

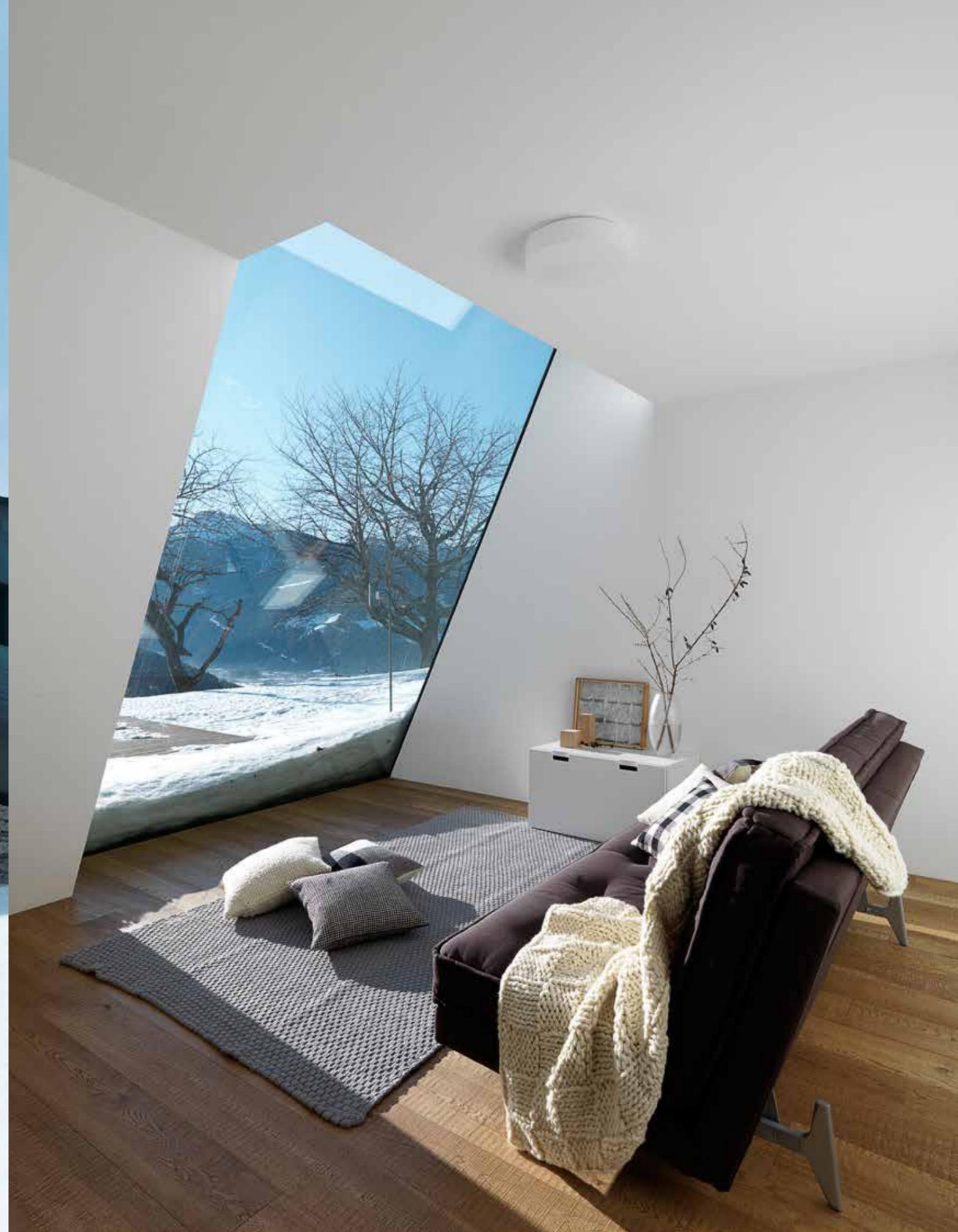
ROOM WITH A VIEW

A striking new mountain home on the site of a 400-year-old farmhouse proves that embracing the future need not mean abandoning the past

