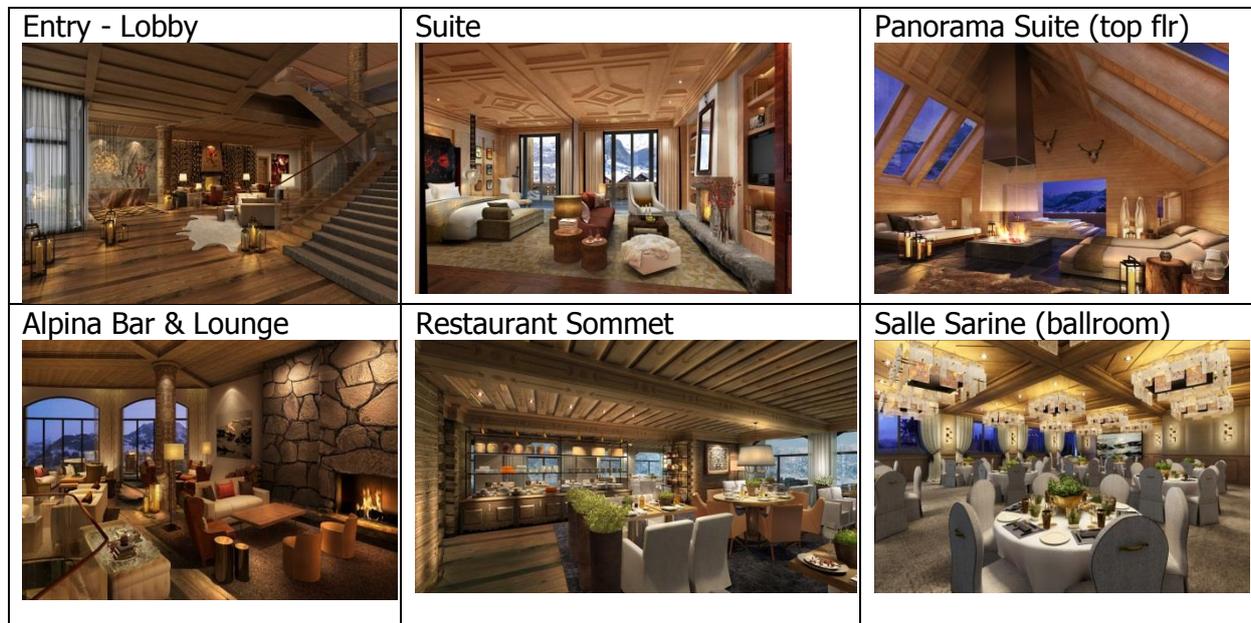


THE ALPINA GSTAAD
PR BACKGROUNDER – HIRSCH BEDNER & ASSOCIATES

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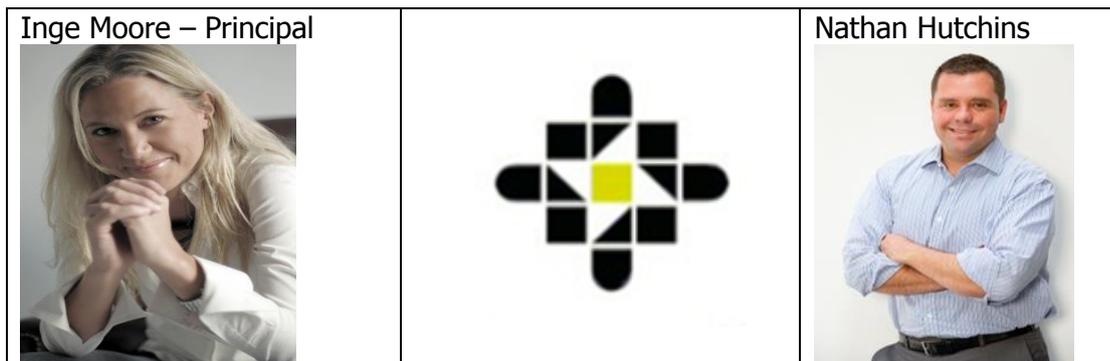


I. Project Scope

The Alpina Gstaad project includes:

