

High Altitude Style.

A 1960s ski house gets a major facelift and makes the whole family smile.

Written by Jane Hope

Photographs by Adrien Williams

When you wind your way up Mont Suisse in Saint Sauveur des Monts, you keep your eyes on the road. The switchbacks and hairpin turns hold your attention until you arrive at the very top. But once there, it's something else that makes you hold your breath. The vista below peeks through the trees, and through the glass portico of a house perched at the edge of the valley. It draws you in. And once inside, the view spreads out like a billowing blanket of green in summer, and a fairy tale of twinkling white in winter. Gazing out at the view, you begin to make connections. The silver roof and spire of the Cathedral in the village below, is echoed in the standing steel roof and siding of one wing of the house. The historic auberges that dot the landscape are inspiration for the cedar shingled roof and siding of the other wing. The windows too, all square, arranged in an even row, or stacked like hay bales, speak of the heritage of barns where livestock once huddled for the winter. These days, the valley is given over to ski hills on all sides. The village bustles with festive après ski destinations. But if cozying up by the fire, or sipping hot cocoa on the terrace is more your style, then you can't top this house at the summit.

A local artisan created the distressed steel entrance door that opens into a broad entrance. Featured is a cantilevered bench and ranks of coat hooks salvaged from the old Bellevue ski chalet in nearby Morin Heights. The space is a perfect dumping ground for gear in any season, and the more the merrier. The open concept living area beyond is designed for gathering, too. The home sleeps eight in four private suites, but can welcome many more for parties around the custom made oak table and the massive kitchen island. The walls and cathedral ceiling are wood plank, and from the rafters hangs a custom lamp construction. The entrance level floors are clad with oversized porcelain tile that reads like a concrete slab extending through the building from the front terrace to back. A few steps below hardwood floors stretch through the house and into the bedrooms. A glass enclosed staircase allows unobstructed views of the valley from anywhere in the house.

This scenic perch was built on the foundations of a tired 1960's Swiss chalet. Originally acquired as a guesthouse to the adjacent home, the family ultimately chose the bright welcoming space as their sole retreat.

Building and interiors design: Jane Hope

Construction and hand finishing: Dominic Toutant Contracteur, Morin Heights

Entrance door: Custom by artist Jean-Yves Côté, Morin Heights

Glass doors: Reynaers by Distribution P. Levesque, Montreal

Glass railing: Vitrierie des Monts, Saint-Sauveur-des-Monts

Staircase: Centre de l'escalier Signature, Terrebonne

Interior doors: Menuiserie des Pins, Longueuil

Door hardware: Par le trou de la serrure, Montreal

Porcelain floors: Statale 9 Grigio Cemento Work, by Stonetile, Toronto and Montreal

Porcelain walls: Azulej Nero Cubo and Estrela, by Stonetile, Toronto and Montreal
Hardwood: Regency Oak, Gloucester, by Stonetile, Toronto and Montreal
Kitchen and bathroom cabinetry: Denis Couture, Montreal
Kitchen and bathroom fixtures: Rubi, Kohler, by Batimat, Montreal
Appliances: Signature Bachand, Montreal

Dining table: Custom by Treebone, Montreal
Sofa and Ottoman: Custom by Perez Furniture, Montreal
Club chairs and Coffee table: Maison Corbeil, Laval
Dining chairs, Bar stools, Bedroom chairs: West Elm
Bedside tables: EQ3
Carpet: West Elm

Dining room suspension: Custom by Robert Franco, Montreal
Quilts: Custom by Red Barn Quilts (Etsy)
All table and floor lamps: West Elm
Kitchen suspension: Compendium by Luceplan
Interior and exterior wall sconces: Rubix by WAC Lighting

Landscaping: Au Coin du Jardin, Saint Sauveur des Monts