

A WEATHERPROOF WIND-DOWN RETREAT

THE WANDERING WALLS BED AND BREAKFAST
XRANGE
HENGCHUN, TAIWAN

Looking out from a gusty oceanfront mountaintop, Wandering Walls Bed and Breakfast offers a calm refuge from its dramatic outdoor setting. Located in Hengchun in southern Taiwan, it faces the South China Sea and sits on a previously undeveloped site in-between tall grasses and acacia forests. Set within this rugged context, the curvaceous, eight-room retreat is the design of Taipei-based studio XRANGE Architects and strives to “blur the boundaries between architecture and landscape to define public and private spaces,” the architects say.

The stark, solid form aims to match the building’s raw environs, creating what its creators term “a sense of quietude and permanence with a single architectural element [the curved walls that are its structure and form] and a minimal palette of materials [concrete, metal, wood, tiles].” The building is cleverly sealed to the elements on the windward side, and instead the outdoors is integrated via stairwell viewpoints, floor-to-ceiling glazing, and tranquil ground-floor patios.

The building’s form and materials were determined by the site’s challenging climate and limited resources. “The remote location is susceptible to gale-force winter winds, sea salt in the atmosphere, and had no access road prior to construction,” explain the architects. “Furthermore, the lack of skilled construction labor and the shoestring-project budget drove the decision to use cast-in-place concrete for its climatic endurance, and ease of transport, and storage.” What might have been restrictive conditions have instead furnished the building with its unique character. “The highly tolerant formwork system allows for misalignments and mistakes made by the local workers, which created the signature ‘lo-res’ curves throughout.” The harsh winds, meanwhile, provide their own kind of finishing. “The roughened cast textures of the walls have gradually smoothed out due to their constant stripping by the seasonal winds.”





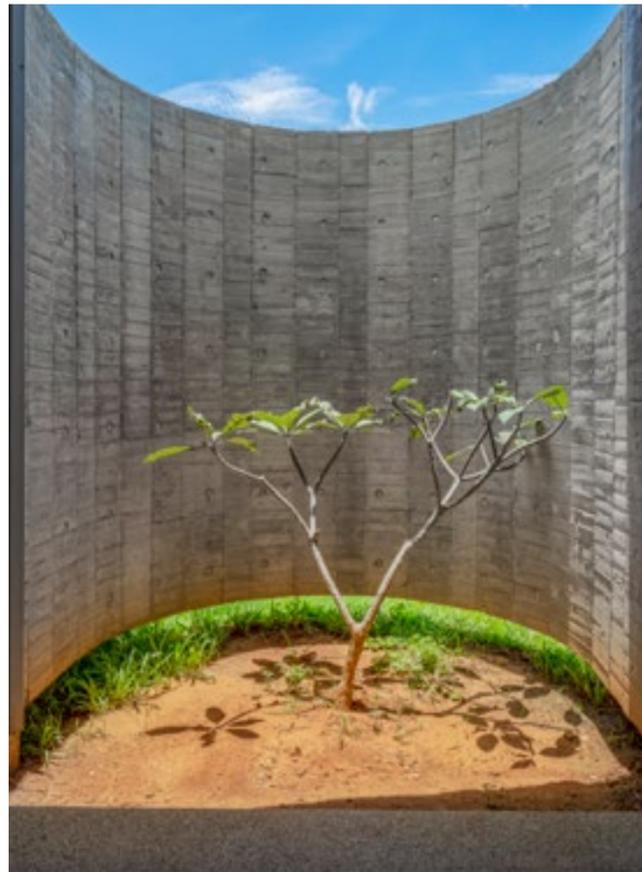
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The Wandering Walls Bed and Breakfast sits on the blustery cliffside grasslands (previous page), overlooking the South China Sea (opposite, above) in southern Taiwan. Designed

to have minimal impact on its surrounding environment, it is both shaded and protected by the coastal acacia forest (above). To shield against the dramatic weather, the building

is closed on the windward-facing side, and open on the calmer grassland-facing one (opposite, below).





The rooftop swimming pools and terrace provide breathtaking panoramic views of the land meeting the sea (above).

Contemplative courtyards enliven the protectively sealed, windward-facing side of the bed and breakfast (opposite, bottom left).

As rough in texture as the outside environment, the building's structural elements are made out of cast-in-place concrete (opposite, bottom right).

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