



1000 IDEAS BY 100 ARCHITECTS

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◀ 0910

The Platinum Tower was commissioned to be the most exclusive building on the Beirut coast seafront; an area that is fast becoming a collection of uneven large-scale architectural gestures contrasting against the cluttered backdrop of the city. With a geometry of four stacked cubes to create a 537-ft-high (164 m) tower, the tower offers a sober, poised formal solution to the problem of a luxury high-rise building in an urban context marked by excess.

0911 ▲

A closer look at this all glass luxury high-rise building reveals a revisited setting for a Mediterranean lifestyle at its simplest. Large loggia-like urban balconies overlooking the sea are reminiscent of large outdoor Levantine living rooms, screened from the sun and protected from the wind through partial enclosures of frit glass.

Nabil Gholam with Ricardo Bofill
Taller of Arquitectura.

0912 ▾

Along with the usage of local stone from the site, the house is topped with a series of green roofs, blending it even more into its green backdrop. The rainwater collected throughout is recycled for irrigation and feeds the ponds that are located at different levels in the house.



0915 ▲

To emerge safe and to reclaim an icon from the Lebanese civil war, where occupation, torture, and death were a cruel reality, requires plenty of positive vigor and contemplation from both the client and the architect. The nostalgia of the childhood house and its memories of safety and joy led to the respectful preservation of the old shell. Once gutted, it was reinvested by nature and cleansed. The new rusty occupant is then carefully inserted and extended discretely into the forest.



◀ 0913

The layout of this high-density chalet compound raised the challenge of dealing with a substantial project mass in a natural setting. To camouflage part of the large volumes, we borrowed the ancestral language of local cascading stone terraces to make use of sloping agricultural land. This ashlar rock base, built with masonry walls and construction techniques, houses the night spaces within the solid terraces and smaller openings. The day spaces are houses in wooden volumes scattered over the landscape.

0914 ▾

The aesthetics of managing a series of walls in a natural landscape was developed here in order to define a house on a hilltop 3,930 feet (1,198m) above sea level with extraordinary vistas. The visitors is presented with a mute succession of stone walls with occasional vertical slits and trees peeking from behind, hinting furtively at the private world beyond. It is a facade that plays hide-and-seek, creating a sense of subtle mystery that enhances that client's desire for discretion while expressing a calm opulence, in addition to providing a safe haven for the family.



◀ 0916

The characteristic thick wall houses creates by old stone construction techniques were echoed here and revisited to create "intelligent walls." By thickening the masonry shell, space was made against the outer wall to accommodate all the structural and technical networks of the house, freeing the internal spaces that are easily accessible through a second layer of storage spaces facing the interior. (Shelves, closets, etc.). The tapering walls range from 23 to 39 inches (58 to 99 cm) as they rise.



0917 ▲

A retractable fabric cover system shades the connecting space between the two wings of the house. This cover provides the flexibility needed in using this inside/outside space almost nine months of the year, diffusing or letting in the desired amounts of sunlight. The fabric opens and closes with the sun. It retracts if strong wind is detected.



◀ 0918

Located in quaint traditional district with strict zoning guidelines, the building laws for this lot requires a minimum of 60 percent stone coverage on the facade. This contradicted the building program, which was to create spectacular views towards the sea and the old crusader castle opposite. Bringing together both these aspects, the solution was to introduce massive stone stacked panels on the facade in tune with the historical, prevalent surrounding materials, but louvered to maintain maximum transparency of views. This allowed light and air where one expects to find massive concrete and stone walls.

Nabil Gholam with VVD.



0919 ▼

The logic of the outdoor fabric covers can be repeated inside, where, mounted on tensed stainless steel cables, they serve many purposes in an office space. They are excellent light diffusers for working environments and they dampen down the reflected sound or noise generated by a multitude of users in a high ceiling space. This economical solution, with its soft light, very low maintenance, and easy access, ensures a unified and elegant appearance.

◀ 0920

Located in the extremely hot environment of Doha Qatar, a comfortable climate in this state-of-the-art mall, called Doha Souks, is achieved through a sustainable system combining facade shielding, artificial air conditioning, and a natural passive system relying on radiant cooling and air stratification. Water walls flanking lush greenery facilitate vaporization and condensation, and carefully placed openings channel the strong southern winds into the mall, and help preserve a layer of cooler air close to the level of the shoppers. Humidity can be condensed over the inner gardens into an indoor rain shower over the landscaped atrium.

