

DESCRIPTION

CASA EL ENROQUE

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Photo: M.A. Cabrera

This small, three-fronted house, covering 4 m x 6.70 m per floor, is slotted between narrow flights of steps on the slopes of a steep hill known as Benacantil in Alicante's Old Town.

This project is the result of Inmaculada's wish for a new home, close to her workplace and which effectively resolves her current needs, including the creation of a mini-apartment on the ground floor, independent from the home upstairs, for when one of her children come to pay a visit.

The project is conceived as the restoration and extension of the existing house, which was practically in ruins.

The perforations are laid out strategically on the façade in order to cast light on the study, provide natural light for the sitting area, provide discrete light for the bathroom area or, in the case of the rooftop turret, to act as a large skylight from where the light would be distributed, reaching practically every corner of the house. The various types of openings in the façade, meticulously studied and strategically arranged, provide cross ventilation that refreshes and revitalises, allowing the air to circulate between the north and south fronts.

On the front overlooking the street, this perforated arrangement is designed, by means of slits and wider spaces, to achieve a series of effects, such as capturing the first rays of sun from the East, obtaining a ground-level view of the entrance to Calle San Roque, or, born from a vocation for protection, avoiding the need for window ledges that are an invitation to lean against or climb up into the gaps in the façade. Here the openings form an oblique vision; the façade is shaped in order to decongest the physically restrained and limited situation imposed by the urban layout.

Finally, yet most importantly, this façade and its openings, in contact as they are with the public space, are protected by a cladding of printed ceramic tiles, arranged in a staggered pattern and accompanying us as we climb the steps on Calle San Roque, continuing along the side and rear façades along Calle Navíos.

The ceramic tiles cover the base of the house, climbing up the façade and venturing inside the openings, forming the jambs on the inside vertical walls in a perfect exercise in geometric adaption to the widening planes that form the elevations.

The tiled base and the formal image of the regular openings perforating the solid façade, protected by permeable metal latticework, mediate between the traditional setting and the determinedly contemporary vocation of the house, El Enroque, and its owner Inmaculada.