

HOMES & GARDENS

Create a magical
CHRISTMAS

BEAUTIFUL INSPIRATION FOR
A HOLIDAY TO REMEMBER

WELCOME IN STYLE

The decorating look
of the season

Festive fireplaces

Cosy kitchens

ALL WRAPPED UP

Our best-ever
gift guide and
the best stores to
shop from

December 2025

WINTER wonderland

It may be cold outside, but in this chalet, which is surrounded by snowy mountains, there's a wonderful warmth with welcoming nooks that draw you in

WORDS PIP RICH **PHOTOGRAPHY** STEPHEN KENT JOHNSON



SITTING ROOM

The plaster used for the fireplace was mixed with copper powder, so it oxidises over time.

Fireplace by Brian Robles.

Sofa, Arthur Espenet.

Ipanema chairs, Jorge

Zalszupin. Custom **rug**,

Amadi Carpets. Custom

chandelier, Paul Ferrante.

Kent Hall lamp (near logs),

George Nakashima. Ceramic

lamp, Adam Silverman

GAMES ROOM

The little square table in the corner of this space comes complete with its own backgammon set.

Wave Wave Wave wall art, 2021, by Sheila Hicks.

Wall sconce, Lumfardo.

Table, Nickey Kehoe.

Spanish dining chairs, Børge Mogensen





KITCHEN

This is where the family eat when they're not entertaining at the formal dining table.

Cabinets in custom walnut, Samuelson Cabinets. Custom **hood**, Amuneal. TL Lamp **pendant**, Piet Hein Eek. **Stools**, Classic Design. Natural Manganese **splashback tiles**, Heath Ceramics



DINING AREA

The bold artwork is a standout feature.

Artwork by Olga de Amaral. Elm Branch **sideboard**, Chris Lehrecke. Bronze wishbone **table**, BDDW. **Chairs**, Kaare Klein. **Vases** by Berndt Friberg. **Bowl** by Niles Wertz



STUDY

The bookshelf unit was made by the company who crafted the kitchen and the chair is an Eames.

Walnut **desk** George Nakashima. **Artwork** by Jacob Lawrence. **Lamp**; **bin**, both Commune x Remains Lighting

Commune Design makes decor look easy. The LA-based studio is, in fact, a master of the modern American aesthetic, artfully spearheading a hugely influential blend of mid-century furniture with folk art, taking cues from both the ruggedness of the Wild West and the understated luxe vibe that characterises the West Coast. But because all of its projects, from the Ace Hotels in places like Palm Springs and Kyoto to private homes across the USA, all just look so comfortable, it's easy to miss the skill and attention to detail that goes into each space. 'People do feel that our interiors are very comfy,' says Roman Alonso, Commune's founder and principal designer. 'But that's because we always design them for the person who lives there – or who will visit if it's a hotel. We get interested – no, obsessed – with how people live and want to make sure that everything they need is always at arm's reach.'

This approach was no less true at Commune's recent 3,350 square metre residential project in the Yellowstone Club, an exclusive ski resort sprinkled with private homes in Big Sky, Montana. 'The owners have four grown-up kids and were looking for a perfect vacation home to spend the ski season in, one they wouldn't rent out but would spend time in as a family and entertaining their friends,' Roman says. 'We really wanted the house to feel different from what you might expect, with none of the trite or trope-y Western things you often get in ski homes in Montana – so no antlers and no taxidermy. This had to be easy to live in and, above all, fun to have people over to.' That meant working hard to create cosy nooks in the vast and vaulted rooms. 'The seating arrangements had to be very cocktail-compatible,' Roman says, pointing to the formulation of sofa and chairs all angled towards each other in a living room, almost creating a room within the room that steals focus from the gigantic windows and the stellar views of those (oftentimes) snowy mountains. 'Had we been doing the architecture of this home, rather than inheriting an already-developed home, we might have framed those views more and

not had quite such big windows,' Roman says. 'Of course, the views are part of the draw of the home, but we wanted to make sure people were able to have other experiences other than looking at the mountains. In fact, we ended up treating them like wallpaper and pulling the eye to areas like the sculptural fireplace or the art on the walls or to the people you're with, in the case of how the furniture was laid. It just gives an opportunity for life – and the way you use the house – to be a little bit more intimate.'

The fireplace was a moment Roman is particularly proud of. 'We thought of doing a copper fireplace, but in the end decided it would just be too Western, too expected,' he says. 'So then we asked a scenic painter if he would be able to create a plaster material that could have copper powder in it and after much experimentation, he could.' An innovative idea, it means that the fireplace will change almost as quickly as the scenery outside will through the seasons. 'It's alive,' Roman says. 'It has the ability to alter and patina over time, oxidising and shifting.'

The overall effect, as you wander around the three-storey home, through the games room, gym, bunk room and ski room on the lower ground floor and around the open-plan living areas above, is of a place you can sink into, despite the grandness of its proportions and the impressiveness of the location. 'It's very relaxed, but the owners invested in wonderful and refined things,' Roman says. 'They knew the power of – and why you'd want to live with – good fabrics.'

Upholstery was sourced from brands like Christopher Farr and JAB US and helped to create a palette of blues, greens and daring dashes of red. 'We were inspired by the abundant nature surrounding the home,' Roman says. 'The blue of the incredible sky, the greens from the lush forests and then the reds that are found in the native woods, which we used to add a few racy elements, covering the cabinets in the ski room to create a chalet feel, making it all just a little sportier.' 🍷

■ communedesign.com

STAIRCASE

Leading up to the bedrooms, this was designed to give maximum opportunity to see the view.