Words **JENNIFER GOULDING** Photography **MADS MOGENSEN** Production **MARTINA HUNGLINGER**



Exterior The house sits snugly between a separate garage and a sauna, on the site of a former farmhouse
Guest room/play room A vast floor-to-ceiling window makes the most of winter light. Try The Wool Company for chunky knitted throws
Stockist details on p191 ►





Entrance The combination of old and new is evident – stone recovered from the 400-year-old farmhouse that stood previously on the site is paired with wall shingles typical of South Tyrolean architecture and expanses of glass
Dining area The table was designed by the homeowner. The 'DSR' plastic side chairs, by Charles and Ray Eames (1950), are available from Vitra
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This kind of architecture is unusual in our rural area, and of course there was all sorts of feedback about that. But the house fits so well into the countryside that it is inconspicuous, and hardly noticeable from afar. It's as if it has always been there,' explains Claudia Brunner, who together with her husband, Kurt, and the award-winning architects Gerd Bergmeister and Michaela Wolf, has created this exceptional home in a small village in Italy's South Tyrol.

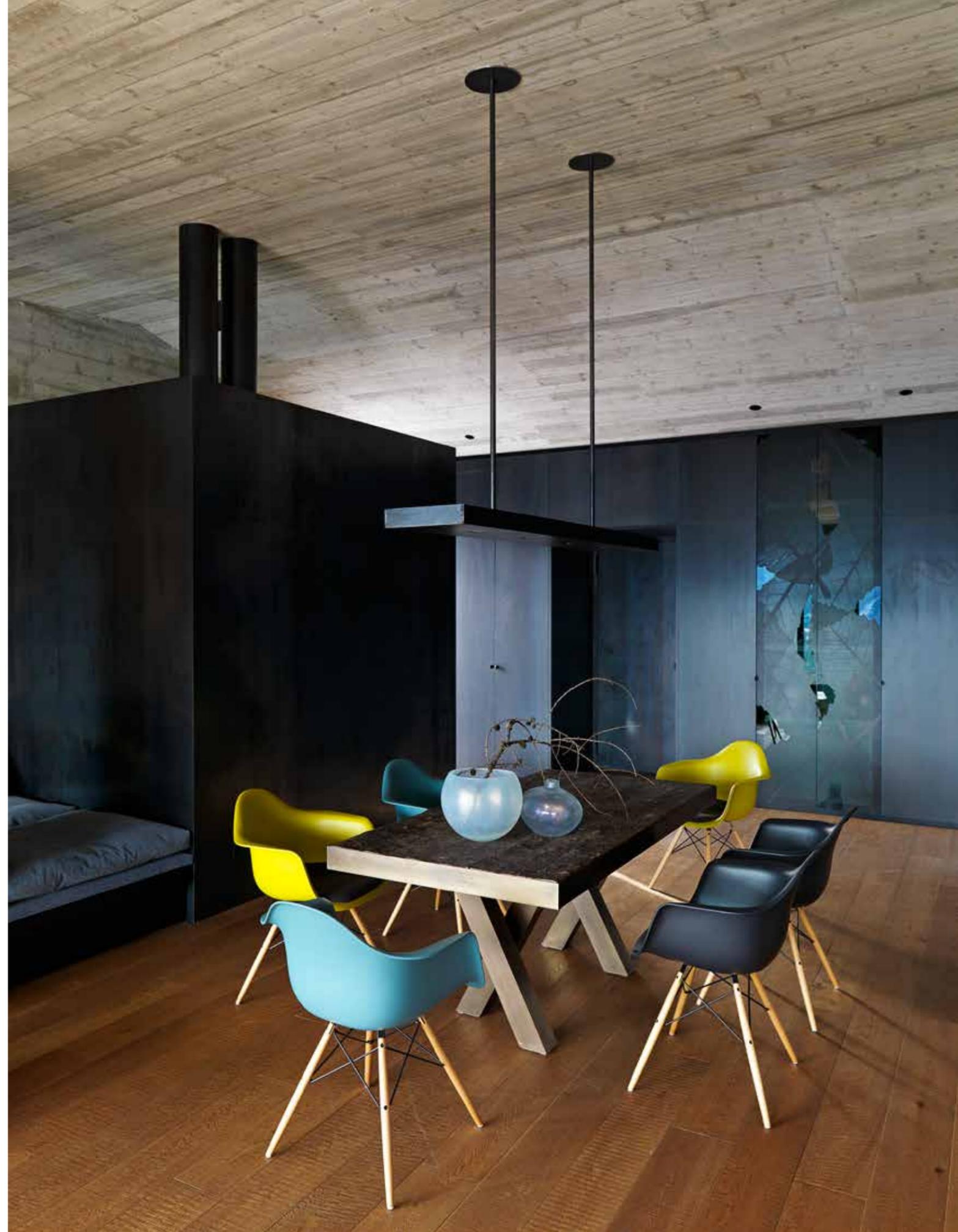
Until recently it was the site of a 400-year-old farmhouse that belonged to Kurt's parents, but had been unoccupied since the 1950s and had deteriorated beyond repair. 'Because it's a beautiful location, with a wonderful view, we decided to knock down the old house and create something new,' says Kurt. 'Our priority was to create a timeless, comfortable family home, which we could use for holidays,' adds Claudia. But the pair had another, more challenging aim for the design: 'We wanted to take traditional elements of the area's rustic architecture and give them new interpretations.'

