

# HOUSE OCHO

CARMEL VALLEY, CALIFORNIA, USA

FELDMAN ARCHITECTURE

House Ocho sits atop a narrow ridge with old oak groves on either end, a site with steep meadows and commanding views in all directions. The owners originally envisioned a meandering Spanish-style house, but such a scheme meant either tearing out a large number of the site's beautiful oaks or placing the house in the middle of the ridge where it would dominate the site. Above all, the clients had fallen in love with the land and wanted a house that would enhance, not detract from, its natural beauty. At the same time, they wanted a warm, light-filled house with ample space to accommodate many guests at once.

The architect's solution was to position the house in the hillside below a cluster of stunning trees and divide the program into a series of grass-covered pavilions. Sinking the house into the hillside diminished its visual impact and left the oak grove largely untouched. Pulling apart the building elements not only broke up the house's overall massing, but enabled light to penetrate three sides of each element. Additionally, the spaces between the elements became usable outdoor rooms.

A striking feature, and one of the house's many green design elements, is the 'living roof' consisting of native grasses and wildflowers. Photovoltaic skylights are integrated as a primary design element that produces beautiful diffuse light and allows the house, though it is sunk into a hillside, to remain bright and cheery. The home's passive solar heating strategy comprises southeast glass windows and abundant thermal mass from concrete floors and exposed retaining walls. Low-E glass provides maximum insulation without significantly restricting the important solar heat transmission. Another sustainable feature is insulation made from post-industrial cotton fibres and recycled denim. Sandblasted form boards created concrete retaining walls with a soft, silvery, wood-like texture.

1 *House Ocho blends seamlessly with its environment*

2 *The natural landscape is an important element that has been integrated into all aspects of the design*

3 *The exterior terrace connects the guest rooms to the main house*









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- 1 Arrival
- 2 Entry terrace
- 3 Entry
- 4 Family room
- 5 Powder room
- 6 Kitchen
- 7 Dining room
- 8 Living room
- 9 Spa
- 10 Master bedroom
- 11 Master bathroom
- 12 Office
- 13 Loft/access to roof deck
- 14 Guest bedroom
- 15 Guest bathroom
- 16 Mechanical



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- 4 Natural light streams onto concrete floors as the ceiling fans help control the airflow
- 5 Floor plan
- 6 An adaptable loft space can be seen nestled above the kitchen
- 7 High ceilings contribute to the feeling of abundant space
- 8 The large pivot door provides light for the concrete thermal mass, contributing to the passive solar strategy
- 9 The guest bedroom offers visitors the luxury of privacy along with landscape views

Photography: Paul Dyer Photography, paul@dyerphoto.com

