

# WINTER'S ESSENCE, ALPINE STYLE

Pristine white slopes, Gucci gondolas, and Michelin-star dining define the ultimate luxury in Courchevel 1850's winter paradise

BY PALLAVI PASRICHA



**H**orse-drawn carriages, a twinkling Christmas tree, snow-lined streets, and snow-capped mountains—it feels like I have stepped into a storybook. This is the charm of Courchevel 1850, a luxury ski resort tucked in the French Alps. The highest of the six mountain villages in Courchevel, it offers the oomph factor and turns up the luxury quotient quite a few notches. Over the last decade, it has attracted skiers with ever-increasing budgets from around the world. The best part? It feels like Christmas all winter.

I check into a five-bedroom, chalet-style apartment in Six Senses Residences & Spa Courchevel. I find myself on the balcony each morning gazing at a white world around me.

Apart from a large drawing room, kitchen, and dining area, what I love the most is sitting down for breakfast in my pyjamas. Say bye to breakfast buffet and hello to a private chef who will come and prepare a feast each morning!

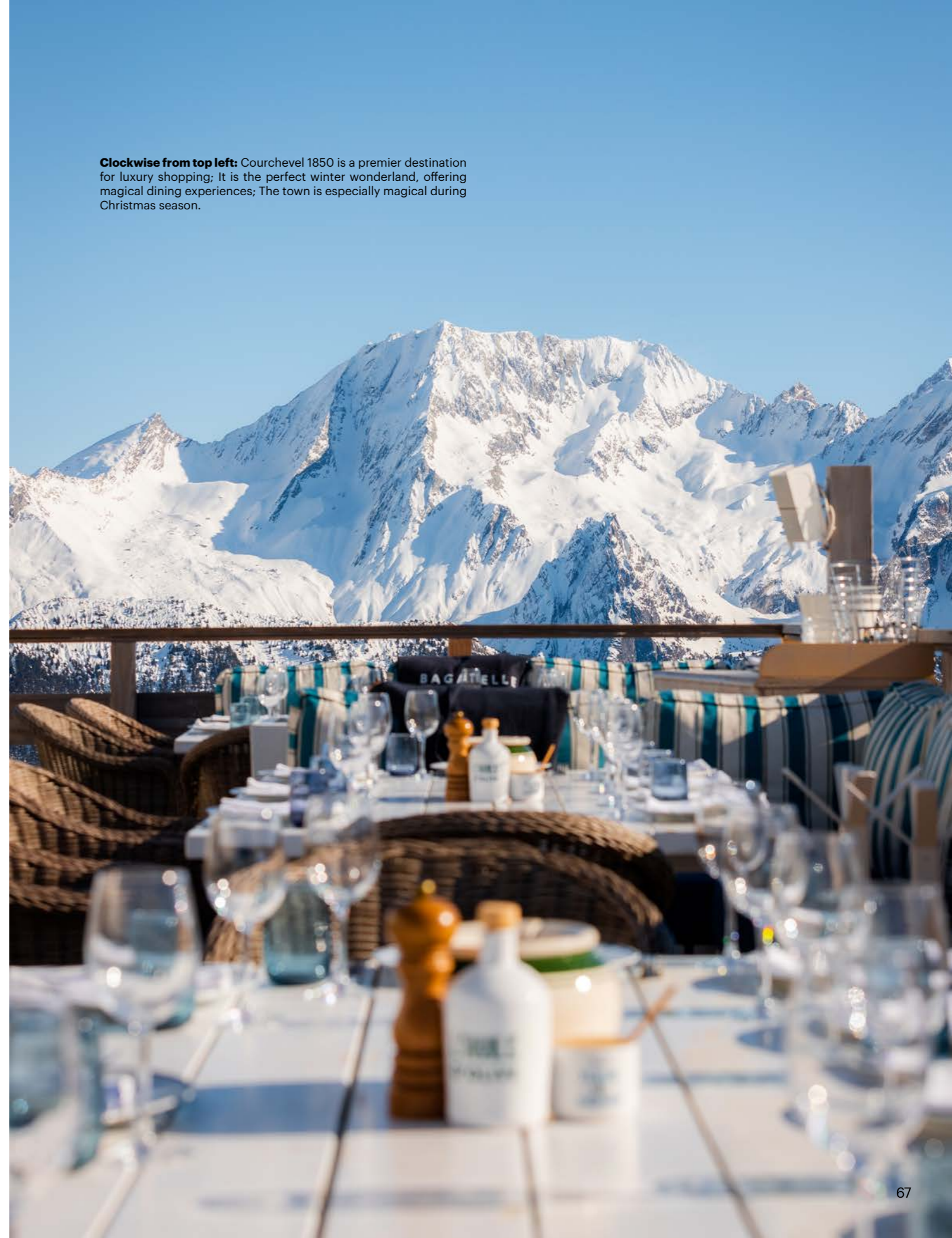
Little do I know this is just the tip of the iceberg in the lavish experiences that follow over the next few days in one of the world's most glamorous ski resorts.

