

# A revisit to Retro

The A-Frame Club reimagines 1970s  
ski culture in Winter Park.

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**Peak Chic**

The A-Frame Club's cluster of custom-built cabins blends 70s ski culture nostalgia with classic mountain-town coziness to create the hippest of hygge hideaways.





As the season's first snowflakes make their descent, they do more than signal winter's arrival; they stir our collective nostalgia.

Ski culture in Colorado doesn't just rely on fresh powder—it hinges on an enduring love affair with its golden era: the 1970s—a time of wooden skis, après parties in mountain lodges, and A-frame cabins. And if you think A-frames are a thing of the past, think again. Enter the A-Frame Club in Winter Park, a timely collaboration between Denver's Zeppelin Development and Portland's Skylab Architecture. They've orchestrated an escape that transcends the typical mountain lodging, birthing a resort that is both a vintage treasure and

a future classic. Right on cue, too. Because as the mercury dips and snowflakes start appearing on our weather apps, we begin to yearn for escapes that offer more than just a comfortable bed and a view. Sterile slope-side hotels be damned; give us a place packed with personality.

Zeppelin Development, the creative force behind The Drive-Inn in the San Luis Valley and The Western Hotel in Ouray, knew it was time to bring back the authentic allure of A-frames with a contemporary twist.

Now in its second winter season, the A-Frame Club does more than keep you warm and well-fed (though it does that, too); it rekindles the spirit of 1970s ski culture without the whiff of mothballs. It's where après-ski is a state of mind, not a social media spectacle.

#### ALPINE CULTURE REVIVAL

A-frames, those iconic triangular cabins that took the post-war era by storm, inspire the design. You might remember them from family trips or vintage ski films. At the A-Frame Club, this nostalgia coexists with new-age luxuries in a property featuring 31 modular cabins set amid mature evergreens along the Fraser River. Just a stone's throw from both the ski slopes and a killer post-slopes scene, the club's restaurant and bar repurpose a historic saloon in Winter Park's historic Old Town neighborhood, adding another layer to the aesthetic while stoking the flames of the cabin life fever that's been building since the pandemic, collecting hashtags and admirers along the way.



Everything here serves a dual purpose: aesthetic and function. The letter-shaped cabins' wing-tipped metal roofs aren't just photo-backdrop fodder; they're set at a calculated slope, marrying the building to its mountainous backdrop. Soaring windows let the light shine in and connect the indoors with the out, and sliding glass doors open to secluded back patios. Even the pathways connecting these cabins feel like something out of a snow globe, cocooning you as they lead you through a hexagonal arrangement that replicates a snowflake pattern across the terrain. Each stand-alone structure faces the periphery of the property, with views so serene they could be Bob Ross paintings.

The designers here use "nostalgia" as a compass, not just a catchphrase. Taking cues from classic ski ads, the 475-square-foot interiors mix cedar planks and natural leather with muted hues, mid-century motifs, and Noguchi-style lighting. Vintage furnishings make you wonder if they were snagged from an old ski lodge before it realized what it had, while patterned rugs and geometric art lean heavily into the 1970s aesthetic. But don't worry, the vibe is all updated.

Free-standing custom Malm fireplaces in bright hues radiate warmth and charm into the cabin on command, and the lofted bedrooms offer soaking tubs for a soothing reprieve. On the main floor, there's also a kitchenette to keep you caffeinated in the morning and satiated on the slopes. It's solitude with style, isolation without loneliness. And, yes, your pup can come, too.

## APRÈS ALL DAY

In the property's common spaces—the bar and restaurant housed in a historic saloon—the A-Frame Club crafts an atmosphere reminiscent of a golden era mountain lodge. Zeppelin worked with Skylab and Denver-based Wunder Werkz to inform the design, where a deep-rooted relationship with the past informs more than just the architecture. Leather mixes with cedar, hanging pothos plants breathe life into the space. The restaurant offers French alpine fare that's a well-earned indulgence after a day spent cutting fresh tracks. Because, let's be honest, the essence of any ski trip often boils down to one thing—the après.

The A-Frame Club is part of an architectural lineage that spans the globe and traverses epochs. From the traditional farmhouses in Ja-

### Design Insights for the Snug Life

Step into the A-Frame Club's cozy cabins and find yourself whisked back to the golden age of alpine escapades. *Opposite:* On the ground floor, the Maharam Rug and Malm fireplace, complemented by a pull-out sofa draped in Pendleton-style blankets, craft the perfect setting for a relaxed day indoors. *Above:* Ascend the steep, ladder-like stairs to the sun-drenched loft, a cozy haven of comfort with plush robes, slippers, and luxurious linens, ideal for unwinding after a day in the winter wonderland. End your day of snowy adventures with a soothing soak in the Onsen-style tub—bonus points for packing your own bubble bath.

pan's Shirakawa-go to mid-century A-frame innovations in the United States, these geometric wonders were more than fads. They've been sites of practicality, offering both protection from heavy snowfalls and communal spaces that breathe life into interpersonal connections. In 2023, the A-Frame Club became a chapter in this rich, triangular history.

So why Winter Park, and why now? Perhaps Zeppelin Development sensed that in a world leaning into its digital future, people crave the tactile, the authentic, and the evocative. Or maybe they just wanted to create an extraordinary place for you to hang your ski boots and enjoy a well-earned cocktail, contemplating a mountain sunset in the land of the purple mountain majesties. Either way, the A-Frame Club serves up an opportunity to revisit the past without forgoing the comforts of the present. It's the retro sanctuary you didn't know you were seeking, but once you find it, you might just decide that this form of nostalgia feels remarkably like home.

