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A flurry of excitement



From super-sleek Bond lairs in the Swiss Alps to luxury tents in Antarctica, the latest winter wonderlands will have you reaching for your skis

By *FRANCESCA SYZ*

CABANE TORTIN, VERBIER, SWITZERLAND

There are ski chalets and then there are Bond lairs moonlighting as them. This futuristic new glass-walled retreat on the face of the Tortin Glacier must surely be the latter. Launching next month high above Verbier at 3,000ft, ski-in-ski-out Cabane Tortin was designed by the award-winning Norwegian architect Snorre Stinessen. It is impressively sustainable, built in the footprint of an old mountain hut, with solar power and water

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sourced from natural springs – all without the slightest compromise on luxury. Sleeping up to eight in three bedrooms, the fully-staffed lodge has a lovely large living room with an open fire, an open kitchen and a private chef, a spa therapist – and a mountain guide for dreaming up personalised ski adventures.

A three-night stay for six people costs about £53,500; cabanetortin.com



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ONE&ONLY MOONLIGHT BASIN, MONTANA

If you're a super-wealthy American, you've probably been to Montana at some point, to 'rough it' in your perfectly pressed Wrangler jeans. But increasingly, it is attracting a more international clientele - a trend that looks set to continue next summer with the opening of One&Only Moonlight Basin, both the first North American and the first alpine resort from the luxury hotel group famous for its properties in the Maldives, Mauritius and Dubai.

It's not difficult to see the appeal. Renowned for wilderness and wildlife, Montana has more mammal species than you can shake a stick at (but don't do that), with frequent sightings of bears, moose, elk, deer, bighorn sheep and red foxes. It also has mountain ermine, although they're almost impossible to spot in the winter when their fur turns from reddish brown to snow white. Because the other thing Montana is famous for is its long winters and myriad opportunities to ski and snowboard, with the first flurries often as early as September (so just after it opens).

Which is why this new One&Only, an 'alpine modern' beauty in a ski-in-ski-out location adjacent to the Yellowstone National Park in Big Sky, will be open year-round and come into its own in winter, when, in addition to skiing, it will offer snowboarding, snow-shoeing, dog-sledding and fat-tyre biking. It will also offer winter fly-fishing, when it is uniquely good for catching winter trout, cold-blooded fish that are more active at that time of year.

Built predominantly of glass and wood, the resort has 73 guest rooms in the main lodge and 19 guest cabins nearby. Every room has epic floor-to-ceiling windows through which to enjoy the spectacular views, and a roaring fire. There's also a gondola connected directly to the summit, a spa, forest-to-plate dining, a stargazing observatory and a hidden moonshine whiskey shack in the woods.

oneandonlyresorts.com

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE
 RIGHT Double-walled sleeping tents at Three
 Glaciers Camp, Antarctica;
 Naturhotel Forsthofgut
 combines traditional materials
 with contemporary design;
 crisp fresh snow in Montana,
 where One&Only Moonlight
 Basin opens in 2025



CHRISTMAS AT THE EDGE OF THE EARTH, ANTARCTICA

World leader in private superyacht adventures EYOS Expeditions has launched a pretty off-the-scale Christmas adventure to the South Pole. You'll start with a stay at Three Glaciers Camp deep in the Antarctic interior, an exclusive private encampment of double-walled sleeping tents surrounded by soaring peaks, striking out into the wilderness to explore on ski, snowmobile or Tucker Sno-Cat, depending on the conditions (and your preference). Weather permitting, you'll board a ski-aircraft and fly to the South Pole for a Christmas Day like no other.

A seven-night trip costs from \$82,950 per person excluding international flights; eyos-expeditions.com

NATURHOTEL FORSTHOFGUT, AUSTRIA

This family-owned restorative alpine resort hotel in Southern Austria, surrounded by the Leogang mountains, has made a name for itself as a wonderful place to reconnect with nature year-round and has both adult-only and family-friendly spas, traditional Onsen bathing and an all-weather swimming lake. In winter, it's loved by skiers and non-skiers alike, with plenty to do, even more so with its latest addition: a stable with seven horses including Haflinger ponies (mountain stock) on which you can go out riding in the snow.

A three-night Riding Happiness package in early December costs from €685 per night based on two sharing, on a half-board (plus afternoon tea) basis, including full use of the spa and a guided horse walk; forsthofgut.at/en

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FORESTIS VILLA, SOUTH TYROL, ITALY

This sanatorium for the Austrian monarchy which then became a Vatican summer retreat is now a chic wellness hotel in the Italian Dolomites. It's big on steamy baths and pagan rituals and sits in a jagged mountain setting so beautiful it takes your breath away. And now, for those wanting complete privacy, it has Forestis Villa, an exclusive-use house a few metres from the main hotel, sleeping 10 in five bedrooms with its own spa suite, Technogym, relaxation room with a roaring fire, a large heated indoor-outdoor pool, wine cellar and cinema.

The villa costs from €20,000 per night, including breakfast; forestis.it

ISLAND HOPPING, NORWAY

Original Travel's new 14-day island-hopping itinerary in Norway is an excellent choice at any time of year but is particularly magical in winter – and given that in 2025 the sun will enter a 'solar maximum' phase, when the Northern Lights are at their best, this is the year to go. Starting in Tromso and ending in Evenes and travelling by a combination of car and ferry, you'll do everything from whale watching in Andenes to Arctic cod fishing and winter kayaking in the Lofoten Islands, enjoying fantastic meals in cosy restaurants all along the way.

From £3,200 per person based on two sharing, including return flights and transfers, B&B accommodation and guided tours throughout; originaltravel.co.uk



EXPERIMENTAL CHALET, VAL D'ISERE, FRANCE

Val d'Isère's historic Hotel L'Aigle des Neiges has just undergone a spectacular makeover by Parisian interior designer Dorothee Mellichzon under new owners, the hipster Experimental Group (which started life as a single cocktail bar in Paris). It re-opens in its new incarnation in January with 113 rooms, a classic brasserie with a wood-fired oven and another restaurant dedicated to all things cheese, a spa and pool and the group's signature cocktail bar, The Experimental Cocktail Club, for fabulous mountain-friendly cocktails.

Doubles from £350 per night, room only; experimentalchaletvaldisere.com



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Floor-to-ceiling windows at Forestis Villa ensure spectacular views of the Italian Dolomites; one of the 13 rooms in the recently remodelled Experimental Chalet in Val d'Isère; cosy chalet style at Lord of Snow, Courchevel 1850; you may well see the Northern Lights on Original Travel's tour of Norway

LORD OF SNOW, COURCHEVEL 1850, FRANCE

Ultra-luxury chalet specialist Haute Montagne expands into Courchevel 1850 this season for the first time, with Lord of Snow, a ski-in-ski-out super chalet just off Bellecote Piste. Designed by the renowned French architect Sophie Decoopman, this seven-bedroom European larch-clad chalet, spread over six floors, offers a contemporary take on the alpine chocolate-box aesthetic, combining museum-grade antiques with the best in contemporary design, such as a custom dining table by L'Atelier des Frères and other pieces by Francesco Binfarè and Patricia Urquiola. Then there's an in-chalet spa with an indoor pool, hammam, sauna and gym, a cinema, a billiard room and the services of a private chef.

From £125,125 per week; hautemontagne.com