

RESTLESS LIVING

"... restlessly dedicated to contemporary living."



VOLUME 24



VILLA T

Located in the center of Toulouse, the project named «Villa T» is a complete renovation of a classic townhouse in the Montplaisir neighborhood. We have talked to French architect, Pierre-Louis Taillandier, about the project.

Prior to the renovation, the existing house consisted of two stories plus an attic. It was originally divided into 4 units, but the units were in such a bad shape that it needed extensive renovation. “The aim of the project is to create an entirely new family ho-

me while preserving only the existing historic façade of this house type called the «Toulousaine», Pierre-Louis says. The new house is now divided in two zones, where the private areas with sleeping areas occupy the upper two floors. The living areas, on the other hand, link the street level in the front to the lower garden level in the back. “These zones function like two superposed duplexes, the «day duplex» and the «night duplex». The «day duplex» is organized at garden level around a kitchen that opens onto a double-height space”, Pierre-Louis explains

and continues: “The upper level of the «day duplex» consists of a single space functioning as living and dining room with a fireplace as a focal point. A balcony looks out over the double-height space towards the kitchen and garden.”

With walls of prefabricated concrete and floors of light oak, the interior of the home has been designed to be minimalistic and aesthetically pleasing. “The contrast between stained concrete and light oak emphasizes the dual nature of the house, bet-

Toulouse, France

ween historic and contemporary expression, intimate and gallery-like spaces, public areas for living and socializing and intimate areas for sleeping. As a rule, the concrete walls are kept pure, without any added elements such as switches, light fixtures, or artwork”, Pierre-Louis says. Yet, one of the most characteristic elements of the house is the combined staircase and library. As Pierre-Louis explains: “The design refers to several classic threads of the architectural imagination, with its built-in library wrapping around the stair like the tower of knowledge of

ancient Babylon, a 15-centimeter (6-inch) vertical reveal connecting all four levels. This stair creates a link between the sky, with its four skylights, and the ground, at garden level, while connecting and unifying all of the spaces and levels of the house. The stair also enables natural ventilation between the gardens all the way to the uppermost floor.” The natural ventilation was in fact an important feature in the design – to create a great indoor climate without the need for air conditioning. “Thanks to the thermal mass, the house does not need to be air

conditioned. The skylights positioned above the stairwell can be opened during hot weather to create a “free cooling” effect. All of the windows are equipped with adjustable sun shades, allowing the house to be naturally kept cool”, Pierre-Louis mentions. In its totality, Villa T is a stylish home perfectly fit to a contemporary lifestyle while emphasizing an interesting reference to the past.

Architecture by **Taillandier Architectes Associés**

Photography by **Luc Boegly**