This objective is realised in the very bones of the building – a combination of wood and stone recovered from the farmhouse and sourced from the local area – while the roof and wall shingles are typical of South Tyrolean architecture, plus there's concrete and plenty of glass. It is a potent mix of old and new which, thanks to the architects' skill, offers visual stimulation and architectural harmony in equal parts. Inside, a wood-burning stove, designed by

Gerd and Michaela and featuring antique tiles, takes centre stage, as it would have in the old farmhouse. In the past, smoke from the stove would have blackened the nearby walls, so the kitchen is painted matt black, which looks refreshingly modern when combined with the more mellow textures and colours in the room.

The small dining area, with its traditional wood panelling and furniture, acts as a foil for the rest of the interior, which is clean and minimalist so as to create a sense of calm and avoid distracting from the view. Furniture has been selected carefully – design classics and notable contemporary pieces – or made especially for the house. The relatively small selection of materials used for the floors, ceilings and walls creates cohesion, while a palette of colours found in the surrounding landscape lessens the distinction between the outside and inside.

Although it is brilliantly designed, there's no sense of preciousness. 'The house is for our family,' says Claudia. 'In summer we love to go into the nearby forest. We spend time in the garden, the children play in the paddling pool and we invite friends over. Winter can be very cold so we spend more time in the house. At that time of year, the important places are the living room with the sofa around the wood-burning stove, and, of course, the sauna.' That's not to say Claudia isn't proud of the aesthetic achievement. 'We wanted to marry mountain style with modern style, and Gerd and Michaela totally fulfilled our ideas,' she says. 'We're really pleased with the result.' ►





