

RESTLESS LIVING

"... restlessly dedicated to contemporary living."



CLIFF HOUSE

Zihuatanejo, Mexico

By the Zihuatanejo Bay, Casa Acantilado – or Cliff House in English – is placed on the cliffs that are constantly hit by the mighty forces of the Pacific Ocean. Surrounded by endemic vegetation and nesting birds, the Cliff House seeks to extend the environment to a habitable place.

“The project is immersed in the natural landscape. As the name says, it is at the edge of the cliff and what we tried to do is merging as much as possible”, architect Daniel Zozaya Valdés begins. “The house looks like a continuity of the rocks below it, and the natural gray tone of concrete matches and does not compete with the colors of nature.” Inspired by the 20th century brutalism, the Cliff House is characterized by the use of concrete. “We implemented many key elements of [brutalism] in the cantilever pool and heaviness of the volumes of the house. Then we took the vernacular architecture of the area and mixed styles creating something very special”, Daniel explains.

In the combination of modern brutalism and the traditional vernacular techniques, the Cliff House balances the contrast between heavy and light. From the upper floor, a large palapa welcomes you instead of an access door, accentuating the use of regional materials such as stone, wood, and palm leaves, done by local labor and with a shape allowing the use of natural light and cross ventilation. “The staircase to the private area takes you along uncovered concrete walls which allows you to see the movement of the treetops, and feel the exterior while being protected”, Daniel tells. The concrete walls finally ends with a pool, where the infinite continuation of the Pacific is embraced.

Architecture by **Zozaya Arquitectos**

Photography by **Rafael Gamo**







ELDORADO TRES HOUSE

In Coachella Valley, country clubs built to cherish the golf lifestyle are now approaching their sixth decade – and so are their homeowners’ houses. Consequently, Palm Springs-based o2 Architecture was faced with the challenge of figuring out how to approach an existing older home built with long-gone sensibilities and in accordance with a different scope, making the existing house out-of-sync with the lifestyle aspirations of today.

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“There was an existing 50-year-old home with a striking circular living room but then the plan became highly segregated and disconnected from outdoor living”, Principal at o2 Architecture, Lance O’Donnell, says. “This inward-focused layout was incompatible with today’s informal living, seamless indoor-outdoor flow and multi-generational activities. What is more, the pool and outdoor living – located on the fairway-adjacent north side – were in the home’s winter

Indian Wells, California, United States

shadow and unresponsive to the southern sun and the panoramic view of adjacent Mt. Eisenhower.” To solve the issues of the existing structure’s layout and orientation, it was necessary to replace the building. To keep the original spirit alive, the new design was informed by the curving geometry of the old house. “The Eldorado Tres home, when observed from above, consists of two back-to-back crescent moons—one facing south, welcoming the winter

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sun and panorama of the rugged foothills, and the other facing north onto Eldorado's 17th fairway", Lance tells. The foyer is placed in the void between these two crescents, and once arriving, the floorplan immediately reveals the logic behind the concept. "From the foyer core, views open onto 4-distinct zones: to the north, the 17th fairway is viewed through a wall of glass past the family/media room; to the east is a passive palm oasis reminiscent of the distinct natural palm clusters indigenous to the canyons surrounding the Coachella Valley; the south reveals the great room and expansive window wall

with the private pool and yard framing Mt. Eisenhower; finally, the west backs onto a cluster of palm trees aligning the pathway to the front entrance", Lance explains. With a desire to preserve a 50-year-old olive tree at the front of the home, it became paramount to create the long promenade leading to the entry door, making the entrance spectacular. "Majestic and peaceful in nature, the olive tree sets the tone for the journey along the curving pathway and through the monochromatic poetry of the materials until it progressively reveals the entry door beyond", Lance adds. Throughout the Eldorado Tres

House, passive strategies were introduced to create a comfortable balance between seasons. "Exposed terrazzo floors add thermal mass to the passive solar orientation and cross ventilation is added by ample operable north/south windows, allowing homeowners to live with nature despite the seasonally harsh climate", Lance ends. Eldorado Tres House therefore embraces the contemporary lifestyle where quality and sustainability are mutually beneficial.

