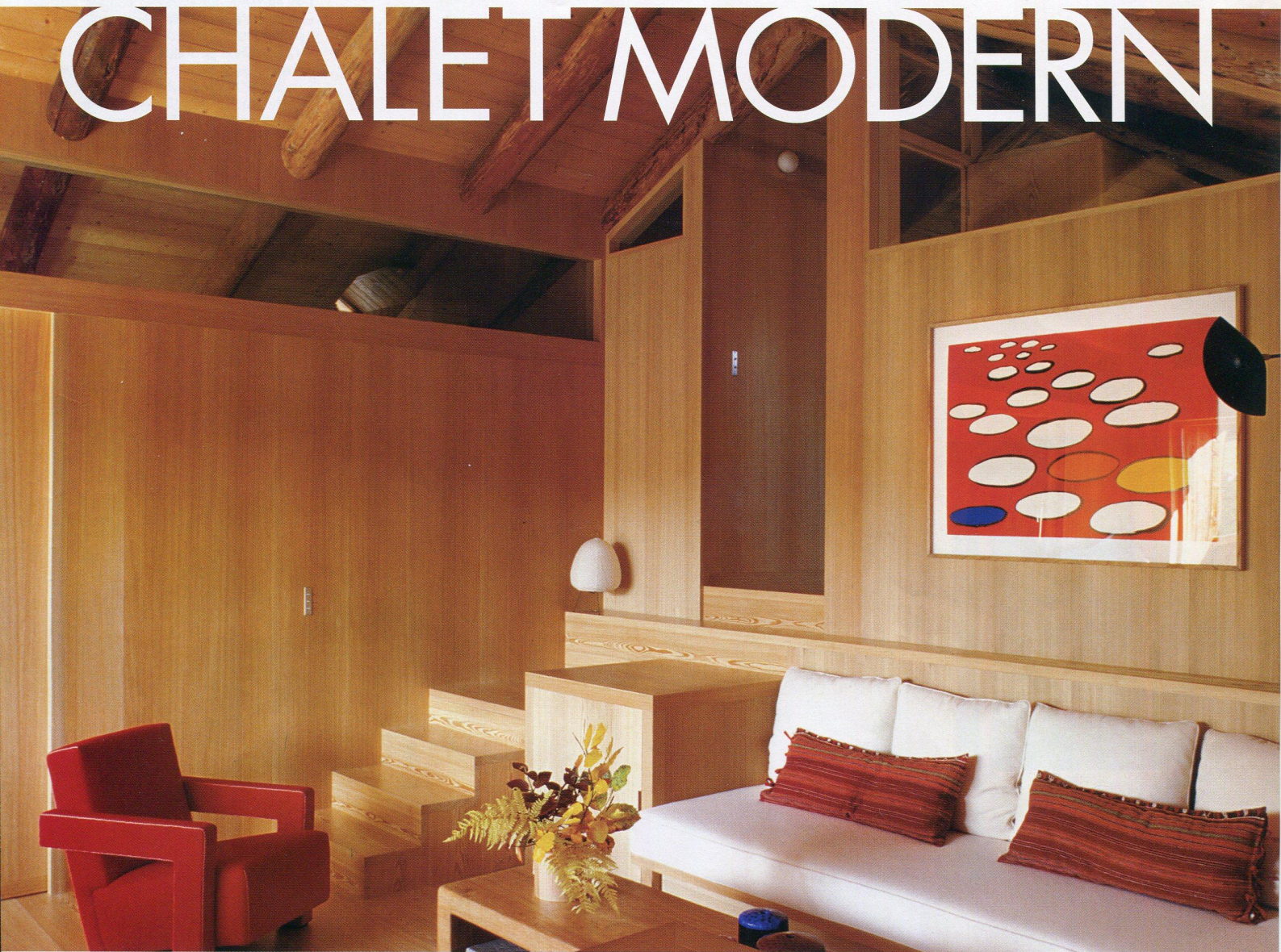


CHALET MODERN



Traditional chalet on the outside, clean and contemporary on the inside, this Alpine hideaway has the best of both worlds.

WORDS ROBERT COLONNA D'ISTRIA PICTURES JEAN-FRANÇOIS JAUSSAUD



OPPOSITE: flashes of red add warmth to the living room. The 'Utrecht' armchair, designed in 1935 by Gerrit Rietveld, is manufactured by Cassina. On the wall is a lithograph by American kinetic artist Alexander Calder. The built-in sofa, by architect David Leclerc, is accessorised with Moroccan cushions bought in Paris. The small white paper lamp is by Isamu Noguchi, while the black metal wall light on the right is by French designer Serge Mouille. **ABOVE LEFT:** in the centre of the living room is a coffee table, named 'Monotable', by Mauro Mori; a green felt stool by Paola Lenti provides extra seating. **ABOVE RIGHT:** nestling at the foot of the Dolomites, the house is surrounded by a spectacular Alpine landscape. The façade of the barn has been preserved; on the top floor, you can see the terrace and a small cut-out window – a typical local feature. ▷



Awkward corners need clever solutions, so this house borrows a few space-saving ideas from boat interiors



From the outside, Count Brandino Brandolini d'Adda and his wife Marie's chalet-style home has all the wholesome charm of a 60s Alpine musical. Nestling amid conifer forests in the hamlet of Cadine di Sopra – near ski resort Cortina d'Ampezzo – with the Dolomite mountains rising surreally above the clouds behind, it makes you long for a run on the piste, followed by a hot toddy wrapped in a cashmere blanket by a roaring fire.

