



Gender Studies
Ford designers are focusing on women **D11**

OFF DUTY

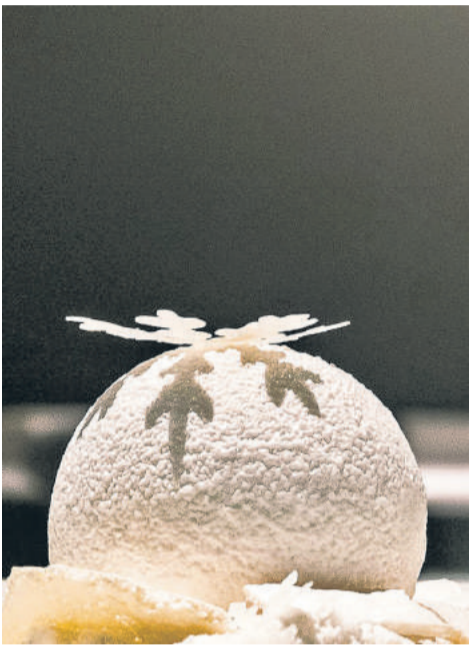
Some Pig!
The beauty of handmade holiday ornaments **D7**



FASHION | FOOD | DESIGN | TRAVEL

STREET STYLING

Saturday/Sunday



Why Ski When You Can Eat?

Courmayeur, in the Italian Alps, draws as many Epicureans as skiers come winter. We find at least eight delicious reasons to work up an appetite



CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF TAGLIATELLE Clockwise from top: Visitors at the Skyway Monte Bianco viewing platform in Courmayeur, a ski town in Italy; appetizers at the Michelin-star Petit Royal restaurant; Super G hotel, home to two restaurants overseen by Milan chef Andrea Berton; spaghetti alla carbonara at Rifugio Maison Vieille, perched at the top of a chairlift; a 'snowball dessert.'

By JAY CHESHES



IN MY FIRST day skiing in Courmayeur, in the Italian Alps, freezing rain turned the slopes into a vertical ice rink. After a few slippery, harrowing runs, I tucked into Rifugio Maison Vieille, a cozy chalet restaurant at the top of a chairlift, whose outdoor deck offers sweeping views in clear weather. Inside its wood-beamed dining room, fellow skiers taking refuge from the elements dug into bowls of creamy polenta and fresh tagliatelle topped with wild boar ragout. The forecast predicted similar washout conditions all week. Luckily, there was plenty more eating to do.

Courmayeur, both a town and a ski resort, boasts nearly as many ambitious, full-service restaurants as it does lifts on the slopes. Even on bright sunny days with powdery trails, the big question tends to be, "What's for

lunch?" The village, nestled in a snug valley on the south slope (the Italian side) of Mont Blanc, Europe's highest peak, is a typically sleepy mountain town for much of the year with around 3,000 full-time residents. But when the ski season kicks into high gear, its restaurants, bars and cafes all come roaring to life. It's a favorite winter escape for residents of Italy's fashion capital, Milan, a straight two-hour shot up the highway. As the new ski season began last December, an outpost of Langosteria, one of that city's top raw bars, opened up for its second year on the slopes at the Super G boutique hotel. This winter, the chilled seafood will come from a new team, under top Milan chef Andrea Berton, who's making his debut in Courmayeur.

As I slurped down a few oysters outside under a heat lamp one afternoon, ski instructors in bright red Emporio Armani parkas led groups of kids down a nearby bunny slope. Meanwhile, posters in town were promoting a public appearance from another star chef, Davide Oldani, of restaurant D'O just outside Milan, taking advantage of Courmayeur's captive audience to promote a new book he'd written on women in contemporary cooking. "This is Milano, winter Milano," he said, when we met up later that week.

For the urbane crowds in from the city on winter weekends, Courmayeur

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Inside



A PENDANT FULL OF SCENT

A fragrant bag. A perfumed pin. The new 'wearable fragrance' accessories **D3**



GLASS ENTIRELY FULL

Nine holiday cocktail recipes to leave you feeling optimistic **D10**



SPACE PROGRAMS

Turn unused areas into bars, nurseries and more with these design schemes **D8**

PLAID NEWS TRAVELS FAST
The latest word on tartan pants—and how to style them **D4**



DESIGN & DECORATING



A Show of Handmades

Resist the resin squirrels and polyester Elsas in favor of these 12 artisanal holiday ornaments from around the world

A CRAFTIER CHRISTMAS 1. Holiday Decorations in Limoges porcelain by Shelley Simpson and Jacqueline Hunt, \$43, mudastralia.com; 2. Ibu Handwoven Ornaments, from Colombia, \$40 for four, ibumovement.com; 3. Sweet Embroidered Ornaments, from Afghanistan, \$52 for three, noondaycollection.com; 4. Green Blue Nutcracker Ornament, hand-painted, \$13, enchantedhome.com; 5. Space-ship Ornament, hand-blown and -painted in Poland, \$50, johnderian.com; 6. Snowdrift Candy Cane, hand-blown and

-finished, \$75, simonpearce.com; 7. Red Clay Piggy Ornament, from Mexico, \$25, stfrank.com; 8. MoMA Rainbow Sugar Holiday Ornament Set, handblown in Poland, \$30, store.moma.org; 9. Wool-Felt Sand Dollar Ornament by Michelle Provençal, \$45, thirdleeco.com; 10. Wood Bauhaus Ornaments by Johannes Gabriel, from Germany, \$160 for 12, ameico.com; 11. Hand-Painted Ceramic Ornament, \$50, katescialabba.com; 12. Terrain Zinc Greenhouse Ornament, from India, \$16, shopterrain.com

F. MARTIN RAMM/THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, STYLING BY ANNIE CARDENAS

FRESH PICK

Aren't You Clever?

Ingenious design ideas we felt compelled to share



Strong-Arm Your Sofa

You know you do it: Court calamity by balancing beverages on the arms of upholstered furniture because the coffee table is just...too...far. Newport Beach, Calif., designer Denise Morrison's inventiveness can help you feel less anxious about your errant elbows. Her Sofa Cufflink hooks onto your favorite resting place to provide a steady perch for coffee or cocoa, with enough extra room for a book or phone (assuming the arm is sufficiently level to tempt you to use it as a table in the first place). Made of solid oak, the contraction—short on the inside, long on the outside—can be customized in five wood finishes and 18 arm widths, and its clean, unobtrusive lines complement most types of décor. From \$195, houseof-morrison.com

Look, Ma, No Vase

Confound the physicists in your life with this new take on a bud vase, in which single flowers appear to defy gravity. Designer Joe Matthews, of Woodinville, Wash., studio Tucker & Lark, reconceived the traditional vessel by flattening it into a convex marble disk. A thin rod skewers a stem of any thickness and fits into a small recess in the base's bowl. Water keeps blooms from peonies to poinsettias hydrated and doubles as a design element—the liquid's surface-tension causes it to pillow and create a light-reflecting dome. Available in black, gray and scientific-looking white. Solo Vase, \$40, solovase.com
—Rachel Wolfe



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