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Travel Hotels Snow Region New Zealand

The ultimate ski house in Wanaka

By Snowsbest - October 19, 2017



A thing of such beauty

There are times when my job as a travel journalist simply rocks. Those moments when the silver spoon you longed to be born with appears as if it was there all along. Though some would say as a white middle class female with a private school education and a Sydney north shore upbringing, that silver spoon was already well and truly lodged in my ivory teethered mouth. If it was I must have swallowed it.

Either way I have been given the key to The Dacha, a lake view shrine to architectural design in the ski town of Wanaka New Zealand, for four nights. It's not silver, in fact it's not a key at all, it's more a code because everything here is state of the art. As it should be when the property is \$8000 a night. Yes you read that right, but it sleeps 16 so all of a sudden it got more affordable, right?



The Dacha roof line with the mountain line

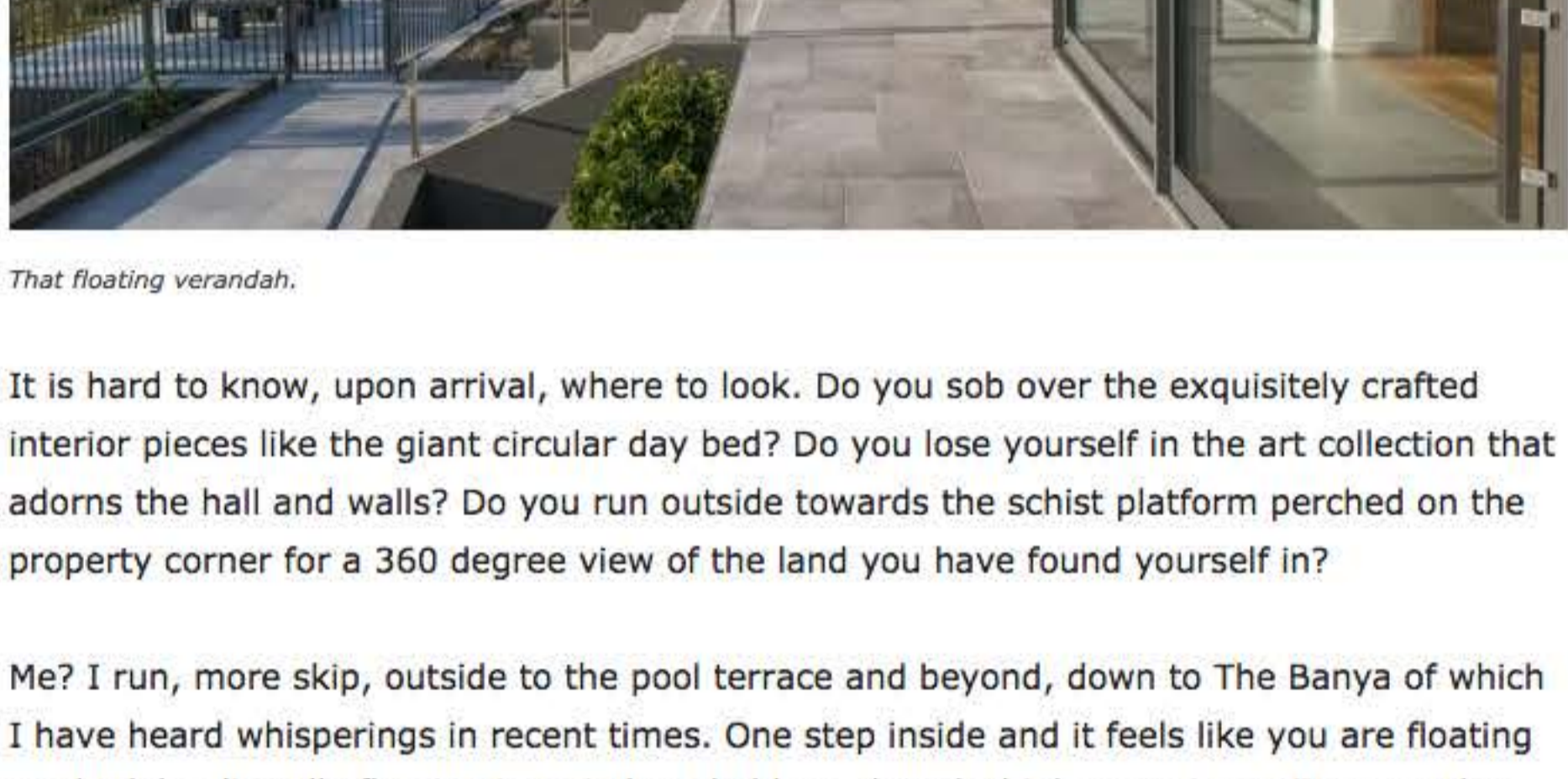
So now you know I'm not paying for this pleasure as even with my plus one it's still \$4000 a night out of my price range. Alas, refer to above. Simply rocks.

