

Project: A Home Around The Forest

Design Team: YSLA Architects

Size: 70.5 m²

Location: Kita-Karuizawa, Japan



Feature:

Project - Nestled within the lush forestscape of Karuizawa, Japan, a weekend retreat by YSLA Architects offers a serene escape from the bustle of city life. This 70-square-meter home, designed for a family of five living in central Tokyo, seamlessly integrates with its natural surroundings, blurring the boundaries between indoor and outdoor spaces.

The architects' vision was to encourage the family to slow down and reconnect with nature, a concept known in Japanese culture as "Shinrin-Yoku" or forest bathing. By extending the home's corridor directly into the forest, the living areas become an extension of the lush, verdant landscape, fostering a deep connection with the environment.

The materials and design choices further enhance this harmonious relationship. Warm wood tones and abundant glazing invite the outdoors in, while thoughtful placement of windows and openings frame picturesque vistas of the forest. Carefully curated furnishings and minimalist décor create a serene, calming atmosphere, allowing the family to fully immerse themselves in the tranquility of their surroundings.

By seamlessly integrating the home with its natural context, YSLA Architects have crafted a retreat that not only provides a comfortable living space but also serves as a restorative sanctuary, enabling the family to rejuvenate and recharge amid the beauty of the forest.

Design Team - Established in 2016, YSLA YamamuraSanzLaviña Architects is a dynamic design firm founded by Spanish architect Natalia Sanz and Japanese architect Takeshi Yamamura. With a combined experience of over two decades, the team at YSLA has made a mark in the architectural industry through their thoughtful, nature-centric approach to

design.

Natalia Sanz, who previously worked at the renowned Kengo Kuma and Associates, and Takeshi Yamamura, an Associate Professor at Tokyo Polytechnic University and a former employee of Dominique Perrault Architecture, have joined forces to create a practice that seamlessly blends international expertise with a deep appreciation for local context.

The firm's portfolio showcases a range of projects, from residential homes to commercial and institutional buildings, all of which are characterized by a strong connection to the natural environment. YSLA's designs prioritize the integration of indoor and outdoor spaces, allowing the surrounding landscape to become an integral part of the built form.

Through their meticulous attention to detail and a commitment to sustainable design principles, YSLA YamamuraSanzLaviña Architects has established itself as a leading voice in the architectural community. The firm's innovative solutions and their ability to craft spaces that foster a sense of tranquility and well-being have earned them accolades, including the prestigious AIJ Young Researcher Award from the Architectural Institute of Japan in 2021.

As YSLA continues to push the boundaries of design, their holistic approach to architecture has cemented their reputation as a firm that seamlessly harmonizes nature and built form, creating spaces that inspire and uplift the human spirit.