- 1) Rooms & Suite floors
- 2) Meeting Rooms
 - Salle Sarine - ballroom with view: 240 m2 / 2,580 sq.ft.
 - Boardroom 1 - conference Room with view: 45 m2 / 485 sq.ft.
 - Boardroom 2 - meeting room: 68 m2 / 730 sq.ft.
 - Boardroom 3 - meeting room adjacent to cinema: 60 m2 / 645 sq.ft.
- 3) Children's Play / Game Room
- 4) Restaurant Sommet
 - All day dining restaurant
 - 190 m2 / 2050 sq.ft. Seats: 68
- 5) Alpina Bar & Lounge
 - Seats: 64
- 6) Cigar Lounge
 - 48 m2 / 516 sq.ft. Seats: 14
- 7) Wine room
 - Wine Room– 28 m2 / 300 sq.ft. Tasting table only

II. HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates Profile



HBA/Hirsch Bedner Associates is one of the most highly regarded interior design companies specialising in hotel, spa and luxury residential work around the world. Since its foundation in 1964, the firm has developed a portfolio that spans more than 80 countries and has grown to have 13 design studios across Europe, USA, Asia and the Gulf. It is the London studio of HBA which is creating and realising the interiors of The Alpina Gstaad. Led by Principal, Inge Moore, the 28-strong studio has recently won international acclaim for such projects as Hotel Alfonso XIII in Seville, Fairmont Nile City in Cairo, the award-winning Améthyste poolside bar at the Phoenicia Beirut and two new ESPAs, one at the Istanbul EDITION and the other at The Ritz-Carlton, Hong Kong. The team leaders of The Alpina Gstaad project are Inge Moore together with Senior Associate Nathan Hutchins.

Individuality and a sure understanding of what makes an unforgettable hotel experience distinguish all of HBA London's luxury hospitality work. Its team members are drawn from many parts of the world and are selected for the particular creativity, energy and experience that they bring to the design process. Fundamental to this process is the early development of a narrative – a framework for the design concept and a source for the design details which together elicit an emotional reaction to the environment and create the guest experience. It is a narrative that draws on location, art, history and legend to create beautiful and unique hotels.

HBA's residential work is similarly characterised by an original spirit that creates homes for bespoke living, shaping residences to meet the aspirations of the owner, or to express the values of a luxury brand or simply to be a gorgeous vacation retreat.

Current HBA London projects include: Hotel Maria Cristina in San Sebastian; Mena House Oberoi in Cairo; Westin Florence; the Royal Suite at the Intercontinental London, Worli Towers, Mumbai; Ritz-Carlton Mauritius and The Sea Hotel in Bat Yam.

III. Design Backgrounder – The Alpina Gstaad

The Concept – A Hotel for all Seasons

HBA takes its cue from the spectacular year-round location, from the region's deeply held traditions and from the understated wealth of Gstaad, the design team at HBA London is creating a guest experience that will be seeped in comfort, enlivened with delightful details and utterly, but discretely, luxurious.

The starting place for HBA's inspiration was legend and history. Legend has it that God, wanting to rest during the final days of creation, laid his hand down on the last piece of untouched land and created Saanenland, the palm of His hand forming the area where Gstaad now lies. History records the adventures and discoveries of A.W. Moore who explored the Alps in the mid-19th Century and kept a journal that describes a natural world which remains unchanged today. Weaving together these two notions, HBA embarked on conceiving design schemes that harness location while offering an interior environment to suit the lifestyles of today's internationally cultured luxury hotel guest.

HBA QUOTE:

"People travel to experience and we are taking the beautiful natural elements that surround The Alpina to create a design which is unique, timeless and will resonate for many years to come," explains Nathan Hutchins of HBA London. "There is beauty to every season in Saanenland and we are designing a hotel which celebrates this in so many of its details and which will be cosy in winter and fresh and airy in the summer."

Public Areas – Reinterpreting Chalet Architecture

HBA London is taking the traditional chalet form of the building into the interior and contemporizing it. Warm reclaimed rustic timber forms the envelope to most of the spaces and there are many references to local customs and craft skills, from elaborately hand-painted ballroom doors in the manner of centuries-old farmers' paintings to intricate patterning embroidered onto some of the armchairs.

However, the overall line is sleek and the spaces, while accessorized with collections of photos and other paraphernalia, are uncluttered. The ambiance throughout is of a very lovely home-away-from-home. While use of local reference is occasionally literal, such as regional-style crockery in the restaurant, more often than not, HBA translates a native idea or indigenous material into something new. Quartz, commonly found in Switzerland and usually mined in Alpine clefts is fashioned into lamp bases, beer taps and sparkling decanters; furs from the ubiquitous Saanenland goat are scattered about the lobby lounge; and the form of glass pendant lights obliquely suggests the shape of the classic Swiss cowbell.

