Sunken into the hillside, its rooftop-enclosed raised beds, grasses, strawberries, and succulents, House Ocho yields in form and material to the beauty of the surrounding Monterey Peninsula. Tall grasses and grooved coastal oaks provide protection from wind and direct sun, and the home's living roof provides an added layer of insulation from temperatures outside.

The house spreads from the hillside as three compact pavilions rather than one large structure, breaking up its overall massing, and enabling light to penetrate three sides of each pavilion. Spaces between pavilions become usable outdoor rooms, and a series of solar panels, integrated as panes of glass into skylights, form a visual spine-filtering direct sunlight into the submerged volumes of the home. The solar panels dually filter the light penetrating the night sky from inside the house, minimizing the impact of artificial light on the home's pristine surroundings.

Concrete rooms, exposed, board-formed concrete walls, and large south-facing windows work together to facilitate passive solar heating throughout the house. For the windows that make up most of the southeastern walls, the architect selected a special glass that allows heat to penetrate while insulating the interior. A thermally reflective concrete retaining wall becomes the main circulation element in the house, providing heat to each pavilion in the winter and cool temperatures in the summer when windows are shaded during the day.

An fluid with the site as its native plant roof, House Ocho's materials palette—sandblasted concrete and exterior paint colors—precisely matches the deep gray and silvery green of the kibden-encrusted oak trees. Rustic stone used for the two chimneys matches the color of the bark on nearby manzanita trees. Exposed Douglas fir timbers reveal the layout and structure of the house, elements tying it to the surrounding forest.

With its low profile, wide windows, and board-formed concrete walls, it is difficult to imagine a structure more at peace with its site than House Ocho, more harmonious with the Santa Lucia Preserve.
A photovoltaic array is visible from the interior of the home, where it lets sunlight through daylight.

3. A framed, back-formed concrete wall is visible from every room in the house.

4. Exposed Douglas fir timbers in the mezzanine.
"A series of solar panels, integrated as panes of glass into skylights, form a visual spine, filtering direct sunlight into the submerged volumes of the home."

5. A cozy fireplace and seating area
6. Lower windows in the great bedroom reveal a lush Mediterranean landscape
7. A custom headboard offers both storage and visual separation