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The house designed for light

A house built sensitively over a Roman quarry in Croatia has been given a sensitive lighting scheme by its designer Dean Skira.



The outdoor lighting mirrors the care given to the interior—uplights and downlights with various colour temperatures are meticulously positioned to highlight the natural colours of the stone in the ancient quarry below.

A stunning family home in Croatia, designed by Dean Skira, merges modern architecture with ancient heritage, creating a living tribute to both past and present.

The ancient stonework beneath forms the heart of the site, shaping both the design and atmosphere of the residence.

In Skira's hands, architecture became a holistic art form, as he designed every element of the home, from the structure to the interiors and, most importantly, the lighting.

The design respects the archaeological site, with the house elevated four metres above the quarry to preserve and showcase its beauty.

But it is the lighting that transforms this home into a truly poetic space, blending light and shadow to create an immersive visual experience.

The lighting design goes far beyond mere illumination—it is an essential part of how the house communicates with its surroundings.

Skira, known for his expertise in lighting, designed the system to be more than functional; it's an art in itself.

The lighting scheme is subtle, mostly hidden, with fixtures carefully integrated into ceiling openings and walls to let the light itself define the space.

His philosophy is that light fittings are secondary to the effects they create on the surfaces they illuminate.

Inside the home, the lighting interacts with the architecture, creating dramatic yet

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serene atmospheres throughout. Every detail of the interior—sculptures, paintings, and even the plants—was chosen with lighting in mind.

Custom planters within the home allow wiring for uplights to be hidden, while plant shadows are cast upon the ceiling, turning the living room into a dynamic canvas of light and shadow.

A simple press of the 'cool' button dims the rest of the lighting, leaving only the subtle 'landscape lighting' within the house for a theatrical, immersive effect.

The exterior lighting is seamlessly integrated with the interior through expansive 35m-long, 3m-high glass windows, ensuring that the landscaped surroundings and the house itself become one continuous visual experience. The outdoor lighting mirrors the care given to the interior—uplights and downlights with various colour temperatures are meticulously positioned to highlight the natural colours of the stone in the ancient quarry below.

The lighting system, controlled by Lutron HQ, adapts to the time of day and the presence of people, making it both intuitive and unobtrusive. It dims automatically after 22pm, providing just enough light. ■

The exterior dining table is illuminated by tightly-controlled recessed LED spotlights.



PROJECT CREDITS

Designer: Dean Skira

Landscape designer: Dionaea Zagreb.

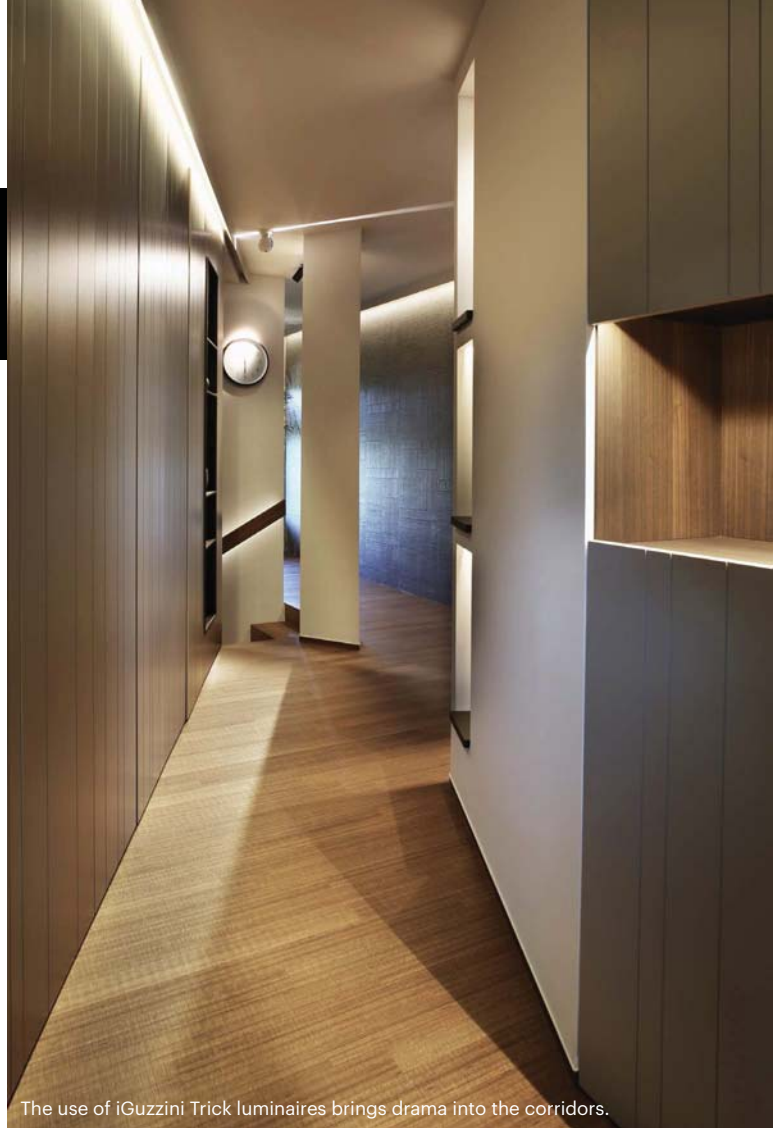
Architect in charge: Leonid Zuban

Structural engineer: Franko Grubisic

Lighting suppliers: iGuzzini, Delta Light, Flos, Arcos, Artemide and Catalani & Smith

Lighting control: Lutron

Pictures: Damir Fabijanić and Luca Cioci



The use of iGuzzini Trick luminaires brings drama into the corridors.

