

## Shelter Redefined in the Swiss Alps

### Description

Up in the Herens district of the Swiss Alps, perched like an outcropping of rock on a mountainside, a former cattle barn has found new life as a one-bedroom retreat.

Lausanne-based Personeni Raffaele Scharer Architects is responsible for the transformation, producing a tiny jewel box of a cabin that's rough-hewn and pristine all at once.

"The owners wanted a weekend house a sort of a hideaway cottage," said Dany Roukoz, spokesperson for the firm. "They asked for the simplest design possible – they didn't want any decoration and especially no picturesque ambiance."

They got it. Roukoz's firm completely dismantled the barn, salvaging its original larch beams, as well as its granite and schiste from the roof and foundation. The architects then carefully reassembled its parts into a first-floor living room, bath and kitchen, with a second-floor bedroom.

Its owner lives 120 kilometers away, and uses the home on weekends and extended stays as long as three weeks.

Redesign of the 1850 structure was never an issue. "The preservation of the outside aspect was fundamental, and the inside had to respond to the clients needs in terms of comfort," Roukoz said. "It was all about the sensations one is affected by when confronted to an extreme lifestyle and to extreme elements such as snow, cold, rain, altitude, sun and so forth."

For the architects, it was all a memorable experience. "The most exciting part was definitely the context, especially the silence and serenity that surrounded it," Roukoz said.

That's easy to see, and to feel.

For more on Personeni Raffaele Scharer Architects, go to <http://www.prsarch.ch/>

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