

CASA BLANQUITA ON NICARAGUA'S FLOWERY COAST

Like Many Good Things, The Most Romantic And
The Most Beautiful Seem To Take Time To Bloom

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Perched at the parking level, the "loft volume" overlooks the descending cliff toward the sea. Each separate rectangular volume stands alone with unobstructed views of the ocean and surrounding tropical flora. Pacific cobbles and white concrete blend seamlessly.





above: Complete with one of multiple sun terraces, the expanse of the Pacific is viewed from the guest suite atop the main living area. Karim Rashid's "Dragonfly" chair sits center stage, while Smart & Green ball lamps from Space Lighting provide a sculptural touch nearby.



SITUATED ON A TINY EYELASH OF RUGGED BEACH ALONG the west coast of Nicaragua, a cascade of six rectangular boxes, or "volumes" that sprawl down the Pacific cliff side to Bolanos Bay, make up the 5,600-square-foot residence of Puerto Rican-born architect Francisco Delgado and his partner, British theatre director Christopher Renshaw. Tying the snowy white volumes together is an invisible line which Delgado conceived as conduit for the circulation of ocean air; the entrance of rain into structural "punctures" feeding the interior tropical gardens; and spectacular views of sunsets that flood the western sky.



Ganda-Blasco chaise lounges from Cirrii Outdoor recline poolside, while an aluminum pergola extends from each rectangular box to provide respite from the sun.

With both owners involved in theatrical presentations, the complex from afar seems at times like a stage set. "No space is wasted with corridors and foyers," architect Francisco Delgado says. Like a play, each "set" descends down the cliff, telling its own dramatic story.

But this very private paradise, an hour on dirt roads from the nearest town, by helicopter, or by fisherman's boat, initially brought about a kind of rebirth during a trip to Costa Rica. After a chance crossing of the border into nearby Nicaragua and happening upon the flower-covered isthmus and bay, the pair impulsively put down a stake and called it home. They believed it would be a place to invest in a new beginning. Much to their surprise, it would also take three years to complete.

"I wanted it to appear as if there were no house at all on this virgin land," Delgado says. He devised a tunnel entrance into the property which opens first to a housekeeper's residence, then descends via another tunnel to a pebble-clad parking platform. Here, entering via a square opening in the floor, the main living space is accessed and presents its most surprising feature: one wall is missing.

Given the dry tropical forest setting, the western wall is eliminated in favor of views of the massive pool winding beneath a glass bridge that links the "asoleadero" or sun platform with the house.

Utilizing architectural magic, Delgado's design allows the wall of the upstairs suite to aid in supporting the 13-meter-long steel beam of the living area's ceiling. No



above: Overlooking the infinity pool, Delgado's design for the main living area magically draws the Pacific nearly to one's feet. Vintage crystals from Ray Ferris's Antiques & Iron Accents are woven into a local driftwood chandelier that cast both light and shadows throughout the space. A circular pebbled-mosaic fountain murmurs in the background.



pillars or obstructing walls interrupt the view across the ocean. Descending past the Jacuzzi, the master bedroom and a guesthouse stand separately, each of the spaces equipped with its own kitchen.

"During the three years of construction, we became a part of this community," Delgado says. A miracle was accomplished by employing 40 village people, one concrete mixer, and a small truck called a camioneta. With electricity from the road, a generator for backup, a cistern and private well, even the Internet and satellite television, Delgado and Renshaw believe they now have the best of both worlds.®