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Audrey Tempelman

Slideshow: A Haven From the City



When Jonathan and Mary Jo Davis discovered a 25x100 foot lot for sale on busy Venice Boulevard in LA, it wasn't love at first sight. "We would drive up and sit in our car and listen to how loud it was and think 'Can we do this?'" Jonathan recalled.

But the couple, who jointly run their architecture firm [Davis Studio A+D](#), decided to brave the noise. And the resulting home not only maximizes its 17-foot width, but also creates a haven from the chaos of the city.

To solve the issue of space, Jonathan says, the couple built the house high, dividing the footprint into three floors: The ground floor they use as a studio, while the living area on the top opens onto two terraces. The bedrooms, consisting of a master, guest, and children's room for their family-to-be, are nestled between the two.

Storage, Jonathan says, was foremost in their minds. "We really thought through how to store things in house without adding pieces of furniture. We created as many built-in walls of cabinets and walls of shelves as we could," he said.

The windowless front wall of the house functions, as Jonathan puts it, "like someone putting out an outstretched hand and saying: 'Stop.'" They used thick glass in the windows and extra insulation in the walls; and erected five-foot railings and walls to create a private-feeling outdoor space.

"We wanted to show that we could build a simple, modern, green house within a budget," said Jonathan. And it seems the Davises have done just that.

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