

# Amaru: Luke Edward Hall's latest venture takes him to the Swiss Alps

Marrying the Alpine location with a Peruvian menu from chef Claudia Canessa, Luke Edward Hall has transformed this restaurant into an eclectic and inviting space to share a meal with friends.

By Christabel Chubb

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Billal Taright

**L**uke Edward Hall is one of those unstoppably-creative people who can turn his hand to more or less any artistic endeavour and produce something wonderful. His CV could be the amalgamation of several people's: artist, illustrator and fashion, textile and interior design. He's often asked to collaborate with brands such as Rubelli, Diptyque and Ginori, which all have lines or products adorned with his freehand illustrations. His latest project, the interior design of a Peruvian restaurant in St Moritz, Switzerland, is the perfect embodiment of his style: fun, eclectic and deeply comfortable.



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The restaurant Amaru is attached to the Kulm hotel, which sits within the alps and has views to match its five star status. In the winter, visitors can take in the snow-capped peaks and enjoy the most luxurious of ski getaways. In summer, the snow melts to reveal a blissful backdrop of alpine grass and the glistening water of the St Moritz Lake. 'I had stayed there once before', says Luke. 'It was back in 2019 and I just fell in love with it. I love grand old [hotels](#) with an amazing history and this one has history by the bucket load'.



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The hotel dates back to 1856, and its founder, Johannes Badrutt, is credited with having been one of the first people to put St Moritz on the map as a winter-holiday destination. In 1993 the Italian interior designer Lorenzo Mongiardino was enlisted to redesign its reception and lobby. 'There is a sense of theatre, but it's also very welcoming. It's a place you want to linger in. I am a big fan of Mongiardino – I love the fact that he was more of a set designer than an interior designer, a master of special effects and visual trickery', says Luke.



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Early last year, the hotel approached Luke about revamping its 50-seat restaurant, Amaru, which is headed up by the celebrated Peruvian chef Claudia Canessa. 'I went to visit it in March 2023 and was astonished by the space. It is a fantastic room with a vaulted ceiling, white walls, a lovely, imposing fireplace and a view over the mountains' he says, adding that it was the 'perfect blank canvas'.

Keen to bring a fresh take to the space, and importantly to 'avoid the cliché of a fully Swiss panelled alpine design already prevalent in St Moritz', Luke wanted to create something which incorporates the restaurant's location and its menu, which includes dishes such as marinated yellowfin tuna, prawn empanadas and chicken croquettes: 'I wanted to allude to Peru and St Moritz but mostly make it feel like a lovely comfortable space'.



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He has done so in subtle nods throughout. The honey-coloured vaulted ceiling is adorned with painted alpine [flowers](#), the work of decorative painter Timna Wooldard. 'I like to create juxtaposition', says Luke of the rich, green lacquered panelling which adorns the walls. 'It was white and in need of a revamp. We replaced it with this amazing green lacquer. The detail of the wood is inspired by that of a Spanish baroque door'. There is a sense of tension created by the delicate floral motif on the ceiling against this imposing green woodwork.



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Above the panelling hangs a set of 24 drawings by Luke which depict more flora and fauna – local to both Peru and Switzerland, as well as an Ibex and some Peruvian landscapes. ‘When looking at one of the drawings you might not know if it’s Peruvian or Swiss, which I quite like’, says Luke. Wanting to incorporate Peruvian art as well, and having ‘fallen in love with the paintings of Ernesto Gutierrez’, Luke acquired several, which now happily hang alongside his own drawings.

It was important not to make the space feel too themed, Luke says. ‘I love an eclectic approach. A traditional floral should be offset with something geometric. And there’s always a place for a stripe’. A large banquette is upholstered in the floral ‘Bromley’ print by the US textile house, Le Gracieux, offset by bar stools in one of Luke’s own fabrics for Rubelli – a nod to the 1970s.



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In front of the grand, carved (non-operational) fireplace sits the new 'Pisco bar', with its chequerboard frontage. Neatly sectioning off the room, Luke says that it 'feels like a great place where you want to sit, drinking Pisco sours into the night.'

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