HBA is also re-imagining other symbols of Swiss culture and society. At Restaurant Sommet, for instance, a communal buffet table is reminiscent of a large kitchen table in a Swiss family home, the heart of the home and of The Alpina Gstaad.

Guestrooms – A luxurious Retreat

The guestrooms are spacious and residential in feel with magnificent views and large outdoor terraces. As in the public areas, the rooms are timber-clad and also have classically carved ceilings. Yet, the impression remains light and contemporary with modern fireplaces and an interplay of textures that helps to make the bedrooms feel cosy. The overall colour palettes reference local trees, enlivened with the rich hues of the upholstery and the warm-toned Swiss timbers. HBA is specially designing an enclosed bar for most room and suites with traditionally carved doors that belie the practical planning and 'mod cons' of the interior which contains a sink, drinks storage and a fridge. Door and room signage borrow on the patterns and textures of the decorative cowbells worn on festive occasions.

HBA QUOTE:

"Through our designs, we are seeking to make sure that guests experience luxury that is truly Swiss in flavour and which reveals the refined and cultivated character of Gstaad," says Inge Moore, Principal of HBA London. "We are creating a hotel which will be synonymous with Alpine exclusivity. A familiar idea, but redefined to captivate the next generation."

IV. DESIGN DESCRIPTION

Entrance and Reception

The experience of The Alpina Gstaad begins for guests even before they enter the building. Driving up a winding mountain road, the arrival sequence takes them into a gallery roadway of hand-chiselled Riggerberg stone and old wood, passing a dramatically lit waterfall that tumbles through mountain boulders and leading to a subterranean porte cochère. Above this, an open oculus soars to the sky which makes an imposing connection with the world outside and casts natural light into the entrance space reflecting the seasons as they change through the year.

The entrance lobby sets the scene for what is to come throughout The Alpina Gstaad with its envelope of warm rustic timbers, hand-crafted pieces and exquisitely detailed finishes; the contemporary is “casually” mixed with the traditional – much as it would be at home. Timber planks to the walls and ceilings have been reclaimed from old Swiss chalets and individually crafted to fit their new location; the reception table is hewn from a single alpine tree trunk. Above this, a cluster of hanging glass pendants form more than a delightful display of lighting to welcome guests; they are also a unique library of poetry since each one has a Swiss verse glazed onto it. Rugs are of hand-tufted unbleached wool with all the naturally occurring variations that come with truly organic materials and the structural columns are clad in Moore & Giles leather with an embossed marquetry pattern, converting their mass into something more delicate and natural-looking.

The intent to create a very comfortable experience is amply displayed in the entrance lobby, nowhere more so than in the huge fireplace surrounded by Alpine boulders individually selected by the designers and picked from the local rivers where centuries of rushing water have shaped and polished them. Another fireplace of similar scale and also flanked by stone is to be found in the lounge upstairs, connecting the two spaces and achieving a pleasant sense of flow. In between, a sweeping staircase is both cotemporary in style and an ample demonstration of the Swiss tradition of impeccably meticulous detailing. Clad in timber, the staircase has anthracite steel railings and a glass balustrade around which the highest grade saddle leather has been hand-stitched on-site. Above, an intricately painted antique ceiling provides a visual feast for the eye and is a feature quite different from anything else in the hotel. Behind the staircase, a slatted wooden screen draws upon the “gimmwand” building style of Saanenland farmland properties and allows an enchanting lattice of diffused light to fall upon the area.

Furnishing and fabrics in the entrance lobby are from Etro, Dedar, Pollack, Garrett Leather, Moore & Giles Leather, Sahco Hesslein, Bisson Bruneel, Maharam, Holland & Sherry, Loro Piana, Pierre Frey and Casamance.

Most of the furniture is bespoke and includes side tables by Lindley, black wooden stumps by Gervasoni <http://www.gervasoni1882.it/>, and a piece by B&B Italia www.bebitalia.it/

Lighting is from Pinto Paris <http://www.pintoparis.com/> and floor lamps from Lorenzo Tondelli.

