Containers of Hope

This house made of two shipping containers allowed the Peralta family to fulfill their dream of living outside of San Jose, enjoying the natural landscape and being close to their horses.

The Containers of Hope project was an experiment for both client and architect but it paid off and has become an internationally-renowned example of the creative beautiful design using shipping containers.

The containers are staggered and offer dual aspect views, meaning that the owners can enjoy the sun rise and sunset.

Location: San Jose, Costa Rica
Date of completion: 2011
Client: Peralta Family
Area: Aprox 100m²
Architecture Team: Studio Saxe
Design Director: Benjamin García Saxe
Project Architect: Benjamin García Saxe
Project Coordinator: Benjamin García Saxe
Builder: Self Built
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A roof between the two sections of the home is made from the scrap pieces of metal taken to make the windows; this not only creates an internal sensation of openness but also provides a cross ventilation which negates the need for air conditioning. The adventurous spirit of this project means that the owners are able to live debt-free in a beautiful landscape.

The final cost of the house (40,000USD) is lower than the cost of social housing provided for the poor in Costa Rica.
— Containers of Hope

Perhaps this project begins to expose the importance of design as a tool to provide beauty and comfort with a very low budget in the 21st century, whilst using creativity to not only redefine a scrap material such a disused shipping container, but perhaps to even show that there are viable, low cost, passive alternatives of temperature control to adapt to a very intense tropical climate.
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Already this proposal has began to spark a great deal of interest and could become one alternative to solve the issue of disposing of disregarded shipping containers in developing countries, as well as begin to solve the large gap which first time buyers encounter when purchasing a home.
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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.