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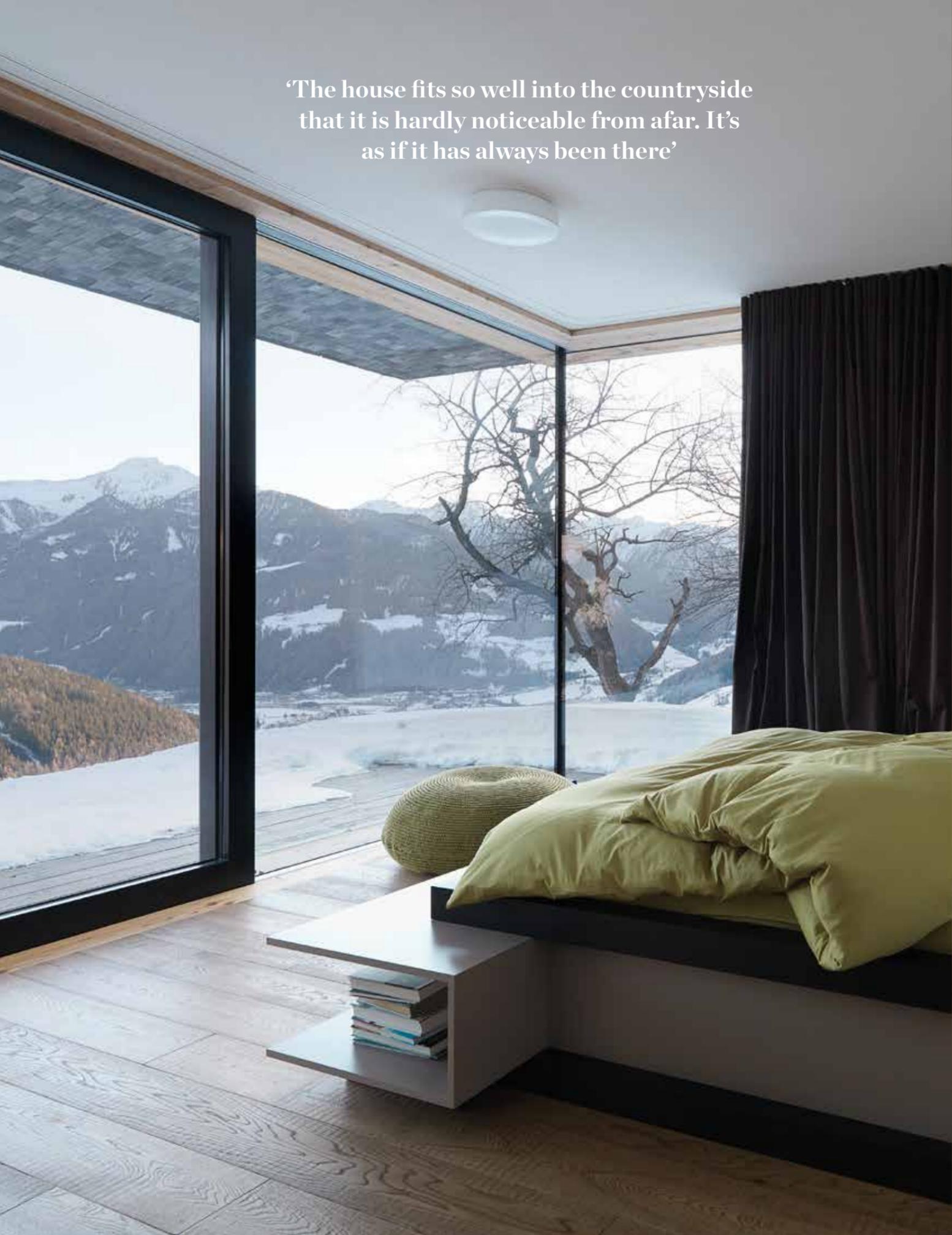
Living area The wood-burning stove, which incorporates antique tiles, was designed by the homeowners’ architects. The kitchen (beyond) is painted matt black, with sleek, unobtrusive units by Bulthaup
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Dining area A second, wood-paneled dining area is a small nod to the past, giving the house a functional but playful feel
Living area A cossetting tan leather ‘Egg’ armchair by Arne Jacobsen for Fritz Hansen is paired with an elegant L-shaped sofa designed by the homeowner
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Bedroom The homeowner designed the bed and cleverly incorporated storage; for something similar, try Poliform
Bathroom The ‘Flat D System’ shower is from Agape, as is the ‘Vieques’ steel bathtub, with a teak shelf and backrest designed by Patricia Urquiola
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