Architecture by **o2 Architecture**

Photography by **Lance Gerber**





H HOUSE

Dnipro, Ukraine

On the banks of Dnipro River, H House was designed as a recreational home with enough space to comfortably accommodate the owners with their friends and family – without having to be concerned about space nor privacy issues.

“Our clients wanted to create a place to hide from city noise and where they could bring their whole family and friends together. It was necessary to combine the possibility of spending time together and at the same time create two separate houses including some private space for each of them”, architect Maksym Klochenko says. Facing the river from the east with a 9 m relief gap between the street and bank level, the plot is separated in two parts – an upper and a lower. “The house is situated on the highest terrace on the street level. Other activity zones are placed further down the slope on different height terraces, allowing us to use the advantages of site relief and keep some privacy for each functional zone and the view to the river open for each place”, Maksym explains. A stepped trail leads from the upper to the lower part, connecting the terraces along the way to the river bank. “It starts from the house, goes to the dining terrace with outdoor kitchen, then goes to the Sauna terrace and arrives at the pier at the river bank”, Maksym notes.





As the clients are an international couple from Ukraine and the Netherlands, Klochenko Architects wanted to combine the simplicity of Northern Europe architecture and some local traditional materials. “The house frame is constructed from prefab wood panels, which were placed together on site. Exterior finish is thermally modified pine planks which have different widths and painted cement board”, Maksym tells. “The main material for the interior finish is clay stucco which is connected to traditional Ukrainian building craft. The house is also filled with wooden furniture which has rough unfinished edges. It gives the feeling of a crafted, rural house.” Given the natural setting of the place, the exterior and interior look were kept relatively simple in order to maintain the focus towards the landscape. “The interior finish brings us a feel of softness and warmth while the black, Nordic exterior finish strengthens the interior’s warm feeling”, Maksym complements. These design decisions has allowed H House to effectively reflect its location while providing a calm and soft living experience where any visitor will immediately notice the charm of the beautiful river bank.

Architecture by **Klochenko Architects**

Photography by **Alexander Angelovskiy**







BALCONY HOUSE Medellín, Colombia

Privileged by its outpost on the mountains of the Aburra Valley, the Balcony House presents panoramic views that are normally exclusively reserved for myths and fairy tales. Nonetheless, Balcony House is real and is projected as a device to observe and contemplate the valley.

“We wanted to create a house that captures this landscape. Two heavy floor slabs frame the horizon of the valley. They organize and contain on the periphery the main spaces of the house and turn its gaze to the mountains. Courtyards of different proportions perforate them to generate accesses, lighting and ventilation for secondary spaces. Design Director at Bassico Arquitectos, Jorge Gaviria, says. Since Balcony House is situated in a tropical region with different climates – e.g. cold fog forest in the upper part of the valley – it was important to create a responsive house taking these differences into account. “We use the glass predominantly on the facades not only to capture the incredible landscape but also to heat the house, large sliding windows that regulate the inner climate. Its parallelepiped geometry is perforated by different courtyards to allow the access of natural light and the growth of different plant species of the tropic”, Jorge explains.

Balcony House is a reflection of the evolution Bassico Arquitectos have undergone throughout the years while also referring to master projects like the Case Study Houses. “In this house you can see the simplicity of the elements that compose it, horizontal and vertical planes of stone, concrete, iron and wood that within its minimalism and its intersections seek the best way to relate to the place and the magnificent distant landscape of a city contained between mountains”, Jorge ends.

Architecture by **Bassico Arquitectos**

Photography by **Carlos Velez**

Words of the Week



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One of the most important lessons I have learned while being exposed to residential projects around the world is how much culture influences a design. I find it fascinating to experience how human behavior and social conditions embedded in culture give rise to certain design patterns.

For an example, Feng shui is the result of the ancient Chinese traditional practice of using energy forces – wind and water – to harmonize individuals. The spiritual Chinese culture hence influences design to incorporate mind soothing and stimulating elements. Scandinavian minimalism, on the other hand, is derived from the need for endurance and comfort in a challenging climate. Here, the Scandinavian culture of reducing everything that is unnecessary guides the design to focus on the essentials: balance and connection, which have been key components for the region to be recognized as the happiest people on the planet.

Regardless of the specific culture, it is incredibly satisfying to see these elements being implemented and experience how it makes a difference in the owners' lives.

CHRISTIAN TRAMPEDACH
FOUNDER, RESTLESS