But back to my love affair with my new abode. I challenge anyone who gains access to the code to walk through the Corten steel clad front door and not fall to your knees at the view from within the living area. Actually the view from every lake facing room, including the West Wing (yes there's a wing) and the self contained cottage called The Banya on the property.

The entire dwelling, designed by Eliska Lewis Architects, has been created to capture the mountain ranges that thrust skyward and the silver lake from which they grow. The building is a fusion of cedar, schist, steel, glass, polished concrete with high ceilings and considered corners.

EVERYTHING HAS BEEN WELL THOUGHT OUT THEN THOUGHT OUT TWICE, FROM THE USB CHARGING PORTS IN BEDROOM RECESSES TO SHADING FOR DIFFERENT SEASONAL SUNS.

A 'floating verandah' gives guests an uninterrupted view at all times and there's even an indoor outdoor room should the wind pick up. Expect mammoth floor to ceiling glass walls with sliding doors that slip away to let the outside in. Also expect an energy conscious home with geothermal energy providing the power for the underfoot heating, hot water and beyond.



That floating verandah.

It is hard to know, upon arrival, where to look. Do you sob over the exquisitely crafted interior pieces like the giant circular day bed? Do you lose yourself in the art collection that adorns the hall and walls? Do you run outside towards the schist platform perched on the property corner for a 360 degree view of the land you have found yourself in?

Me? I run, more skip, outside to the pool terrace and beyond, down to The Banya of which I have heard whisperings in recent times. One step inside and it feels like you are floating on the lake, literally floating in a timber clad box, though think more Aman Retreats than the bows of the First Fleet. This mini retreat on the property is separate to the main house with a sense of privacy and perfect for couples. Though it was originally built by the Australian owners as a retreat space for their teenagers.



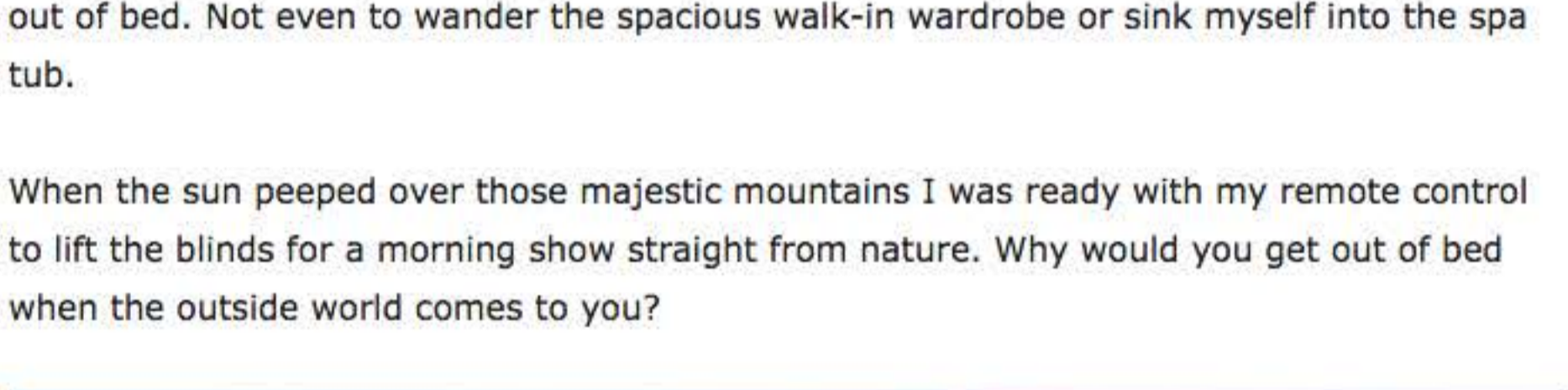
The Dacha main building is all connected by one long sweeping hallway that lights up as you walk through. Rooms are spaced off this hallway with the to die for laundry (hey, I loathe washing and even I want to wash all day in this space) and mammoth ski dry room, two garages at the back and a master suite, living-dining-kitchen (we'll get to that kitchen in a moment), indoor outdoor room towards the front. We haven't mentioned the guest wing with it's own lounge, also lake facing, and identical bedrooms with ensuites at the front and two styling bunk rooms at the back.

But about that kitchen. Like all good homes that come with a private chef - Ok, this one doesn't always come with a private chef but you can chat to the crew at [Touch of Spice](#) and they will arrange one for you too - there is a butler's kitchen. Think of it as a mini kitchen off the main kitchen, a sub kitchen, a galley, call it what you will. It's where our chef created a three course meal with matching wines without any disturbance to our party of four.



