



Winner: Interior Design

House overlooking the sea

OAB. Office of Architecture in Barcelona (Xavier Martí and Lucía Ferrater)

Photographs: Alejo Bagué

This house stands on Port de la Selva Bay, located on the northern coast of the Cap de Creus Nature Park, overlooking the sea and the Tramuntana mountains.

Built between party walls, the house reflects the area's rich cultural legacy and is inspired by two homes in the neighbouring town of Cadaqués - Casa Villavecchia, designed by F. Correa and A. Milá and Casa Senillosa, by J.A. Coderc – both prime examples of how respect for traditional style is compatible with the inclusion of contemporary elements and comforts.

It stands on a long narrow plot between two streets, adjacent to a series of taller buildings. The solution adopted for the vertical plane guarantees compliance with building regulations for the town's historic quarter: a staggered plane leading to the rear street, allowing for enhanced ventilation and sunlight whilst adapting the heights as well as the traditional façades of the protected courtyards.

The complexities caused by the elongated shape and north orientation of the plot, the difficult weather conditions and the lack of privacy have been resolved by the open yet sheltered inner courtyard located at the centre of the home, providing a relaxing living space that can be enjoyed both by day and night, providing protection from the heat, cold, rain and wind.

The result is a haven providing inhabitants with a carefree space in which to enjoy their privacy to the full.

The interior layout is divided on three levels. On the ground floor the house can be accessed from both streets via an entrance behind the garage and a pedestrian entrance at the front leading directly to the space combining the kitchen, dining room and courtyard, in keeping with the style that characterises traditional fishermen's homes. Two staircases – one interior and another exterior - lead up to the bedrooms located on the first floor, where a suspended gallery creates a distribution passage or atrium running around the courtyard, creating a sense of continuum for this focal point of domestic life. Finally, the second floor houses the library, living room and a sheltered terrace overlooking the sea.

In terms of building solutions, one of the outstanding features of this house is a frugal use of means based on making optimum use of materials, which, thanks to the light that floods the interior, bring the most characteristic features of the interior to the fore.

Rigour, austerity and a sense of substance define the areas that connect the everyday living spaces of this home with its more figurative domain, namely the courtyard, whilst at the same time moving beyond mere domestic considerations, firing the imagination and enriching and embellishing the lifestyle that unfolds within.

Ceramic floor tiles have been used throughout the home, covering both the interior and the courtyard, which features 13 mm traditional Catalan *rasilla* tiles.