Nº 6

LOCATION MOUNT BULLER, AUSTRALIA
DESIGN LISA BUXTON
ARCHITECT PANDOLFINI ARCHITECTS
WORDS CARLI PHILIPS
PHOTOGRAPHY SHARYN CAIRNS

FRESH TRACKS

Three apartments in Victoria's Mount Buller have been given new life as one luxurious ski lodge for multi-generational enjoyment

Living room The cosy seating area features a generous 'Valley' sofa and coffee table by Jardan. The colour scheme is soft and neutral, with a Mongolian-sheepskin ottoman by CCSS. Underfoot is an 'Odessa' rug by Armadillo and the floor lamp is the 'Felix' by McMullin. The painting above the kitchen island is by Clare Milledge ➤

‘Buller’, as it’s affectionately known to skiers, holds a special place in the hearts of Australians who grew up holidaying on the slopes of the resort. For the new owners of this enchanting chalet – a family of three siblings and their parents – it stoked both fondness and freshness. ‘The idea behind purchasing the property was to give their grandchildren and children the same snow experiences they enjoyed growing up,’ says interior designer Lisa Buxton, who transformed the house into a contemporary and luxurious winter retreat. ‘The emotional connection to the area was resolute, as they wanted the next generation of family holidays to be in a place they loved.’

Originally three separate apartments, the weatherboard lodge was amalgamated into a single residence by architect Dominic Pandolfini of Pandolfini Architects, who retained the classic façade and exposed timber beams of the existing pitched ceiling. ‘The brief was for it to comfortably accommodate several families while retaining the charm of the original structure,’ he says. During the ski season, the house can swell with up to eight adults and six children under the age of seven. With a limited footprint, the space-to-people ratio meant rooms needed to be multi-purpose. The playroom can be converted into a bedroom, while the main bathroom doubles as a steam room. And, although the kids’ bedrooms are small, the custom joinery has been cleverly designed, with two sets of bunk beds arranged side-by-side for cousinly company.

At the heart of the home is the open-plan hub, with a hard-working kitchen well-equipped for après-ski meals. Oak cabinetry has been topped with a thick slab of heavily veined, deep-charcoal Nero Picasso stone while, overhead, cupboards in aged brass rest above a splashback lined in glazed Japanese-stoneware tiles. The adjacent dining space features a banquette accompanied by sled-inspired chairs that Lisa sourced in Rome a few years ago and had been waiting to use in a project.

The toasty living room roars to life from the cast-iron Cheminées Philippe fireplace, which is raised up on a block of silver travertine. It is a snug spot to defrost in a rich palette of chocolate, hazelnut and dove grey – there are buttery leathers, Mongolian sheepskin and New Zealand-wool-lined carpets and rugs. ‘As the house is shared by so many people, the vibe and Pinterest boards were varied,’ Lisa recalls of the brief, ‘but everyone was in agreement that it needed to be warm, layered, calm and unfussy.’ Soft throws are scattered everywhere, so there’s always something cosy close by.

With so many people came a deluge of ski accoutrements, so there’s also a specially designated room for storing equipment, with space to remove gear, plus a separate drying room with a European ski-boot holder that dries footwear at rapid speed. Transporting everything to the lodge was no mean feat, and a small convoy of vans and trucks ferried furniture and decor up from the city. Everything was then carried by hand up the snow-covered hill to the house. ‘It wasn’t the easiest delivery,’ says Dominic, ‘but it was completely worth it.’ *lisabuxton.com; pandolfini.com.au*

Exterior It was important to the clients to retain the traditional façade, with its pitched roof and wraparound balcony
Living room On the silver travertine plinth is a Cheminées Philippe fireplace. The painting is by Kirsty Budge from Daine Singer and the cream armchair is vintage ➤

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Dining room The custom oak dining table from In Good Company is surrounded by vintage Italian chairs that reminded the designer of sleds. Illuminating the area is Isamu Noguchi's 'Akari 33N' pendant for Vitra ➤

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Kitchen The island's base is lined in Japanese Tajimi Azuchi tiles from Artedomus with a Nero Picasso-stone top from G Lux. Above is the 'Akari YP1' pendant from In Good Company. The overhead cupboards are in aged brass, while the lower joinery is in Evenex Sincro Bonnie Oak. The 'Dita' bar stools are from Grazia & Co ➤

Bathroom The space cleanly intersects three materials: Gleeze Bianco tiles from Earp Bros, Lauriana stone from Artedomus (from which the bath is carved) and Aldo Glacier matte tiles from Byzantine Tiles
Bedroom On the 'Leo' bedside table from Grazia & Co is a 'Jean De' lamp from MCM House. The custom bedhead is covered in 'Trait de Génie' linen jacquard by Misia. The artworks are by Claudia Lau
See Stockists page for details ED