Meeting rooms

The 240sq metre/2580 sq ft ballroom excels in its expression of the finest craftsmanship of Saanenland and the designers’ choice of materials and attention to every detail honours the rich heritage of the region. The ceiling is formed of beautiful rough-worked rustic timber from which specially-designed wrought iron and Alpine quartz chandeliers hang, achieving an imposing gravitas to the room. The walls are also timber-clad up to dado level, and above - hand-beaten and rolled by local artisans – bronze sconces conceal wall lights which in their turn pick up on the texture of the sconces and cast an ethereal light onto the softly upholstered panels behind. The chairs are both handsome and unique, upholstered in leather to the front and a bold herringbone wool to the back, while the unbleached custom-designed Berber wool carpet has its own inherent beauty. The prevailing masculinity of the room is softened by the soft drapes which dress the wall of windows that looks towards the rolling countryside north of Gstaad. Details such as the Swiss stitching on the wall panels and the woven leather tie-backs to the drapes, delight the senses.

Salle Sarine's (ballroom) finery provides a clever disguise for its precisely planned practicality; it is a flexible space that seamlessly integrates AV technology and can be configured in a number of layouts.

The hotel's meeting rooms have a design based on the scheme of the ballroom and include a 45 m² / 485 ft² conference room, also with spectacular views, as well as two further rooms adjacent to a cinema. The bespoke hi-tech conference tables have been fabricated by Bulo.

Ballroom lighting is from Brabbu <http://www.brabbu.com/>

The Cinema

The Cinema is another exceptional experience at The Alpina Gstaad. Located deep in the building like a hi-tech secret, it is a luxuriously intimate space equipped to support both 2-D presentations and 3-D screenings as well as guests' own plug-in content, or by way of a sliding pocket wall to open up to the adjacent function room and become part of a larger event. All the furniture is free-standing allowing the room to be adapted to different occasions. There is seating for 14 people in generously over-sized armchairs and sofas with ottomans and integrated reading lights, as well as bean bags for children. Upholstery is in rich brown leather, charcoal-toned wool with Swiss stitching details covers the panels that line the room concealing storage areas, and there are even blankets for late-night audiences to nestle under.

Textiles are by Maharam, Holland & sherry and Dedar.

Furniture is from Baxter and Julian Chichester www.julianchichester.com/

Lighting is from Nicholas Hasslam <http://www.nicholashaslam.com>

Kids Room

The Kids Room is dedicated to young fun – a uniquely designed indoor adventure for toddlers and children from the minute they tumble through the stable-style door. HBA London has created a space in the spirit of a mini-chalet for its small guests replete with Alpine timber, the traditional Swiss colour palette of red and white and delightful scaled-down furniture. There are masses of activity and relaxation offerings, including a tree house and slide in front of a simply coloured mountain scene, a blackboard wall, a reading area, an arts and crafts zone, media centre and a place for children to take a nap. Tree branches double as coat pegs and a Wetzner magnetic wall allows children to display their artwork for their parents' return. All the elements have been custom-designed in this wonderland.

Fabrics are from Nobiliis www.nobilis.com

Alpina Bar and Lounge + Terrace

The feature staircase in the reception area leads up to the lounge. With a huge fireplace on one side, the bar on the other, the exterior wall glazed floor-to-ceiling to provide connection with the large terrace outside and the magnificent views of the Bernese mountains beyond, the lounge bar is well-anchored in generous comfort and well-being. This is a very social space with huge armchairs, a luxurious combination of linen, wool and leather upholstery, and – continuing the narrative of the entrance below - leather-clad columns and a weathered timber envelope. The palette of the fabrics is soft with punches of burnt red colour and lots of stitching and embroidery details in the best of Swiss tradition.

The bar is uniquely crafted. Its hammered bronze fascia captures the lights and its top is cut length-wise from a local forest pine leaving a naturally textured edge. Standing apart from the wall, the double-sided bar gives the barman a dramatic stage on which to display his cocktail-making skills. Another uniquely designed piece is the D.J. station – a beautifully crafted consul table by day, it transforms into a fully-functioning station by night replete with the latest Pioneer equipment.

Furnishing and fabrics are from Etro, Dedar, Pollack, Garrett Leather, Moore & Giles Leather, Sahco Hesslein, Bisson Bruneel, Maharam, Holland & Sherry, Loro Piana, Pierre Frey and Casamance.

