

glass

Sustainable ski trip

Glass finds in Lagació a fine example of why you should make your skiing holiday an eco-friendly one



Whatever slopes we choose, off-piste or on, most of us skiing aficionados (or amateurs – pick your label) have our own designated favourite resort of which we pay a yearly visit. But as the global warming signs gather pace and frequent our news channels more and more regularly, is it not about time we all chose a resort that adhered to the sustainability rulebook, in an eco-friendly-abiding manner, (albeit with a bit of the deluxe thrown in)? These types of ski resort are not – as they once were – a rare find, but are in the manifold and popping up all over the world, each with their own character and a strong allegiance to sustainability. Lagació Mountain Residence is a wonderful model for such intentions.

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To set the scene, Lagació resides in Italy's exquisite South Tyrolean Dolomites, in the 35 km-long Alta Badia. Here you find a land where the age-old Ladin culture is still much alive and maintained through ancient religious rites, folk customs, local dishes and mythical legends, where its own Ladin language is still spoken by some 40,000 natives in the Dolomite region. The Dolomite mountains were made a World Heritage UNESCO site in 2009 and it is hard to conceive that these, in their 3,000 feet of grand terrain, were once part of the Thetys Ocean. The omnipotence of nature here and the respect Lagació gives it throughout its philosophy and key principles is both obvious and impressive. It's hard not to spend hours staring at what nature has created: alpine pastures and intricate ravines down mountains that slice apart green hills and blue sunny skies.

And the skiing? Alta Badia is one of the most renowned and extremely well-groomed skiing quarters the world knows, boasting take-your-breath-away (literally) downhill runs for all skiing levels, with more than sufficient amounts of snow running well into April. Access to the slopes is literally next door to Lagació and a snowboard fun park and three toboggan runs will also ensure maximum amounts of fun-fuelled activities. It's unquestionably both a haven and heaven for skiers and snowboarders.

Lagació itself, complements nature's magnificence in a loyal fashion. The architecture and modern design of the Lagació Mountain Residence mirrors the owners, the Canins family's desire to run a sustainable resort on ultra-low energy. The resort has a certified standard A CasaClima (energy certificate) which is designed to actively save energy and promote healthy living in comfort. The compact design and high level of thermal insulation (where little heat can escape before it is reused) characterise Lagació's commitment to sustainability as well as its impeccable use of solar energy. Sophisticated technical and electrical systems have also been installed so that energy requirements for heating are severely reduced. In addition, many natural materials have been used in the construction of Lagació where possible – slate, local wood, timber from old beams, loam, loden and linen fabrics dominate the interior design.

The water from the Canins' own natural Spring is also revitalised via the Grander technique, which re-purifies water, without adding or taking anything away from it. It is clear that extra measures have been taken where possible to ensure Lagació is as environmentally-friendly as possible, yet these don't distract from the ambience, convenience, comfort and freedom of the place. This is in addition to the Canins' heartfelt effort to push us closer together with the natural world, which on the whole, we've not been good at paying sufficient attention to thus far.

Light floods in through panoramic windows upon warm-coloured walls in the chic bedrooms and fossils from the Dolomite region adorn the entrance of each apartment, which come with a modern bathroom and a well-equipped kitchenette for home-cooked meals. The five types of apartments which vary in size (from 42sq m to 88sq m) are named after five fossil types from the St Kassian region and are furnished in larch, Swiss pine and spruce. In the mornings, after you've watched the sun stream into your bedroom, breakfast awaits. The breakfast room at Lagació ensures that all guests taste only the finest natural produce from the South Tyrolean Dolomites and also offers stunning views over the Dolomite mountains.

Importantly (we deem) there is also a spa, La Palsa, where a Finnish sauna and steam room awaits extremely energetic skiers. Massages, wellness therapies and beauty treatments are also available for those who crave some pampering after an exhausting day on the snow. You can also enjoy specialty South Tyrolean wines at the bar-cum-lounge as well as range of warming herbal teas, thirst-quenching fresh juices and healthy snacks. Or you can venture out of Legació's quarters and enjoy your leisure-time in the nearby little town of St Kassian, surrounded by the mountain peaks of Conturines, Lavarella and Lagazuoi. Here you can shop at the small stylish boutiques or feed the appetite you worked up on the slopes with the culinary delights on offer from two Michelin-starred restaurants, St. Hubertus and La Siriola. Certainly, you won't be short of things to do, ways to recuperate and views to appreciate.

Legació certainly honours a love of the surrounding South Tyrolean history and a dedication to the traditions of Ladin culture. But more than that, it has provided in its entire being, a role model for a sustainable ski resort that holds environmentally-friendly methods of energy use and water use in extremely high esteem. Legacio neatly puts forth an appreciation of and a respect for the surrounding natural world – an integral part of their philosophy – that complements rather well, the snow-sports culture that we all know and love.

Rates vary from €140 - €260 for a small apartment per day for 2 people and from €400 - €700 for a large apartment per day for 4 people, depending on the time of season.

www.lagacio.com