

MI CASA, SU CASA

Welcome to the colourful new
home taking Mexico by storm

Words Louise Smithers

Photography Documentación Arquitectónica — Adrián Llaguno

Geometric patterns
complement the
bold palette



“The pigments applied to walls run inside and out, emphasising their autonomy and determining the character of each space” – Jeff Brock

If you thought winning the meat raffle at the local RSL was exciting, imagine scooping a house in Mexico! As that's the first prize in an annual raffle organised by the Technological University of Monterrey, the winner of Casa TEC 205 has hit the jackpot!

Flanked by imposing views of the Sierra Madre Mountains and the city of Monterrey, this Mexican home is surrounded by natural wonders such as the Chipinque Ecological Park. Respecting the local environment was paramount, so the casa was designed around four existing mature trees (three walnut trees and a trueno tree). “We decided to not only preserve these trees, but to make them part of the project,” says architect and co-founder of Moneo Brock, Jeff Brock. “Now embedded in the house, the trees definitively characterise the spaces they inhabit.”

Maximising green space and exposing public areas to the sky and surrounding views were highly important. To do so, the conventional domestic floor plan was turned upside down, with the bedrooms placed on the floor below the entry level rather than above. “The bedrooms take advantage of the earth's thermal mass, bringing natural freshness to the house and lowering cooling loads during the many months of high temperatures in Monterrey,” explains Jeff. “This arrangement allows the more public floor to enjoy the better views that its higher position affords, and provides direct access to the garden for all the bedrooms.”



“The outdoor space was conceived as a large exterior room, delimited by walls and windows that frame the fantastic views of the Monterrey Mountains”

– Jeff Brock



High ceilings are illuminated to enhance their effect and draw the eye up

we love

THE GEOMETRIC
CARPETS
DESIGNED BY
MONEO BROCK



houses & apartments casa tec 205

The outdoor spaces (including a private breakfast terrace, a pool and barbecue area) have been elevated from the typical ground-floor layout up onto the roof, which is found on the street level. Unlike most contemporary constructions where the living/dining area opens to the outdoors, this home takes things one step further. All major interior spaces have been granted immediate connection to the outdoors, whether it's a garden, a patio or a terrace. "The outdoor space was conceived as a large exterior room, delimited by walls and windows that frame the fantastic views of the Monterrey Mountains," continues Jeff.

Oversized wall planes intersect at the core of the home and protrude into the outdoor spaces to enable sustained connection. Colourful Mexican buildings and master Mexican architects like Luis Barragán

and Ricardo Legorreta inspired the decoration of the exterior walls, which have been coated in strong, bold colours.

Colour is also the hero of the interior design, unfolding into a vibrant palette where blue, red, orange and green comfortably cohabit. "The pigments applied to walls run inside and out, emphasising their autonomy and determining the character of each space," says Jeff. For example, lively wallpaper was applied to create a mural effect in certain rooms.

High-end furniture has been mixed with more affordable pieces to great success. Bright geometric carpets designed by Moneo Brock cover the floors and a "Plexijazz" screen of translucent acrylic and coloured vinyl greets the owners and their guests as they enter the house.

All major interior spaces have been granted immediate connection to the outdoors

Simple landscaping allows the bright structure to dominate



ed's fave
 THE BRIGHTLY COLOURED WALLS THAT FEATURE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE HOME



houses & apartments casa fec 205



Outdoor spaces are well furnished to ensure frequent use

A strict six-month deadline was enacted and met with the aid of local construction systems and materials, including Santo Tomás stone and Oaxaca hydraulic tiles.

Bioclimatic measures embedded in the architecture keep emissions minimal. Exterior shutters, eaves and screens add to the shade already provided by the site's mature trees, creating a Goldilocks effect where it's never too hot or too cold — it's just right. Strategically placed thermally broken and double-glazed windows benefit from the pleasant east-west winds to promote natural cross-ventilation. "The roof, in addition to having a thick layer of thermal insulation, is protected from excessive overheating by pergolas and sunshades," points out Jeff. Rounding out the home's passive attributes are low-energy appliances and LED lighting.

Casa 205 may have been designed by students, but the colourful, clever and energy-efficient structure casts a masterful shadow over the city of Monterrey.

HD moneobrock.com



The kitchen is functional and fabulous