

CONCEPT & PROGRAM · SINGLE SOURCE OF TRUTH

Casa del Acantilado

A CRISP-CONTEMPORARY HILLSIDE VILLA · LA ZAGALETA, MARBELLA

SIX BEDROOMS · PRIMARY SUITE · STAFF QUARTERS
FIVE LEVELS · 14.40 M DESCENT
INFINITY EDGE · CANTILEVERED TERRACES
GLASS · CONCRETE · STONE

The architecture disappears so the sea can speak.

Casa del Acantilado is a grand villa that does not sit on its La Zagaleta hillside so much as descend it — a cascade of white horizontal planes stepping down the slope toward the golf, the coast, and the Mediterranean beyond, each one floating a little further out over the fall of the land than the one above.

The house is organised as a vertical journey. You arrive at the top, at road grade against the mountain, where the estate meets the sky. From there the building unfolds downward with the slope: the main living volume first, then the sleeping levels descending the face, then wellness, and finally the staff and service world tucked into the base of the hillside. Every level cantilevers a terrace out over the fall of the land, so the section reads as a stack of thin slabs held against the view.

The material argument is restraint. Structure is white board-formed and smooth concrete; the envelope is frameless structural glass that vanishes at the corners so a room appears to end in nothing but horizon; the ground plane and the anchoring walls are honey-toned local stone, tying the man-made planes back to the hillside they grow from.

The signature is the infinity edge. On the top terrace the pool runs to a seamless lip that dissolves into the view beyond it — the fairways and the sea reading as one continuous surface, with the whole villa cantilevered underneath and out of sight. Nothing on the seaward face is allowed to compete: no railings that read as lines, no mullions, no colour. The landscape does the talking.

This document defines the building whole — its form, its levels, its dimensions, and its palette — so that every render and every frame downstream depicts the same house. It is the single source of truth for Casa del Acantilado's form.

One volume, read as five floating planes: arrival above against the mountain, sleeping in the middle of the slope, service at the root, and at every level a terrace held out over the fall of the land.

PROJECT

Casa del Acantilado
Grand hillside villa

LOCATION

La Zagaleta, Benahávis
Gated golf estate, Marbella

REGISTER

Crisp contemporary
Fran Silvestre · A-cero
Herzog & de Meuron · SANAA

LEVELS

Five (L0 to L-4)
14.40 m total descent

PROGRAM

6 bedrooms + primary
2 staff bedrooms
Spa · cinema · wine

SIGNATURE

Infinity-edge pool
3.0 m terrace cantilevers

How the house stacks down the hillside.

THE SITE

The plot is a real, buildable hillside inside La Zagaleta, the gated golf estate in the Benahavis foothills above Marbella. The ground falls away to the south across the full descent the house needs, toward the estate's private fairways, then the coastal plain, then the Mediterranean on the horizon. The road arrives quietly at the top, against the wooded rise and the Sierra Bermeja ridge to the north; the entry is a single-storey white plane and a slot of shadow, because the drama is reserved for the descent. Orientation puts the long seaward face to the south and south-southwest, catching the full arc of afternoon and sunset light down the seaward glass.

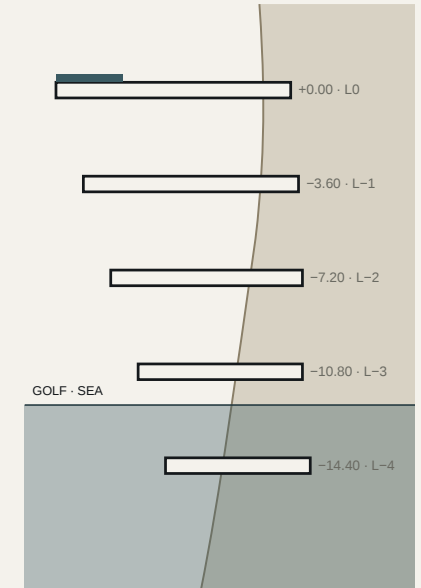
THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SECTION

The building is set on a **9.0 m structural grid**. Slabs are post-tensioned flat plates, 0.35 m deep, spanning the bays and cantilevering **3.0 m past the seaward column line** at every level to form the floating terraces. Floor-to-floor is a constant **3.60 m** (3.00 m clear plus a 0.60 m slab-and-service zone).

As the house descends it **steps back into the hillside**: each lower level is set behind the one above, so the terrace of a level cantilevers over the roof of the level below. Read from the golf and the coast below, it is five thin white planes, each narrower and further back than the last — the cascade. Structurally this is honest: the lower levels bear deeper into the slope, and the base level is largely cut into the hillside.

Vertical circulation is a single sculptural core — a glass-and-concrete stair wrapped around a lift — held to the **landward** (uphill) side so it never interrupts the view. It threads all five levels; every floor also opens to its own terrace, so the journey down is a rhythm of enclosed core and open edge.

Floor-to-floor 3.60 m · five levels · 14.40 m from the top slab to the lowest floor. The section on the plan set agrees with these numbers exactly.



Schematic section — five slabs stepping back into the hillside, each terrace cantilevering over the level below. The pool sits on the top slab. Measured section drawn to scale in the plan set.

