

Harper's

# BAMBAAR

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*Pure  
Glamour*



## The spring break Riksgränsen, Sweden

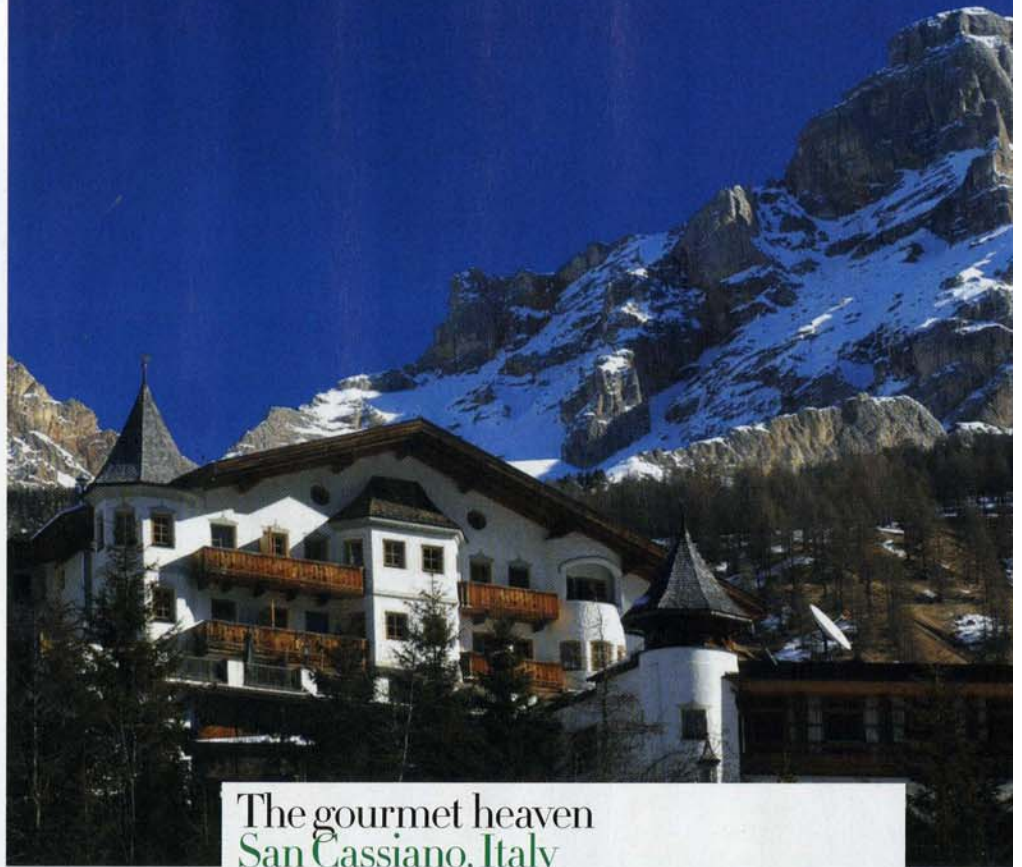
After Easter, when the Alpine season is in meltdown, the hardcore snow crowd heads to northern Sweden, where the end-of-season parties merge with skiing and boarding action under the midnight sun. The focal point is the world's northernmost ski resort, Riksgränsen – little more than one large hotel with a small ski area, where you can slalom between bollards marking the Norwegian border. Méribel it isn't, but there is fun to be had: skiing down to the fjord for a seaside picnic; a boat trip to the port of Narvik, with a train ride back to base; or heliskiing – one of the few good-value Swedish pleasures. The party season peaks in mid-May, when the annual Scandinavian Big Mountain Championships (extreme snowboarding) come to town. Hole up at the cosy Meteorologen Lodge.

*Four nights, from £845 a person B&B, including flights and transfers, with Original Travel (020 7978 7333; [www.originaltravel.co.uk](http://www.originaltravel.co.uk)).*

## The perfect family Christmas Yllas, Finland

Your log cabin will lie deep in the forest, half-buried in snow. In the morning, peer out at the pearly dawn and check the thermometer. Minus 20 is good, but 30 or below would put paid to après-ski; a shame, because afternoon activities are half the fun of a family holiday to Finland's tallest ski hill. After morning lessons on Yllas' uncrowded, child-friendly slopes, swap ski boots for furry footwear to mush your own team of dogs at the husky farm. Or, snuggle up for a reindeer-sleigh ride and tea in a tent with costumed Lapps. There is Santa Claus to visit, too – a long coach trip, but essential for believers. Wrapping up warm for the walk to breakfast, you can propel the children on scooter-sleds. If you're lucky, the walk back will be illuminated by the Northern Lights. *Seven nights, from £422 a person, including flights and transfers, with Inghams (020 8780 4433; [www.ingham.co.uk](http://www.ingham.co.uk)).*

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## The gourmet heaven San Cassiano, Italy

A generation ago, an Innsbruck beautician swept a widower in the village of San Cassiano off his feet and set about transforming his home. Daniela's first move was to install a beauty farm, complete with Cleopatra bath, Alpine herbal mud wraps and a pool. Then she handed over a corner of the pizzeria to a young local cook, Norbert Niederkofler. He is still there, 12 years later, and his St Hubertus restaurant has two Michelin stars, for creations such as rhododendron flower risotto with mushroom carpaccio. Daniela Steiner now has a global chain of spas, and her charming stepson Hugo Pizzinini runs the Rosa Alpina – summoning helicopters, and guiding guests to the best skiing and finest restaurants.

*Seven nights, from £2,010 half board, including flights and transfers, with Powder Byrne (020 8246 5300; [www.powderbyrne.com](http://www.powderbyrne.com)).*