Furniture: Armchairs from Baxter, pieces by B&B Italia www.bebitalia.it and Christian Laigre www.christian-liaigre.fr/ and black wooden stumps by Gervasoni <http://www.gervasoni1882.it/>

Restaurant Sommet (All day dining)

The restaurant interiors manage the fine balance between providing a showcase of regional traditions and culture and offering a contemporary and very comfortable experience through daytime and evening. All joinery is within the fine tradition of Swiss cabinetry, from the antique ceiling planks which are exquisitely decorated in a manner typical of the area to the large timber beams that clad the walls and which, as in other public areas, are in perfect dovetailed formation around the room. Wrought iron and saddle leather are widely used, the former in the lighting, the latter upholstering the banquettes and chairs. Yet, the ambience is fresh and light thanks to crisp white linens and numerous potted plants and herbs as well as the uplifting wrap-around views of the Bernese mountains thanks to the restaurant's location on a corner of the building. A focal point is the Swiss cheese display set out on a traditionally styled counter. The restaurant is "the heart of the home", welcoming, nourishing and sociable. Outside, a terrace with fire-pit is the setting for al fresco dining and provides a rejuvenating experience of connection with Alpine world.

Furniture and fabrics are by Pierre Frey, Moore & Giles Leather and Knowles & Christou. The custom-designed chairs are by Giorgetti.

Cigar Room

The handsome masculinity of the Cigar Lounge is based on one of Havana's most famous cigar lounges. To this, HBA London has added further layers of 1930s-style glamour, fun and abstracted references to cigar design in the colour palette. Classic deep-buttoned armchairs, dark woods and leathers abound, but the details are novel. A small custom-designed table is attached to each armchair, supporting at arm's length an elegant ashtray, lighting is warm and cosy and lampshades are in a sultry red silk. Throughout the space, air conditioning and extractors have been carefully integrated and hidden from view to ensure that the experience feels both indulgent and extremely comfortable. Through the windows, the view is of the rolling countryside to the north of the hotel.

Fabrics and materials are from Moore & Giles leather, Cortina Leather, Loro Piana and De la Cuona. Chairs are from Bright Chair Company.

Wine Room

The Wine Room has been conceived as a most extraordinary cellar in a private home where small groups of friends may be entertained while tasting some excellent wines. Located adjacent to the bar, its entrance is heralded by a wrought iron gate and rich drapery swept back to reveal a sanctum for oenophiles. Clad entirely in rustic limestone and with delightful wrought iron features, its acclimatised space will be home to over 1,000 bottles. Custom-designed storage allows for bottles of all sizes, as well as cases of wine, and an antique cheese table in traditional Swiss style serves as a wine tasting table for up to eight guests.

Outdoor Terraces

The expansive south-facing terrace which looks towards the mountains and ski slopes acts as an extension to the entrance lobby. Inspired by the concept of "Fire and Ice", the stone-clad terrace makes a perfect connection with nature through the seasons, appreciated in modern comfort. Casual furniture, lanterns casting low levels of light and several large fire pits create a cosy and restorative ambience.

Just a few paces away, the pool deck provides an alternative retreat. Constructed in Ipé wood, it has its own discreet entrance from the spa. Again, there is a fire pit, as well as chaise longues, loungers for couples and other easy seating loosely grouped around low tables. The black and white tones of the furniture form a chic combination with the grey Swiss stone pool.

Fabrics and furniture are by Ralph Lauren, Zimmer & Rohde, Perrenials and Clarence House.

Guest Rooms and Suites

No two rooms or suites are the same. While they all share the qualities of understated luxury, spaciousness and great comfort that sets The Alpina Gstaad apart, they differ in their aspect, features and detailing. As in the public areas, the guestrooms are clad in timber. A custom-designed, hand-tufted carpet covers the floor apart from the timber-floored entrance lobby inside the door. Each room has a beautiful and unique classically carved ceiling, some in a rustic manner, others in a more contemporary style. Some rooms are tucked under the eaves, creating an especially chalet-style experience.

All rooms and suites are refined and residential in ambiance with an interplay of textures and a soft colour palette, enlivened with accents inspired by the bright red fruit of the Barberry bush, which flourishes in this Alpine terrain, and by rich chocolate brown. Fabrics include knitted cashmere, wools and linen; details are inspired and captivating, including impeccable hand-crafted stitching to the upholstery and touches of embroidery which provide delicate counterpoints throughout. They are warm in winter and fresh in summer.

Most suites have a unique mini-bar cabinet. Made from individually selected antique Swiss cabinets with their traditionally carved and painted exteriors, they are a charming feature which belie their clever internal planning which integrates a sink, drinks storage, Lavazza espresso machine and a fridge. Another delightful feature in the suites are working gas fireplaces above which a convex mirror by Ochre plays with the reflections of guests as they pass.

All the rooms and suites have magnificent views, some to the mountains, some to the meadows, and have large outdoor terraces from which to enjoy them.