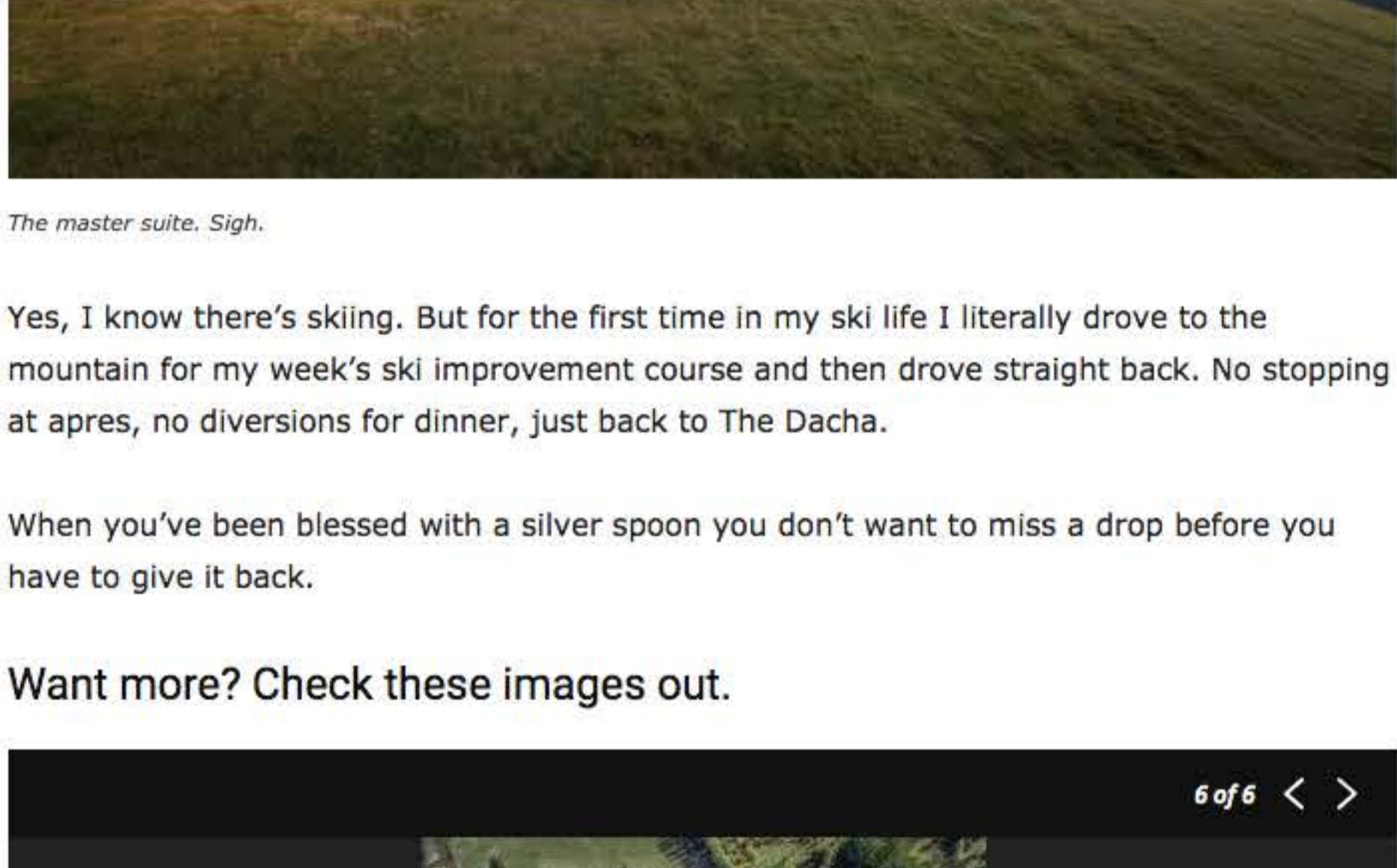
Though to be honest this sub kitchen would in any other home be impressive enough. But in The Dacha the main kitchen is open plan and guests can descend upon the breakfast bar or around the dining table or shout to you from the lounge chairs that they have sunk themselves into.

Of course if you prefer you could cook on the BBQ and in the pizza oven in the indoor outdoor room. You know, because you can.



It will not surprise you to know that I nabbed the Master Bedroom and then refused to get out of bed. Not even to wander the spacious walk-in wardrobe or sink myself into the spa tub.

When the sun peeped over those majestic mountains I was ready with my remote control to lift the blinds for a morning show straight from nature. Why would you get out of bed when the outside world comes to you?

