



KIRSTEN DUNST
at home in L.A.

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FRESH TAKE

the renovation issue

AD

DISCOVERIES

1. IN SIGNATURE SEA RANCH STYLE, THE ROOFLINES OF THE LODGE SLOPE TOWARD THE OCEAN. 2. A LOUNGE AREA IS SIMPLY FURNISHED WITH A CINI BOERI SOFA FOR ARFLEX, CHARLES DE LISLE LIGHTING, AND MARTINO GAMPER STOOLS.



TRAVELS

Ranch Redux

Charles de Lisle and Terremoto join Mithun architects in resurrecting The Sea Ranch Lodge

The ongoing COVID-19 crisis has only burnished the allure of The Sea Ranch, the quietly radical planned community that sprang up in the 1960s along 10 miles of breathtaking Northern California coastline. The landmark development—conceived by a group of pioneering Bay Area architects and designers as a progressive haven centered on harmony with the natural environment—continues to issue its siren call, promising refuge from the hurly-burly of contemporary life.

This fall marks the much-anticipated reopening of The Sea Ranch Lodge, an original structure that had been shuttered for the past three years after decades of unfortunate design interventions and deferred maintenance. Containing a variety of drinking, dining, and lounge spaces, all open to the public, The Lodge also houses the local post office and a small general store.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SAM FROST

DISCOVERIES



Phase two of the rehabilitation project will involve the renovation of the guest rooms adjacent to the main building.

“The Lodge is the heart of the community, so its closure left a serious void,” says Akemi Tamaribuchi, a representative for the building’s new owners, a group of investors dedicated to the preservation of the architectural treasure. The job of spearheading the project’s creative direction, and managing the myriad complexities of working with the Sea Ranch Design Committee and the California Coastal Commission, could not have fallen into better hands. Before assembling her team of collaborators—including the architecture firm Mithun, AD100 interior designer Charles de Lisle, and AD100 landscape architects Terremoto—Tamaribuchi camped out in a corner of the decrepit building. “I wanted to feel the history and soul of the place, so I walked the trails, smelled the air, sat in every room,” she recalls. “I thought a lot about the gumption and ambition of Al Boeke, Lawrence Halprin, William Turnbull, Joseph Esherick, Charles Moore, and all the other architects and visionaries who brought this place to life.”

In Donlyn Lyndon and Jim Alinder’s 2013 book, *The Sea Ranch: Fifty Years of Architecture, Landscape, Place, and Community on the Northern California Coast*, the scheme for The Lodge was said to be “initiated by Esherick’s office, but completed and executed by others, with Al Boeke leading the design team.” The spirit of those forebears clearly guided the work of renovation architect Sade Borghei of Mithun. “Our goal was



1. THE BAR'S CHECKERBOARD PATTERN NODS TO CHARLES MOORE'S FAMED SEA RANCH CONDOMINIUM. 2. IN THE SOLARIUM, DIRECTOR'S CHAIRS CHANNEL THE BUILDING'S LOOSE, SUMMERY VIBE. 3, 4. BARBARA STAUFFACHER SOLOMON'S ICONIC SUPER-GRAPHICS ADORN THE FAÇADE AND INTERIOR.



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DISCOVERIES



1. DE LISLE REFURBISHED THE CENTRAL FIREPLACE OF LOCAL STONES EMBEDDED IN CONCRETE. 2. FABIEN CAPPELLO PENDANT LIGHTS HANG ABOVE A CUSTOM COMMUNAL DINING TABLE WITH JOSEF HOFFMANN CHAIRS FOR THONET.

to simplify and reduce—to remake this building from the ground up, with entirely new systems and greater accessibility, while remaining true to the original vision,” he explains.

De Lisle seconds the notion: “We tried to maintain the romance of this incredible spot, so we referenced all the original details, followed the same construction methods, and kept the materials humble. The spaces had to be simple and approachable.” The designer outfitted the building with a mix of classic 20th-century furnishings leavened with contemporary designs that possess a sympathetic, unpretentious vibe. “The Lodge is all about the space, the vistas, and the crazy energy of the bluffs. It’s not about interior design per se. The furniture is secondary, transient,” he notes.

Story Wiggins, the lead landscape designer from Terremoto, similarly places her office’s contributions to the project in the context of the site’s rich history. “Sea Ranch was built around visionary landscape principles, so we had big shoes to fill. Every move we made was designed to nurture a more intimate connection between the building and the land,” she says, describing the firm’s transformation of the formerly grim asphalt parking lot, the replanting of the surrounding meadows, and the subtle insertion of a deck at the back of the structure.

“Everyone on this team was working with the single, shared purpose of securing the future of The Lodge,” de Lisle says. “If no one notices we did anything, that would make me the happiest.” thesearanchlodge.com

—MAYER RUS