### A FRAME CLUB

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## The man on the mountain

Nic Weber, the A-Frame Club's culinary director, is no stranger to accolades and Michelin stars, having served stints in the kitchens at places like Joël Robuchon in Las Vegas and Atelier Crenn in San Francisco. But it's the rustic allure of wood-fired cooking and Colorado's local bounty that drew him back to the mountains. We caught up with him in his culinary lair to get the inside scoop. Have a taste:

### Where do you source your food?

"When it's in season, we crush it with fresh produce—Colorado's little remote towns have the best farmers markets. During the winter, we have to get creative—and we go local whenever we can, incorporating ingredients from little mom-and-pop companies into the menu. Not just the ranchers—the little goat milk farmers, too."

### What inspires the menu?

"It is a very simple menu, but we try to pack as much flavor into every step of the process as we can. It's a balanced act. We have big, meaty dishes like a huge bone-in short rib, and we also have a grilled veggie medley. Cooking with the wood fire ties everything together."

### Have you always been drawn to fiery techniques?

"I've cooked in super-fancy Michelin-starred kitchens, but my real joy was what I was cooking on my days off. I would drive out to the desert with a bunch of vegetables and some skirt steaks and build a fire pit. So when I developed the menu here, I wanted to focus on elevated comfort food."

### What are your comfiest dishes?

"For me, it's the French onion soup and the lamb chop. When I think 'cozy,' I want something warm and filling. I want a soup made with marrow bones and onions grilled over a wood fire, or Colorado lamb prepared sous vide, then cooked over coals."

### Who's coming to dinner?

"We're a magnet for tourists, who just two years ago couldn't find fine dining in towns like Winter Park. Locals love us, too—we have a list of regulars that we call to invite in when a big snowstorm delays our out-of-town diners. They love to share stories about when this place was their mountain-side hot dog joint. There's a lot of history in this space."



#### Dig In

Colorado lamb cooked over coals and served with rich umami king trumpets. *Inset:* Vegetable medley.



# Alpine Agenda

If you don't want to leave your cabin, we don't blame you. But if you do, you'll find plenty to do.

## Venture Out Fest

DEC. 2

■ Celebrate the season's start with demos, tours, an on-mountain treasure hunt, and tons of free activities throughout the day. Try out skis, snowboards, splitboards, and avalanche gear, and then head to Beacon Park for rescue demonstrations. Oh, and definitely sick around for gear giveaways. Hone your skills with free, guided trips from Ski + Ride School experts. Meet professional sit-skier Trevor Kennison, then rub paws with Patrol Pups. Gather 'round Red Chair Plaza for live music, warm up by the bonfire, and then bask in the glow of the fireworks show. [winterparkresort.com](http://winterparkresort.com)

## First Day of Winter Celebration

DEC. 21

■ 'Tis the season to pray for snow, and Winter Park's premier wine bar is doing just that with a special après party complete with gear and wine giveaways,

champagne sabering, live DJs, and more fun.

[adventuresdecanted.com](http://adventuresdecanted.com)

## Torchlight Parade

DEC. 24

■ Experience Winter Park's beloved holiday tradition. Snap a pic with Santa, get toasty by the bonfire, and watch torch-bearing skiers and riders descend Lower Hughes with flares in hand to light up the night. Cap it all off with a Christmas Eve dinner at Sunspot. [winterparkresort.com](http://winterparkresort.com)

## Feel the Burn Weekends

JAN. 12-14, FEB. 16-18,

MAR. 15-17, APR. 5-7

■ Choose your adventure at Winter Park's specialty clinics: Trees and Steeps for navigating hidden powder stashes and challenging slopes, the Bumps clinic for mogul mastery, or the Breakthrough Women's Clinic for a female-focused experience. [winterparkresort.com](http://winterparkresort.com)

## Fire & Ice Fest

FEB. 10

■ The longest-running professional ski race in the country serves as the signature fundraiser for the National Sports Center for the Disabled. Expect three days of skiing, racing, corporate challenges, kids' snowplow sprints, and more. [nscd.org](http://nscd.org)

## Mountaintop Après

4 P.M., THURS.-SAT. (WEEKLY)

■ Catch the gondola up to Sunspot for free and relish in great live music, yummy lite bites, and the crazy alpenglow along the Continental Divide. [winterparkresort.com](http://winterparkresort.com)

## Après Party at A-Frame Club

4-6 P.M. SAT. (WEEKLY)

■ This is where the cool crowd gathers. Swing by the A-Frame Club for a post-slopes patio party featuring killer tunes from top DJs and a worthy menu to match. [aframeclub.com](http://aframeclub.com)

## Insiders Guide to Winter Park

Don't like driving in the snow? Take the Winter Park Express train departing at 7 a.m. Friday through Sunday from Union Station, arriving at the base of Winter Park Ski Area, and departing for Denver at 4 p.m. with the option to book one-way or round-trip tickets. [amtrak.com/winterparkepress](http://amtrak.com/winterparkepress)

Keep the best powder to yourself with Winter Park's brand-new Early Up, granting you exclusive access before the mountain opens. [winterparkresort.com](http://winterparkresort.com)

Hot Sulphur Springs is perfect for unwinding from a day on the slopes. With 16 mineral-infused pools scattered throughout the property, you can find your own serene paradise, or book a rejuvenating massage. [hotsulphursprings.com](http://hotsulphursprings.com)

Ski Granby offers a less crowded alternative for skiers of all levels. The mountain also lights up for night skiing, adding a neon glow-stick touch to your turns. [granbyranch.com](http://granbyranch.com)