The majority of the furniture is bespoke and desk chairs are from Flexform www.flexform.it

The art includes original pieces that re-work natural and reclaimed materials into something new, giving them renewed meaning and value. Artists include Emily Hesse, Ian Turnock and Sonja Aeschlimann.

The bedside reading light is from <http://www.contardi-italia.com>

Deluxe Guestrooms

Located on the first, second and third levels, some of these rooms face south to the mountains and others north to the countryside. Leather predominates in the large headboards made and custom-embossed by Cecilia Bordoni, in upholstery to some of the seating and in a re-fashioning of the traditional leather straps which hold cowbells into bedside lighting - an iconic Saanenland image translated here and in other guestrooms into a distinctive feature. Some of the Deluxe Guestrooms have extensively carved timber walls; they all have large wardrobes and a TV in both the bedroom and bathroom.

There are 25 Deluxe Guestrooms ranging in size from 31 to 48 square metres.

Junior Suites

In addition to the features found in the Deluxe Guestrooms, the generous size of the Junior Suites allows for separate bedroom and sitting room areas, the latter with a hand-built local stone fireplace. There are large comfortable armchairs, a sofa and leather-upholstered poufs with a dining area outside on the balcony. The suites also include a separate shower as well as a bathroom with tub and bidet. Thanks to their width and location within the building, the Junior Suites all enjoy lovely and relaxing pastoral views through the expanse of windows to their exterior wall.

There are 14 Junior Suites of about 57 square metres each.

Deluxe Suites

The Deluxe Suites are even larger than the Junior Suites and therefore additionally include a guest cloakroom, a walk-in shower room and a walk-in closet. The bathrooms have a dry vanity area – a sensitively lit mirrored space for making up. The generously-sized fireplace is the focal point of the lounge around which seating is grouped; the space is thoughtfully accessorised with local crafts and book cases displaying a curated collection of literature.

The eight junior suites are 76 square metres each.

Grand Luxe Suites

Luxury reaches a further level of distinction in these huge suites with their space to entertain friends over dinner, a separate working area with desk and a truly impressive fireplace of Alpine stone flanked by a specially-designed and internally lit bookcase delightfully furnished with objects and books. Guests may lounge here either on the chaise-longue or in the cosy armchairs, or they can chose the sitting room beyond, or they may prefer to sit and gaze out from the large south-facing terrace from which these suites flow.

There are eight Grand Luxe Suites, each approximately 95 square metres.

Panorama Suite

The ultimate suite experience at The Alpina Gstaad is the three-bedroom, duplex Panorama Suite on the fifth and sixth floors. This exceptional suite extends from the north to the south elevations of the building, from views of the glacial mountains to vistas of Alpine meadows. It is both a luxurious self-contained retreat and exclusively connected with its location.

The living spaces flow from one into another, beginning with the natural wood-burning fireplace with its floor-to-ceiling stone chimney piece and collection of elegant seating. From here, the lounge continues in the style of a very lovely residence, opening out onto a large terrace; on the other side, hidden from view, there is a kitchen.

The master bedroom alone is a sumptuous experience with its wood burning fire, walk-in dressing room and a bathroom that contains a large free-standing tub, over-sized showerheads and TV inset into the mirror. Onyx wall sconces glow dramatically against the marble-clad walls. Both fifth floor bedrooms have dormers and balconies.

An elegant staircase leads up to the suite's extraordinary top floor that reveals a spa, Jacuzzi, a fitness and massage area, a central wood-burning fireplace and a bedroom, as well as verandah providing breath-taking birds' eye views of the panorama outside. Once again, the concept of the "gimmwand" style of Saanenland buildings had been transposed into the space and, through this timber lattice work, light filters and plays with the interior world of the spa. Above this, the view soars through skylights in the roof to the mountain peaks and in the bedroom where a rich red canopy unfurls from headboard to skylight, the eye is directed upwards to the Alpine sky.

The Panorama Suite occupies 400 square metres.

Furniture pieces are by Christian Laigre www.christian-liaigre.fr/ and Julian Chichester www.julianchichester.com/

Bedside reading lights are by Contardi <http://www.contardi-italia.com>, Cox London <http://www.coxlondon.com/> and Wired Designs (Wardrobe) <http://www.wired-designs.com>

Guest Corridors

The lift core is strikingly clad in Alpine stone. The entrance to each guestroom is signalled by pin lights and door signage borrows on the patterns of decorative cowbells worn on festive occasions.

Lighting in the corridors is by Wired Designs <http://www.wired-designs.com>