03 — THE PROGRAM, LEVEL BY LEVEL

Five levels, top to root.

LEVEL	DATUM	PROGRAM	TERRACE & EDGE	GROSS M²
L0 Arrival · Living	+0.00	Motor court & quiet entry · great room (living / dining / open kitchen) as one glass volume opening to the view at eye level · scullery · study / office · guest powder · circulation core	Seaward living terrace with the infinity-edge pool dissolving into the horizon · outdoor dining	405
L-1 Primary · Sleeping	-3.60	Primary suite at the prime seaward corner — bedroom, dressing room, ensuite bath, private lounge · Bedroom 2 (suite) · Bedroom 3 (suite) · core	Primary private terrace (cantilever) · two bedroom terraces	364
L-2 Guest · Family	-7.20	Bedroom 4 (suite) · Bedroom 5 (suite) · Bedroom 6 (suite) · family / media room · core	Shared family terrace with plunge / spa pool (cantilever)	324
L-3 Wellness	-10.80	Spa: gym, sauna & steam, treatment room, indoor-outdoor lap pool · home cinema · wine cellar & tasting · core	Wellness terrace at the lap-pool edge (cantilever)	283
L-4 Staff · Service	-14.40	2 staff bedrooms (ensuite) · staff kitchen & living · laundry · lower garage & service access · plant / mechanical · storage — largely cut into the hillside	Service terrace / lower-slope access at the base	252
Total		6 bedrooms + primary suite · 2 staff bedrooms · spa · cinema · wine	Five cantilevered terraces	1,628

HOW THE LEVELS CONNECT

A single circulation core — an open concrete stair wound around a glass lift — runs the full 14.40 m on the landward (uphill) side, serving all five levels. It is deliberately held off the seaward face so the view is never crossed by structure. Each level also steps directly out to its own terrace; the descent alternates between the cool enclosed core and the bright open edge.

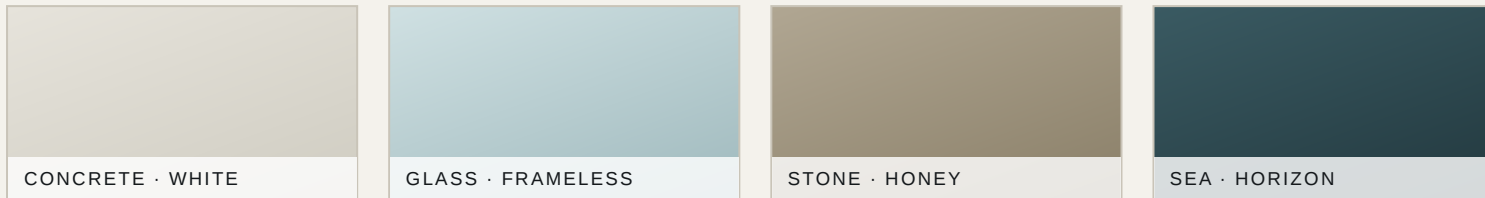
THE BEDROOM COUNT

Six bedroom suites plus the primary suite: the primary and Bedrooms 2–3 on L-1, Bedrooms 4–6 on L-2. The primary owns the prime seaward corner of L-1, one level below the living volume, so it commands the same uninterrupted horizon with complete privacy. Two staff bedrooms sit on L-4, entered from the service side.

Three materials, one horizon.

THE PALETTE

The whole villa is built from three materials held in strict discipline, so nothing distracts from the sea. Downstream renders and frames should draw from exactly this palette — the house must read the same everywhere.



Concrete — smooth white and board-formed, forms the floating slabs and structural walls; matte, no sheen. **Glass** — frameless structural glazing, minimal silicone joints, vanishing at the corners; floor-to-ceiling on the seaward face. **Stone** — honey-toned local limestone for the ground plane, terraces underfoot, and the landward anchoring walls, grounding the white planes to the hillside. Interiors: pale microcement floors, oak joinery, stone. No applied colour — the landscape and sky are the palette.

THE INFINITY EDGE

The pool sits on the L0 living terrace, running **15.0 m along the seaward edge** to a seamless overflow lip. Beyond the lip: nothing but the fall of the land, the fairways below, and the Mediterranean on the horizon, so the water reads continuous with the view. The pool is set flush with the terrace stone; the lip has no coping line. Because the terrace cantilevers 3.0 m over the level below, the pool appears to float free of the building when seen from the golf and the coast below.

STRUCTURE

9.0 m grid
PT flat slabs, 0.35 m
3.0 m seaward cantilever

FLOOR-TO-FLOOR

3.60 m constant
3.00 m clear

GLAZING

Frameless structural
Vanishing corners
Full-height seaward

POOL

15.0 × 4.0 m
Infinity lip, L0 terrace
Flush stone deck

RECURRING ELEMENTS (THE VISUAL LAW)

The stepped hillside
The infinity edge
Golf foreground, sea horizon
Five floating white planes

FOR DOWNSTREAM

Elsa & Dario render from THIS form: five levels, stepping-back stack, 3.0 m cantilevers, infinity pool on L0, glass + white concrete + honey stone.