

# Studio — Saxe

Press Release

**Mint**

April 2018

# —Mint



Mint\_Outside\_1

## CONTEMPORARY COSTA RICAN COASTAL HOTEL COMBINES MODERN DESIGN AND TRADITIONAL CRAFTSMANSHIP

Stepping down a steep hillside and overlooking the ocean, Mint Santa Theresa is a new hotel that blends a European design aesthetic with Costa Rican craftsmanship – created to ensure that guests can commune with nature, each other and local people.

The Swedish owners fell in love with Santa Theresa as a surfing paradise, as well as its burgeoning yoga community. Inspired by Greek architecture, minimalism and Scandinavian design, they commissioned Studio Saxe who have developed a reputation for their approach to architecture that harmonises with tropical landscapes.

**Location:** Santa Teresa Costa Rica

**Date of completion:** 2018

**Client:** Jonas Thorrel / Johanna Johansson

**Area:** 660m<sup>2</sup>

**Director:** Benjamin G. Saxe

**Structural Engineer:** Sotela Alfaro Ltda.

**Electromechanical Engineer:** Dynamo Studio

**Builder:** Matta Duran

**Photography:** Andrés García Lachner

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Mint\_Outside\_2

Hotel residents occupy individual pavilion-like structures where they can retreat into a private zone and yet still interact with the nature around them. The spacious guest rooms can be opened up completely to a personal terrace with an ocean view to the front and a garden with tropical plants in the rear. Even the bathrooms have an open layout, giving the guests the opportunity to shower while listening to the sound of the crashing waves.



Mint\_Terrace\_9

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Mint\_Terrace\_6



Mint\_Bedroom\_1

Each room is afforded its own rooftop terrace, complete with lush plants, a sail for shade and furnished with rattan furniture made in Sarchí, a Costa Rican town famous for its inhabitants' craftsmanship. The architects have used locally-sourced materials throughout the project, such as in ceilings that are made of "caña brava" (a type of grass) installed in an intricate fishbone pattern. Local craftsmen have also created custom furniture made of local wood and using traditional techniques in new ways.

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Mint\_Interior\_2



Mint\_Circulation\_1

The heart of Mint Santa Teresa is the communal lounge area with its infinity pool and sunset bar. It is open on all sides save for a single wall of plants by the entrance, providing the guests with some privacy while maintaining the natural setting. The lounge serves as a meeting spot for guests, owners and locals of the area. In the morning, a breakfast buffet, is eaten at a communal table and later in the day stories are exchanged over drinks by sunset. The experience at Mint Santa Teresa is part of a new form of tourism, where visitors want to learn more about a destination and get a sense of what it is like to actually live there.

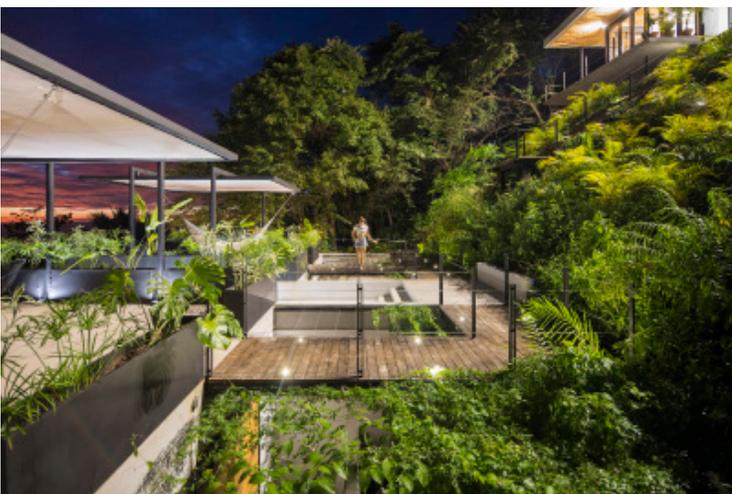
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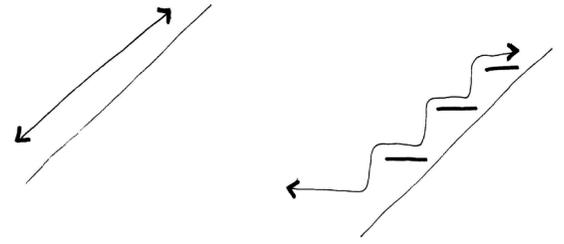
Mint\_Terrace\_3



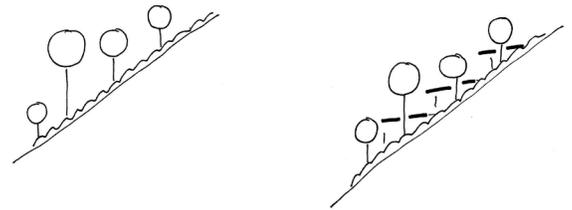
Mint\_Terrace\_2



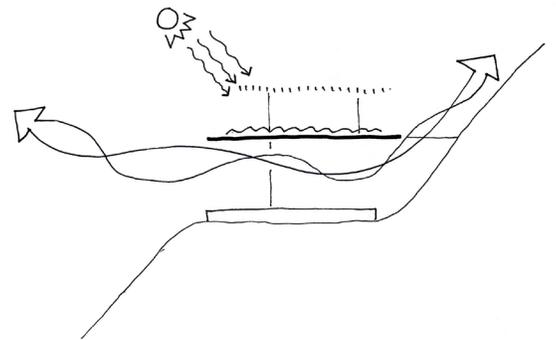
Mint\_Terrace\_7



Mint\_Diagram\_1



Mint\_Diagram\_2



Mint\_Diagram\_3

Benjamin Garcia Saxe explains his vision: "Hotels traditionally became vast objects in the landscape that bear no relation to their surroundings and are devoid of genuine human interaction. At Mint, we endeavored to create a contextual design that adapts to its landscape and offers a new type of experience for a breed of traveler seeking authenticity. We worked hard on creating spaces that combine an appreciation of natural beauty with a rich array of possibilities for social and cultural interaction. The result is a completely unique way of thinking about hospitality and wellness."

# — About us

Benjamin Garcia Saxe set up his own practice in San Jose, Costa Rica in 2004, with the aim of exploring our relationship with the natural environment through architecture. Since then, Studio Saxe has grown into an award-winning international practice made up of a multidisciplinary team, creating buildings and spaces by blending **technological innovation** with handcrafted techniques to form truly sustainable designs. Founded on the belief that buildings must connect to their landscape – whether a tropical paradise or a concrete jungle – **Studio Saxe brings a global attitude to solve local problems.** Ideas and techniques from around the world can be harnessed to benefit communities, both at home and abroad. Local traditions and identities are explored and developed, ensuring a process whereby we learn from the past and build for the future.

The dedicated architects and designers at Studio Saxe uncover **new design solutions for every project**, treating each building as an opportunity to improve methods and approaches, responding to specific places. Working alongside clients and collaborators, the studio continually seeks new forms and functions that blur the boundaries between natural habitats and inhabited space.

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