



Three Idyllic Residences in Spain

DESIGN GCA Architects
PHOTOGRAPHY Silvia Lopez

GLOBAL INTERIORS, INTERIORS

Slow is the way to go in Formentera, and couldn't be better encapsulated than in these three homes by GCA Architects on its rugged coastline.

At the centre of the Mediterranean sea and east of the Spanish mainland, the Balearic Islands are one big source of Wanderlust. Among the four Balearic Islands (and the smallest of the lot) sits Formentera, quieter than its neighbour Ibiza and the widely-acclaimed Mallorca. This exclusive island, its pristine coastlines and petite villages are where you go to escape the crowds and revel in some peace and quiet. So what better place to design three family homes, in an olive grove overlooking the ocean, connected by dirt roads? That's what Barcelona-based firm GCA Architects were called to do, combining linear Mediterranean architecture, minimalist principles and the island's natural materials. Each endowed with their own individual character, GCA Architects have blended the slow and serene pace of life Formentera promotes.

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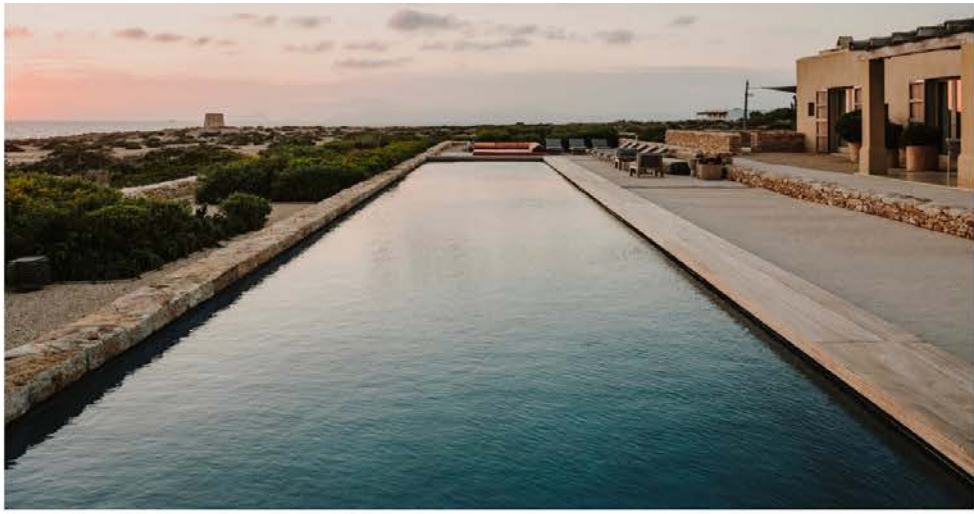


GCA's contemporary approach to the traditional architectural style of the island is revealed in the positioning of the homes. All homes optimise the sun (including the glorious sunset) and the sea views while playing with how light enters the home.

Similar to *Oxygen Houses* by Susanna Cotts, these idyllic residences are all about accessing nature as a source of life and tranquility. All three homes were designed from the ground up, with the terrain always in mind. Mirroring the rocky and rugged environment, the first home is fortunate to be on the front line facing the ocean. The home draws on simple shapes and linear elements in stone, simulating the traditional walls of Formentera architecture. Other materials that characterise the home are micro-cement and timber, lending the home an earthy palette. The interiors are made up of made-to-measure joinery and furniture among enduring design icons.

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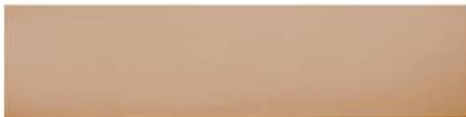




Simple and austere, the next home is closely aligned with the simplicity of the traditional buildings of Ibiza and Formentera. The home is organised around a central courtyard to protect it from the harsh conditions – particularly the wind – and also privy to some spectacular sea views. Just like the others, it's a simple volumetric composition of flat roofs. Made from dry natural stone with rustic timber pergolas, the home is an extension of its environment, adapting to its dryness. Outside entertaining is almost a given with the dining and lounging spaces overlooking the saltwater, stone-edged pool and sea. Surrounding these areas is landscaping that's indigenous to the area, combined with olive trees, fig trees, carob trees, lavender, thyme, rosemary and cactus – all of which you're likely to discover in the gardens of Formentera.

These Spanish residences represent living holistically within the realms of quality design. A mix of sobriety, elegance, simplicity and modernity, they show us GCA Architects' skill in 'bringing feelings and thrills out of simplicity' – and one very pressing excuse to spend a European summer on Formentera.









AUTHOR [Sophie Lewis](#)

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
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