

“Architecture is the reaching out for the truth.”

Louis Kahn

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THE INTELLIGENT TOWER

The Wissensturm in Linz, Austria known as the 'Tower of Knowledge' is an adult education center. It is housed in a 63 m elliptical tower structure with 15 upper floors, a 3-story base structure and a basement.

The services available to visitors in the Wissensturm complex includes a service center and an info point for clear identification of spaces. At the heart of the complex is a well stocked library. The aluminum and glass roof on the top floor of the tower allows for natural lighting helping reduce energy requirements.

However, Wissensturm's special feature is that it offers safe routes and a greater freedom of movement for the visually impaired. They have installed a simple system of tactile floor signals, made of ceramic tiles. Textures were conceived to stimulate the tactile feeling of the foot

and to use the contact of the walking stick on the tile. At the same time, the chromatic contrasts are useful as further communication signals for the visually impaired.

The tiles have relief symbols on their surface and form a network of routes that guide them after entering the foyer and lead them safely towards services such as desks, doors, lifts and multimedia devices. The two basic devices, forward represented by parallel lines and stop by squares, are used throughout Europe and are repeated in the pedestrian areas on every floor of the building.



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AN ARCHITECTURAL DELIGHT

Nestlé Application Group Offices, Toluca, Mexico

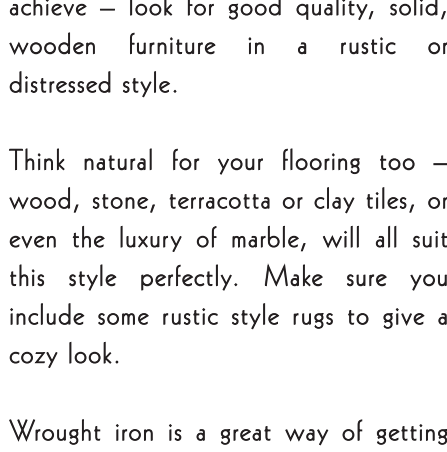
Designed by Mexican firm Rojkind Arquitecto, the Nestlé Application Group Offices are located in the industrial zone of Querétaro, near México City. It accommodates laboratories, offices, auditorium and tasting areas.

The uniqueness of this structure's design arose due to Querétaro been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1996. Thus new buildings in the industrial periphery had to have arched porticos.

Rojkind, faced with the issue resolved it by having a series of intersected domes form the matrix of an open and continuous space – the portico. This

expands into another space, formed by simple boxes in a satin finish reflective glass. The structure is a simple system of semi spherical domes made out of steel arches and rings.

The final result is a structure of unified contrasts, metallic exterior and colorful interiors. This play of contrasts results in a dynamic perspective— depending on the observer position, it can be dominant in one moment and discreet in the next.



BOOK REVIEW

Time-Saver Standards for Interior Design and Space Planning (2nd Edition)

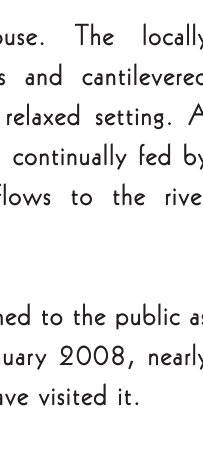
By Joseph DeChiara, Julius Panero, and Martin Zelnik

A sourcebook for planning and designing residential and commercial interiors, "Time-Saver Standards for Interior Design and Space Planning" provides time and money-saving ideas for various construction details, finishes, woodworking and special treatments.

Published by McGraw Hill and recognized as the "Silver Bible," this is a reference book for architects, interior designers, space planners and facility managers. It contains drawings, data and details on residential layouts.

The editors have brought together contributions from architectural and interior design firms to give details derived from working drawings, showing various solutions for design problems in interior architecture.

In its second edition, existing sections have been expanded to include new material as well as a host of additional lighting design details, workstation configurations, and reference standards. New sections deal with space management for healthcare, hospitality, banking and conference centers.



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ITALIAN HOME DECOR

A Touch of Class

The first idea that comes to mind when one hears the words "Italian Interiors" is a sophisticated and minimal designer look. However, "Italian interiors" could also be a rustic Tuscan style which brings with it a warm, welcoming and relaxed feel.

Featured are a few tips to bring the Italian look to your abode...

The Contemporary Look

The Contemporary Italian look is essentially a clutter-free one.



The basis of your Italian decorating scheme should be white. Paint walls and ceilings in white. Include some color as accents in accessories and furnishings.

As for furniture, choose simple, modern-looking sofas and chairs, in leather and chrome. Black and brown are the eternal favourites but you can opt for brighter, more modern colours.

The modern, streamlined, quality look goes for your flooring too – so keep it clean and pale – to go with your white walls. Marble and Tiles are much preferred flooring materials but you can opt for wood if you want a warmer look.

Luxurious fabrics are an absolute essential to complete the Italian interior style.

The Rustic Tuscan Look

Color is vital to recreating the Tuscan decorating style. The Tuscan look is warm, earthy and muted.

Your walls should be textured - with the look of old plaster or 'stucco' to give a really rustic feel.

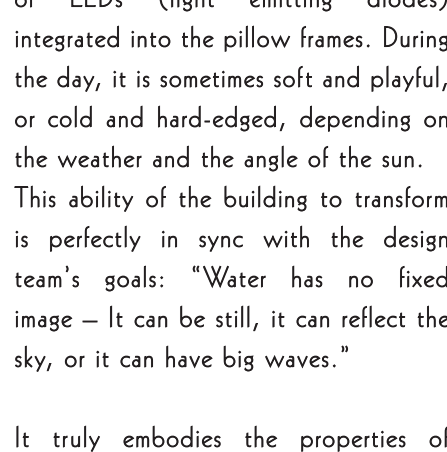
Tuscan style furniture is really easy to achieve – look for good quality, solid, wooden furniture in a rustic or distressed style.

