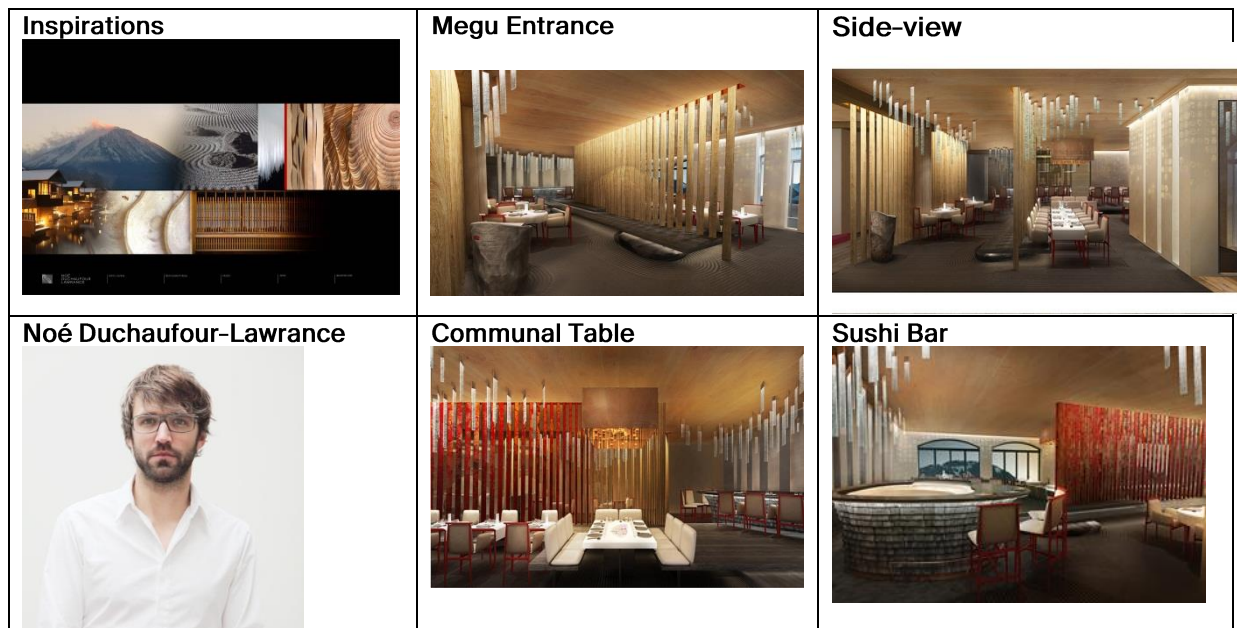


# THE ALPINA GSTAAD

## PR BACKGROUNDER: Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance

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### I. Project Scope

The Alpina Gstaad project:

MEGU - sophisticated and modern Japanese cuisine, sushi and sumibi aburiyaki.

Interior restaurant - 120 m<sup>2</sup>/ 1300 sq.ft. Seats 43 inside & 14 outside.

### II. Profile

Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance grew up near the sea in Bretagne \* and used to contemplate the coastal landscapes. The emotions felt observing these landscapes became later a source of many inspirations.

Noé defined his own language as a designer and interior architect using natural shapes which are supple, organic, fluid and structured at the same time. A passion for materials and its shape embodied his course of studies of Sculpture on Metal (at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Appliqués et des Métiers d'Art), then Design at the Arts Décoratifs in Paris. Influenced by a creatively rich past (his father was a sculptor), Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance's exceptional aesthetic quality soon emerged. Beginning with the restaurant Sketch in Soho in 2002 where he served as artistic director and his interior design was soon acclaimed by the international scene with his renowned egg-shaped toilets!

Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance seizes each project as a real opportunity to (re)define an aesthetic quality of his own. Rapidly putting his ideas into practice within a temple of haute French cuisine, he recreated Senderens (formerly known as Lucas Carton) to a first-rate face-lift. Inside, the luminous tables and engraved mirrors nestle within ancient wood paneling in a decor where the 'in situ' ceiling reinterprets Majorelle's line, a successful gamble where Art Nouveau and design join forces in a contemporary world.

2007 was a key year when he was discovered by Maison & Objets and voted 'Designer of the Year', the same year he left his mark upon the interior decor of the Maya Bar in Monaco, renovated the famous Maison Sénéquier in St Tropez and devised the new architectural identity of the Air France business class lounges, in partnership with Brandimage.

Since 2009, Noé has created the new architectural identity of Yves St Laurent Beauté and has been working on various small to large scale projects, from hotels to perfume bottles (the best seller One Million for Paco Rabanne followed by Lady Million). Designing furnishings and objects are a permanent feature of his work for prestigious producers in France and Italy where he freely expresses his organic vocabulary, with the emblematic Manta desk in the furniture line for Ceccotti collezioni, with its elegant intertwined curved lines and ramifications. In parallel, he has designed Rémanence, a candelabra for Baccarat and the Derby armchair for Zanotta.

In 2010, Noé's continued his collaboration with Zanotta and Ceccotti continues followed by success with Cinna with his Ottoman armchairs and sofa collection, and Bernhardt Design with the Corvo chair. Noé was bestowed with a Red Dot Design Award 2011, recognized by Wallpaper and Elle Déco 2009 for the "Buonanotte valentina" bed with Ceccotti collezioni, as well as bestowed the Gold Award Neocon 2010 for Corvo with Bernhardt Design.

