

# House with a citrus grove in a windy land in Sardinia

By Filippo Casillo

The project is composed in a non-ordinary, non-referential way. It is an architectural life invention. It is composed of a large circular wall that opens into niches where you can live. A long curved corridor connects the spaces. These open inside onto a huge garden that grows all around and inside.

Originally the house space is a bushy plain lashed by strong winds about 700 meters from a rocky coastline in north-western Sardinia. A place where it is difficult to live and grow vegetation. Despite this, the beauty of this place made me want to find a solution for living thereby creating an unconventional seaside holiday house. Moreover, I wanted to be able to grow ultra-organic agricultural products here to support a sustainable agricultural tradition linked to the potential of this area.

The initial idea is therefore to create a huge, precious garden protected from the wind amidst Mediterranean bushes. The house develops around this garden. And by creating a spiral wall, there is a natural progression and additional protection from the wind.

As you gradually enter the house, bushes are transformed into ever more luxuriant plants. At the end of the garden, in the most protected and private area, there is a plantation of citrus trees. The idea of using these plants comes from the rural tradition, where citrus fruits, which are very fragile in the wind but also need a lot of sun, are grown protected by walls.

The internal arrangement of the house rotates around the garden. Each room is built into the wall, overlooking a different part of the garden. At the beginning a walkway leads from the parking area to the living area of the house. You can enter from the kitchen or arrive in a half-covered square that overlooks a large portion of the garden. From this square you can enter the hall, which is protected and overlooks the square. Inside a long curved corridor, which makes you lose your orientation, leads you to the night area. The two bedrooms are also niches in the garden and have small terraces overlooking the outside. Continuing along the corridor, you come to a last covered but outdoor space. This is dedicated to contemplation and work in the citrus grove. On the opposite side of the corridor, there is a study, the only room that looks outside and the sea.

The predominant material for the project is concrete. This extremely versatile material is perfect for the nature of the project and emphasises the structural truth that is a fundamental element of radical life in this architecture.

Furthermore, in order to have spaces with the purest experience, the windows and doors can disappear through an automatic system into the ground. Once the house is in use, most of the interior spaces can be lived without filters on the garden. Contact with the nature can be very strong because you are already protected by the outer wall.

The botanical choice for the garden is designed to have beautiful plants that need a warm climate and little wind. Gradually you will move from Mediterranean vegetation of myrtle, heather, juniper and rosemary to pink tamarisk bushes and Jacaranda trees. Finally, in the most private and protected part of the garden, a mixed plantation of citrus fruits. These include grapefruits, lemons, bergamots, citrons, pomelos, lime trees, oranges and mandarins. The desired color scheme ties in with the grey tones of the surrounding rocks, also due to the use of local debris as an inert material in the concrete. From the outside, all you can see in the architecture is a wall from which leafy plant tops sprout. A mystery that gradually unfolds as you enter the house.

The long corridor is naturally lit by small glazed holes in the ceiling. From these same holes, at night, the lighting is artificial.