When the couple fell in love with the building and decided to make it their holiday home, it was just an old barn with a pretty gable roof. This meant they had to convert it for domestic use – a task made more tricky because Italian law prohibits any changes to roof or windows, and space was tight under the eaves. Marie and Brandino decided to hand over the project to a friend of theirs, French architect David Leclerc, with instructions to avoid imitating the rustic-style chalets in the resort nearby, and a request to produce a simple, contemporary design that made the most of the available space.

Although the barn has a large floor area, its sloping sides meant that the rooms had to be carefully arranged. It made sense, for example, to position the beds and therefore the bedrooms where the height under the roof was the lowest. After studying the building's awkward corners, David also decided to borrow a few ideas from boat interiors that he'd seen. So, almost every piece of furniture was made to measure, and every nook and cranny has a function (for example, hidden storage is tucked beneath the steps leading to the children's bedroom).

The living area is the heart of the home in every respect, positioned in the centre of the space, where the ceilings are highest and light floods in through the large picture window that leads onto the terrace. The kitchen, main ensuite bedroom and children's room (on a raised level) are arranged around it, separated by wood dividing walls with sliding doors. Openings have been left at the top of all these partitions to draw attention to the building's most beautiful feature – its roof beams. All the additions were built in local larch-wood, which grows abundantly in the region and blends wonderfully with the existing roof timbers, adding to the house's cosy, all-enveloping feel.

As they're not here all the time, Marie, who designs and makes glassware on the nearby Venetian island of Murano, and husband Brandino, who produces Merlot wine on the family estate at Vistorta, brought into their new home just a few possessions to add a personal touch. Including, of course, a collection of Marie's colourful vases and tumblers – the former for displaying wild flowers gathered in the pastures, and the latter for the odd tippie of family vino after an afternoon's skiing.

DECO ▷

David Leclerc Architecture (00 33 1 42 73 57 01; davidleclerc@wanadoo.fr).

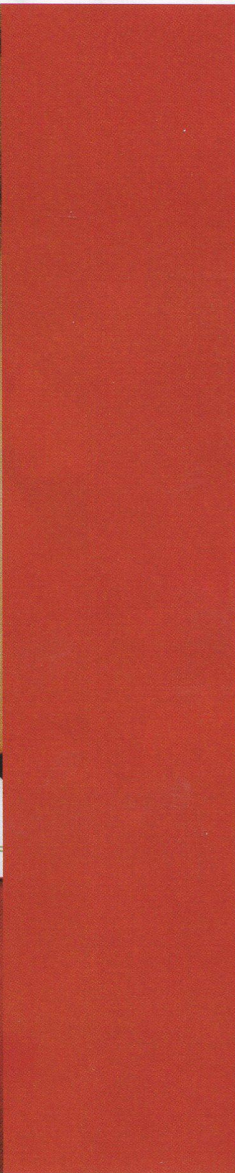
Awkward corners need clever solutions, so this chalet borrows a few space-saving ideas from boat interiors



OPPOSITE: a view from the living room through to the kitchen. Architect David Leclerc had to work around the barn's existing roof and windows, which are protected by Italian conservation laws. New partition walls and floors in larch, a local timber, enclose the interior spaces, which also feature built-in storage units in the same wood. **ABOVE:** tucked in under the eaves, the kitchen sports stainless-steel worktops and kitchen appliances by Alpes and Miele. On the shelves to the left is a bottle of Vistorta, from the owner's vineyards in northern Italy. The tall cupboards hide refrigerators.



OPPOSITE: the main bedroom is made cosy with a fur bedspread. The bed with built-in shelves was designed by architect David Leclerc. **ABOVE LEFT:** to save space, the main bedroom's en suite has a radiator installed along the side of the bath (which is the 'Oberon' by Villeroy & Boch). The 'Tara' taps are by Dornbracht. The washstand and basin are made from Corian. **ABOVE RIGHT:** a larch-wood partition and sliding door separate the main bedroom from the living area. ▷



ABOVE LEFT: looking from the children's bedroom on the top floor down towards the main living space, with the original roof beams on view. The bedspread is from Paris shop Johanna Gullichsen. **ABOVE CENTRE:** the terrace retains its original larch structure and is furnished with a simple wooden bench and suitably narrow table made by local woodworkers. The glass and jug are by the house's owner, Marie Brandolini, who works on the island of Murano, Venice's glass centre. **OPPOSITE:** a large picture window looking onto the terrace offers diners spectacular valley and forest views. The wooden table and benches were designed by David Leclerc.

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All additions were made in the local larch-wood which blends with the original beams and creates a cosy, all-enveloping feel