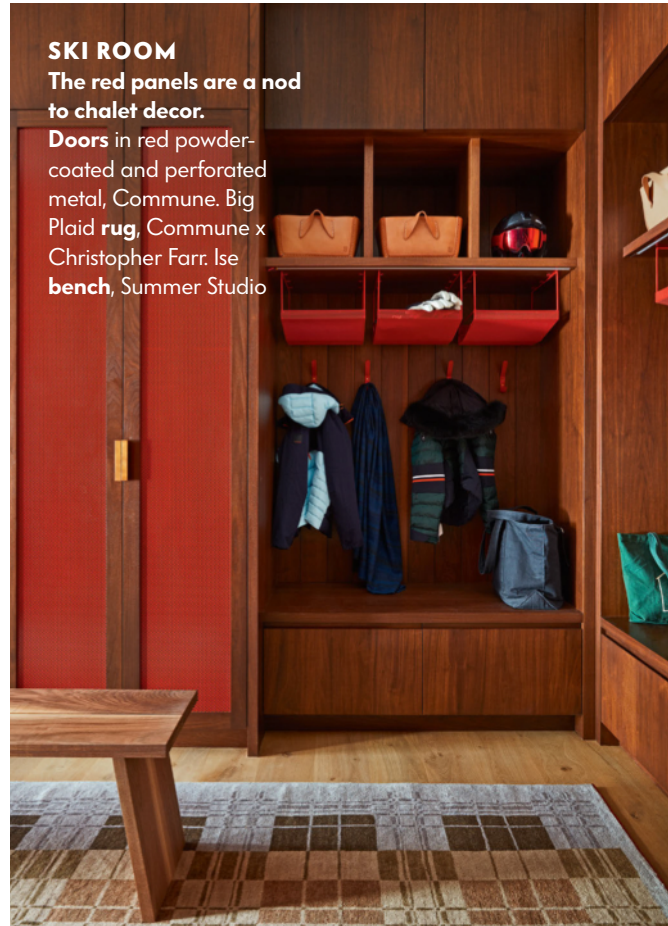
Custom chandelier, Jeff Zimmerman. Chair, Sam Maloof. Tribal rug, Commune x Christopher Farr. Artwork by Theaster Gates





BEDROOM

A pale palette doesn't detract from the view. Lufive chandelier, Lumfardo. Custom desk, Dusk (LA). Indochine chair, Charlotte Perriand. Lamp, Kevin Willis for Commune. Bed linen, Commune x Hamburg House



SKI ROOM

The red panels are a nod to chalet decor. Doors in red powder-coated and perforated metal, Commune. Big Plaid rug, Commune x Christopher Farr. Ise bench, Summer Studio

Q&A Roman Alonso

The designer shares his style inspiration

I KNOW I'M A CREATIVE BECAUSE

I can solve a problem.

YOUR STYLE IN THREE WORDS

Practical, casual, layered.

GO-TO COLOUR Green. I usually start there because of its links to nature and how it makes you feel.

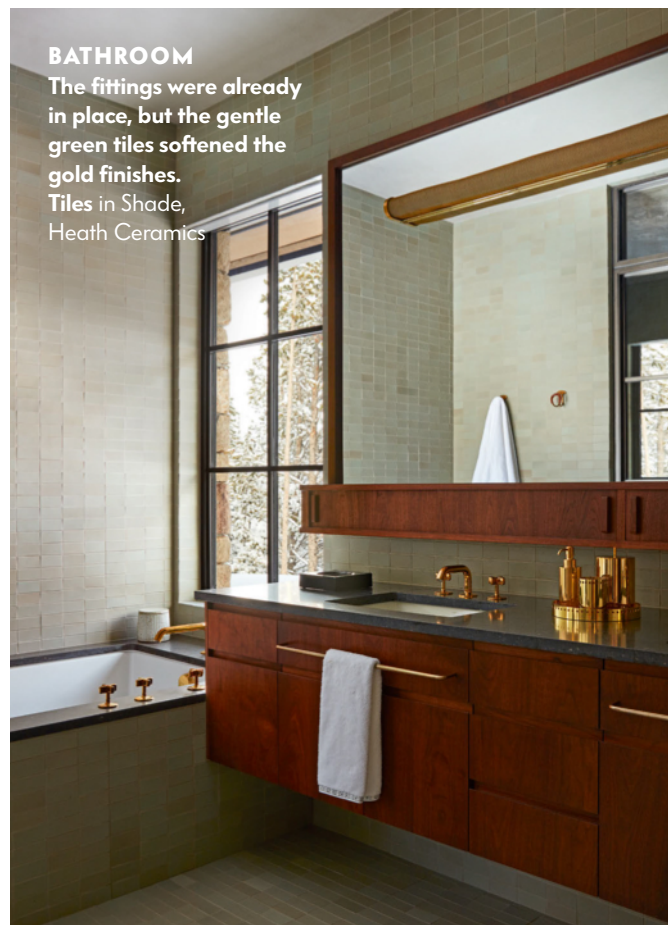
FAVOURITE DESIGN DETAIL Native woods – we use them whenever we can.

DESIGN INSPIRATION I'm currently very into Appalachian furniture, which I'm reading about a lot for a new project.

HOME MAKES ME FEEL Safe. I live in a small space and feel cuddled by it.

MOST PRIZED POSSESSION A couple of vintage Anaïs Nin books that were given to me as a gift.

FAVOURITE MUSEUM TO VISIT LACMA in LA. There is always something to look at and now that there is a new building it adds an extra layer of wanting to go there.



BATHROOM

The fittings were already in place, but the gentle green tiles softened the gold finishes. Tiles in Shade, Heath Ceramics



BEDROOM

Roman likes to use blue whenever possible as a nod to the many colours of the Montana skies.

Mills upholstered bed, BDDW. Bedding, Commune x Hamburg House, Custom ottoman, Classic Design. Rug, Doris Leslie Blau