Inaugurated in May 2010, galerie BSL is one of his latest interior architecture projects in Paris dedicated to design and fashion for which he created a huge 'volute' or spiral which is both a case and a display stand on an architectural scale. He recently designed the interior of a chalet for private clients in the French Alps and is presently working on designing new places in Paris and abroad.

Noé's hallmark approach to luxury is an organic, sculptural and sensual design where shapes and colours confront and caress each other blending together so well.

### **III. Design Inspirations - Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance and Japan:**

Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance first visited Tokyo, Japan for a month of discovery at the age of 20 years. Since then, Japan has inspired his designs and heightened his interest for Japanese culture, architecture and lifestyle.

In 2004, he was responsible for the interior design of 3rd Culture, a fashion and accessories store, located in the Imperial Hotel in Ginza, Tokyo. The same year, he was invited by the Institut Français to participate in Tokyo Designers Block, one of the main design events in Japan, with the production of a sound and olfactory video installation called 'Everything is in Everything.'

In 2007, he undertook the new architectural identity of Air France business class lounges, in collaboration with Brandimage, which was rolled out for the first time at Narita international airport, near Tokyo.

In 2010, he visited the south of Japan and discovered the duality of this country, between tradition and modernity, symbolised on the one hand by the city of Kyoto and on the other, by the island of Naoshima, a Japanese paradise of contemporary art.

## **IV. MEGU Design**

Noé's discoveries in Japan and his passion for nature and landscapes inspired his designs for Megu at The Alpina Gstaad.

For both Japan and the Swiss Alps, their relationship with nature is the common ground between both cultures where the most distinguishing design characteristic is how it fits in harmony with its natural environment.

Noé defined the new interior space by incorporating the view of the Alpine scenery outside using codes of traditional Japanese architecture, such as partitioning/filtering, framing, composition and horizontal lines.

Megu's 120 sq. mtr (1,300 sq.ft) of space is located in the hotel's open entertainment floor with a bar lounge, Megu, an All Day Dining Restaurant, Swiss Restaurant, Wine Room and Fumoir.

Inspired by Japanese traditional houses, Megu has three levels built one step above each other with table configurations which distinguishes the sushi bar from the dining tables and communal table for 8-10 persons. A stone platform extends to the terrace outside, connecting the restaurant with the exceptional landscape surrounding it.

The see through border screen walls were inspired by traditional Japanese wood partitions. These immovable vertical wooden slats or partitions create the feel of openness and intimacy for Megu's patrons, to see without being seen, and show the view of the Bernese Alps for those just passing by. The materials chosen to cover the screen wall partitions establish a "double play" with one side made of conifer wood often used in Gstaad with a bas-relief representing the famous Japanese mountain "Mt. Fuji" evoking a "filter play" with the reinterpreted landscape juxtaposes with Swiss mountains - the real one. The other side of the partition is covered with antique kimono fabrics over 100 years old, mostly red, the signature color of Megu restaurants.

### **Furniture Designed by Noé:**

The entry reception table with the red Megu logo is a big round marble stone with a flat top and a built-in cabinet with drawers covered in leather.

The chairs are inspired by a 'torii', the Japanese gates which mark the approach and entrance to Shinto shrines such as the famous Ryoan Ji (temple) in north Kyoto near the Garden Pavilion. These 'torii' gates represent the line between the human and spirit world and keep the bad outside. The 'torii' frame of the chair is painted in Vermillion red lacquer and the seat is covered with soft leather in taupe color.

The dining tables have a thick white onyx stone top with a round indentation in the centre for floating flowers and candles.

The sushi bar table has a thick brown marble stone with sycamore wood shingles on the exterior sides inspired by the church roof in Gstaad village. The burned grey color of this wood is inspired by the color of the roofs found in Naoshima, a fisherman's village in Japan.

### **Lighting Design by Noé:**

Above the large white onyx communal table, a lighting display with a large square mirror in copper finish on two sides encase the suspended Japanese lanterns inside, creating the illusion of infinity lights above. These lanterns are used in temples of Japanese homes and Buddhist altars.

The lighting system consists of hanging lights made of long rectangular glass hand crafted individually by a glass sculptor. Each original glass carving has an organic design showing movement inside the glass, which create motion inside the restaurant space even before the guest arrive.

### **Carpet:**

The carpet is inspired by a Japanese stone garden. A mixture of grey colors in gradient shades creates shadows and depth in the restaurant floor which appears like a stone garden.

### **Wall:**

The white plaster wall is covered with natural chalk, a Swiss technique.

### **Ceiling:**

Wide planks of conifer wood from Switzerland (without any carving or design) line the ceilings.

### **Color:**

Megu logo – Pantone Red PMS186 and PMS 21-1-7C

Vermillion color represents a salutation of life which rids misfortune and disease.

### **V. Press Release Quote**

#### **PRESS RELEASE Quote from Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance:**

"Megu at The Alpina Gstaad is inspired by Japanese temples in Kyoto and traditional Japanese houses. The design concept reflects 'the link between two entities' through interior architectural codes, know-how, techniques and atmospheres connecting the Megu Japanese universe and the mountains of Gstaad. These two worlds come together in harmony to create a unique place."