Think natural for your flooring too – wood, stone, terracotta or clay tiles, or even the luxury of marble, will all suit this style perfectly. Make sure you include some rustic style rugs to give a cozy look.

Wrought iron is a great way of getting the Tuscan interior design look in your accessories too.

The Tuscans love their beautiful fabrics, so choose luxurious linens, draperies, lace and throws, wherever possible.

Go ahead, bring a touch of class to your home with these Italian interior décor ideas.



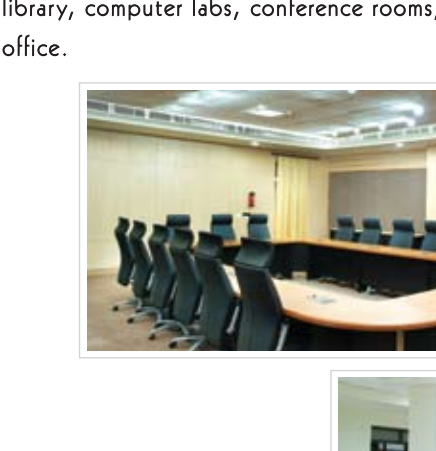
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EXTRAORDINARY HOMES

Ever since humans began living in caves, they had the urge to add a personal touch to their dwellings. For most people, it's a wish to beautify and embellish their homes and surroundings. For others, it is a quest to articulate their vision.

Featured here are two homes that reflect an incredible vision.



Fallingwater - USA

Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1935, Fallingwater is built near a waterfall in rural southwestern Pennsylvania. Broad windows give the inhabitants a feeling of the wide space. The materials used in the structure blend with the rocks and trees outside.

The sound of the active water stream on which Fallingwater is built can be heard

throughout the house. The locally quarried stone walls and cantilevered terraces add to the relaxed setting. A small swimming pool, continually fed by natural water, overflows to the river below.

In 1964 it was opened to the public as a museum. Since January 2008, nearly five million people have visited it.

Free Spirit Houses - Canada

Designed by Tom Chudleigh, Free Spirit Houses are wooden spheres that hang from trees or other surfaces. It is a biomimicry as their shape and function imitate the natural world.

The Free Spirit House is a blend of tree house and sailboat technology. Suspension points are similar to the chain plate attachments on a sailboat. Each sphere has four attachments on top and four anchor points on the boom.

The Free Spirit Tree homes are strong and are adapted to life in the forest. The interior contains modern amenities, and one can experience luxurious living within the quiet confines of a forest.



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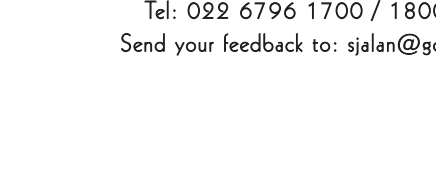
LITERALLY INTERNATIONAL

With the idea to create an international ambience and enough individual space for the student, Godrej Interio brings Merit, a comprehensive range of desk cum bench solutions. They are ergonomically designed with flexible sitting positions and are available in exciting colours.

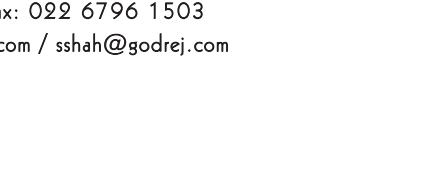
Merit



Double Seater



Ample Storage



Single Seater

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BEIJING'S WATER CUBE

It is but natural that a facility that was built to host the swimming and diving events for the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing should embody the properties of water. The designers created a building that not only captures some of the elusive characteristics of water, but also tightly integrates skin, structure, and the performance parameters of an Olympic-level sports venue.

The materials chosen were steel and a space-age plastic, ethylene tetrafluoroethylene (ETFE). By enveloping the building with ETFE, the design team could treat the Swimming Center as an insulated greenhouse, capturing the energy from the sun for heating and lighting. ETFE was more appropriate for such a use than glass, because of better acoustic and insulating properties. Also, it is lightweight, which eliminated the need for a secondary structure to support the skin.

The Water Cube's structure is the outcome of applying sophisticated

analysis and optimization software that engineers created in-house specifically for this project.

Appropriately, some of the building's most innovative features are its systems for handling water. Unlike most swimming pools, which send filter backwash water to the municipal wastewater systems, the Water Cube collects such gray water for treatment and returns it to the pool.

Visually the Water Cube becomes a glowing blue box at night with the help of LEDs (light emitting diodes) integrated into the pillow frames. During the day, it is sometimes soft and playful, or cold and hard-edged, depending on the weather and the angle of the sun. This ability of the building to transform is perfectly in sync with the design team's goals: "Water has no fixed image – It can be still, it can reflect the sky, or it can have big waves."

It truly embodies the properties of water.

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NEW INSTALLATIONS

Education by Gautam Buddha University – Furniture by Godrej Interio.

Godrej Interio brings a productive ambience with its Educational Furniture Range to Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida. Godrej Interio has provided ergonomically designed furniture across two floors for a range of application areas including classrooms, library, computer labs, conference rooms, administration room, staff room and principal's office.

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