

WINNER. FINAL DEGREE PROJECT

A landscape garden.

Restoration of the area around the Zirí Wall in the El Albaicín district of Granada. A new Residents' Centre and Tourist Information Office.

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THE GARDEN

The area which today is known as the Zirí Wall forms the northern boundary of the El Albaicín district. Three major landmarks (the Elvira, Monaita and Arco de las Pesas gates) mark the site of what once must have formed an essential infrastructure for moving around this historic city. When it was no longer needed for defence purposes, the space was taken over by a number of Carmen houses (Granada's typical homes with ornamental and kitchen gardens). The challenge today lies in finding a solution for the current state of neglect.

The proposal

The project proposes the recovery of this space for the city, including a number of new and existing civic facilities. In order to achieve this, the project is based on two key premises:

- On the one hand, the proposed recovery of circulation along the entire route. The general strategy consists of the inclusion of a walk (with a ceramic tile covering) that draws attention to the various highlights along the way (archaeological, elements, pools, fountains, eye-catching views and lookout points). This surface is constructed using a variety of ceramic pieces, which over the centuries have defined the city of Granada's architecture (solid and hollow brick, curved roof tiles, ceramic tiles, etc). Their random, almost erratic layout is intended to reflect the nature of a city that has formed a veritable cultural melting pot over time, as well as recovering and integrating the traditional building materials and methods used by their architectural forerunners. In the city of Granada, architecture is essentially the sum of multiple periods.
- And secondly, to maintain the condition of a fragmented landscape, enhancing the quarter's porosity thanks to a number of transversal access routes.

As for the atmosphere this garden projects, the intention was to create the sense of a *terrain vague* combining gardens, heritage and landscape.

RESIDENTS' CENTRE AND TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICE

The underlying concept of this project is to create a contemporary gateway to the area around the wall that also solves current issues such as reduced mobility. The resulting element, namely the tourist information office, restores the lost sense of urbanity to the small front square, providing a meeting point for the city and garden.

As for the materials used, the proposal plays with dual interior-exterior language:

Exterior: the succession of gardens that form the area around the wall can be seen as a landscape sculptured from human intervention on the land. Indeed, underpinning the entire project is the notion that this is one of the key and defining values of the site. The walls that form the residents' centre provide a structure that envelopes the spaces yet also acts as an element of retention for the garden soil.

Interior: in contrast to the 'hard' materials used in the exterior which interrelate to the other features in the area (towers, walls and retaining walls), the interior is designed for civic purposes and for this reason 'kinder' materials have been used that are more in keeping with domestic needs than infrastructures.