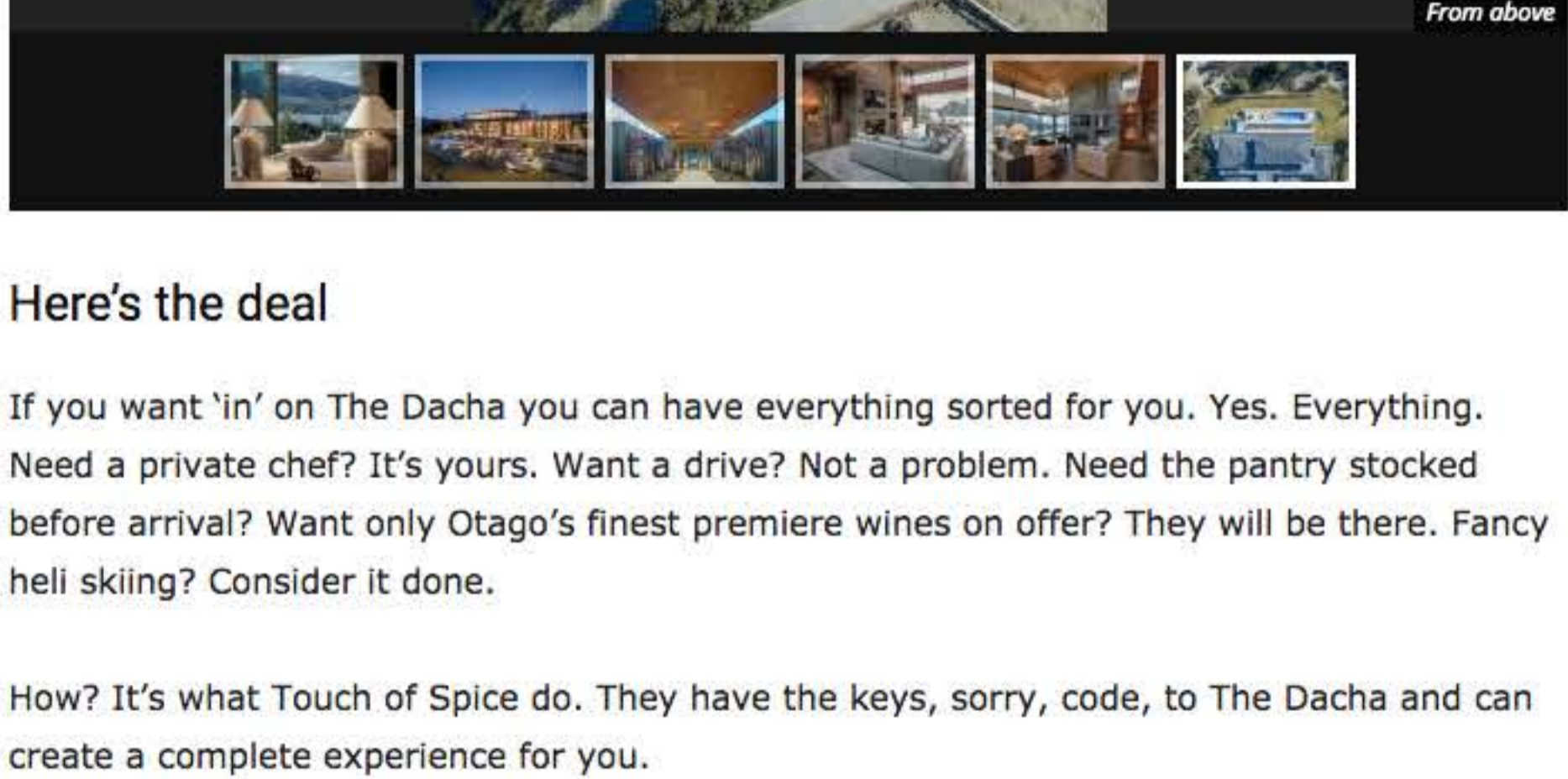


The master suite. Sigh.

Yes, I know there's skiing. But for the first time in my ski life I literally drove to the mountain for my week's ski improvement course and then drove straight back. No stopping at apres, no diversions for dinner, just back to The Dacha.

When you've been blessed with a silver spoon you don't want to miss a drop before you have to give it back.

Want more? Check these images out.



Here's the deal

If you want 'in' on The Dacha you can have everything sorted for you. Yes. Everything. Need a private chef? It's yours. Want a drive? Not a problem. Need the pantry stocked before arrival? Want only Otago's finest premiere wines on offer? They will be there. Fancy hell skiing? Consider it done.

How? It's what Touch of Spice do. They have the keys, sorry, code, to The Dacha and can create a complete experience for you.

Check [out their website](#) and tell them we sent you. You don't mind if I stay at The Banya while you're there, right?

Rachael Oakes-Ash was a guest of Touch of Spice

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 Rachael is the name behind @misssnowitall and the founder of SnowsBest.com. A long time journalist and ski writer, she's been published in ESPN Freeskiing, TIME, Powderhound, Sydney Morning Herald, Action Asia, Inside Sport, Australian Financial Review, Emirates Open Skies, Conde Nast and more.

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