The next day, I walk around Avenue Montagne, lined with glorious names like Gucci, Prada, Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Dior, Hermès, and more. With over 40 luxury designer brands, offering winter wear like ski suits and jackets (that one cannot pick up anywhere else), Courchevel 1850 is the ultimate haven for shopaholics.

If there is luxury shopping, how can gourmet food be far behind? Home to 47 hotels that are the epitome of luxury, Courchevel 1850 has five palace hotels fit to host royalty—I dined in some of them.

My first meal at Il Rifugio, an Italian restaurant on the slopes, sets the tone for more such indulgent experiences. Besides seven Michelin Star restaurants, Courchevel 1850 is home to fine dining venues and fun restaurants that liven up the experience with a different energy. At La Ferme Saint-Amour, where I dine one evening, the music gets louder with each passing hour and live music performance lends an extra flavour to my decadent cheese fondue.

My last meal at another two-Michelin star restaurant—Sylvestre Wahid, is special because here, chef Wahid combines French and Pakistani flavours. It sounds odd to me but as the meal begins, I understand how beautifully he has crafted the dishes. The flavours are impeccable—there is Crab with Gold Caviar and Timut Pepper, Truffle French Onion Soup that is distilled tableside and blue lobster, grilled to perfection. It is a cosy 15-seater space at Hotel Les Grandes Alpes.



**Clockwise from top left:** Courchevel 1850 is a premier destination for luxury shopping; It is the perfect winter wonderland, offering magical dining experiences; The town is especially magical during Christmas season.



**Clockwise from left:** Courchevel 1850 is part of Les 3 Vallées, the largest expanse of ski slopes in the world; It is a destination where Christmas dreams truly come to life; In the heart of the town, skiers can take one of 50 lifts to access 102 pistes, from beginner-friendly to expert-level runs.

I walk where skiers donned in chic designer ski suits and jackets are going up the slopes in Gucci-branded gondola lifts. I wear my ski suit and get onto a gondola to a bunny slope called Magic Carpet, where beginners learn. I am skiing for the first time and inevitably keep falling. But I keep trying till I can manage to go a few metres.

For ski enthusiasts, Courchevel is a dream as it has 102 ski slopes spanning 150kms. First timers can hire instructors who will make sure that you can zip down the slopes with ease.

Besides skiing, there are plenty of other snow-related activities such as mountain biking, snowshoeing and dog sledging. I enjoy sliding down the slopes in a tiny toboggan—it is easy to learn how to turn it perfectly and navigate tunnels.

Courchevel 1850 is a place that makes winter and Christmas dreams come true. If you happen to be there during Christmas, this year, make sure you meet Santa Claus and attend the Christmas Eve party. There will be a tea party for children and a ski school torchlight descent where 300 instructors will glide down the slopes. On New Year's Eve, bring out your dancing shoes as there will be a DJ and spectacular fireworks at midnight.

Surrounded by the vibe of whimsical luxury, I cannot think of a better way to bring in 2025. 🎄

