

ATOMAA

CSR



#CSR 2024

House Cisore. A
rediscovered retreat

Cisore, IT

Alpine House

102mq

“The house on the border of memories
Always the same, as you know it...
And you feel a great sense of sweetness”

- Francesco Guccini, Radici.

Hidden among the folds of the Alps, in the quiet of the historic village of Cisore, the restoration project has brought life and memory back to a house that tells centuries of history. We are in northern Piedmont, just a step away from Domodossola, surrounded by a landscape that seems stolen from a canvas: mountains whispering ancient stories of the border between Italy and Switzerland, influences that blend the essential Walser character of Val Formazza with the vibrant brushstrokes of the painters from Valle Vigezzo.

It is a place that can be reached (also) on foot: a journey that starts in Milan, where the client resides, travels through time on a train to Domodossola, and concludes with a walk along an old mule track, leading to Cisore—a paradise as remote as it is accessible.

The house at the center of our project preserves family memories: once the home of the client's grandparents, it had been abandoned for over twenty years. However, its distinctive features were still alive, and the project aimed to respect, preserve, and enhance them, as if they were relics of a past time.

The greatest challenge was spatiality. The original house was dark, cold, and made up of isolated rooms, as was often the case in ancient mountain homes.

Our vision, on the other hand, focused on bringing light and openness, creating depth and connection between spaces. Strategic openings, and precise architectural solutions allowed light to flood every corner.

We decided to give more prominence to the staircase, steep and imposing, a central element leading to the bedroom floor and maintaining its strong character.

Without opening the portals, it would have remained trapped between two walls.

Instead, these openings—created to bring light and depth into the spaces, connecting the living room and the kitchen—have made the staircase the protagonist, a central element of the architectural narrative.

The kitchen, with its monumental fireplace—the beating heart of the house—has been transformed into a cozy living room, a place for conversation and dinners with friends.

Every detail—from the larch, walnut, and chestnut floors and ceilings to the patina of time enveloping every surface—was treated with artisanal care. The beams, blackened by soot or whitened with lime over the centuries, have been brought back to life, sanded and smoothed by expert hands.

The red of the pompeian resin, accompanied by dark iron elements such as the stair railing and beams supporting the walls where portals were opened, served as the fil rouge, highlighting the explicit contemporary interventions.

Moving to the upstairs sleeping area, in keeping with the balance between tradition and modern use, the house originally had only a small external bathroom. We therefore had to carve out space to include a bathroom—small but complete. Here, too, the bathroom adopts the same red/bordeaux tone as the entire floor of the new, unified ground level space.

The roof's essence is revealed through a glass hatch, providing access to the attic while transforming the scenic stone roof into a lantern for the small bedroom.

Every object, painting, or photograph found within the house inspired the project, turning memory into architecture.

The piode di beola roof, a masterpiece of centuries-old tradition, has also been restored, maintaining its grandeur.

Though tough on the outside—solid and heavy,

made of local stone— it hides a welcoming wooden heart, which can become a cool extra bedroom for the hot summers or a playful space.

Finally, addressing the outdoor space, the intervention was carried out in the most natural way, respecting the historic village.

Stone, natural lime plaster, and a lovely vine of American grapes, integrated with the one that miraculously survived abandonment (and the construction site), frame the context.

An olive tree and jasmine, together with wild tufts and aromatic herbs scattered here and there, surround the beautiful stone table, which finally returns to host breakfasts and summer dinners.

Thanks to the lifesaving shade of the vine, even lunches find a pleasant, cool refuge outdoors.

Today, Cisore is not just a restored house: it is a place that breathes memory and looks to a new present, a living testament to how architecture can preserve the soul of a place and the people who lived there. A bright and welcoming refuge where tradition and innovation meet to tell a new story.



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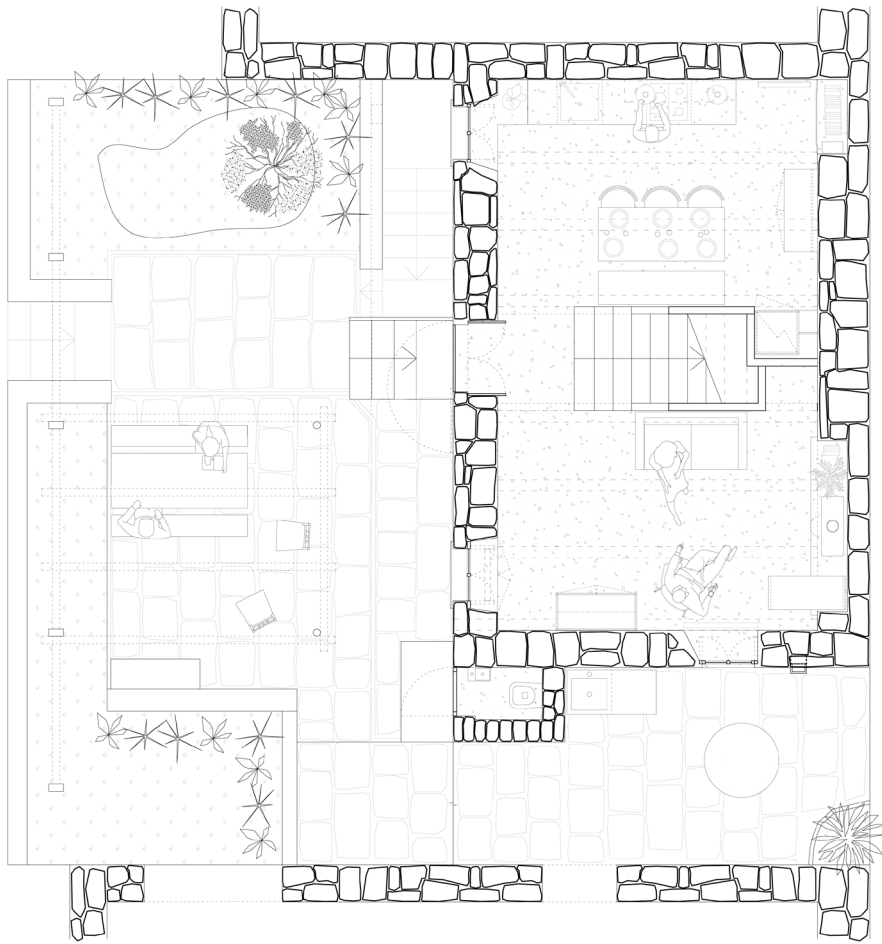
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Credits

Client: Privato
Typology: Alpine House
Location: Borgata Cisore, Domodossola. Italia
Year: 2024.11
Sqm: 102
Architectural project: ATOMAA
Design team: Andrea Del Pedro Pera, Umberto Maj, Cesare Galligani, Samantha Furlotti, Sofia Badessi, Giulia Barilli
General contractor: Alberto Giozza
Carpenters: Cappellini Cucine, Roncoroni
Photography: Alberto Strada