

Section

Sheltered behind the walls are two large glass sections seen only in glimpses. Stretching between the wall and the main part of the house, the windows allow light, greenery and the pond's reflections to bring a sense of space to the interior.

The garden is partially shielded by walls on both sides, evoking a traditional monastery garden and further reinforcing the impression given by the front of the building. However, this impression is misleading. In fact, Villa Rotonda's character is the exact opposite of how it first appears. It is surprisingly transparent and open, with a glass façade flanked by large, covered terraces, one of which leads to a swimming pool. Interior and exterior merge into one. From the garden, the house still looks simple and precise, but with a modernist idiom that verges on the extravagant.

Designed by the Dutch architects Pieter and Thomas Bedaux, Villa Rotonda plays, in an elegant and surprising manner, with contrast and illusion. The brothers are the third generation of a renowned architectural dynasty. Several of Villa Rotonda's features are refined interpretations of established family traditions – for example, the choice of grey brick. "Our father, grandfather and the Bedaux studio generally are known for coating façades with a thin layer of cement that gives the buildings a grey hue," Thomas Bedaux explains. "Pieter and I wanted to add a twist to this tradition, and went in search of grey-tone brick. A sample from Petersen Tegl made all the difference – we had found our material. We visited the brickworks in Denmark with the client, and the future resident of Villa Rotonda fell for the brick."

Villa Rotonda, Goirle, the Netherlands

Client: Private

Architect: Bedaux de Brouwer Architecten

Engineer: H4D Raadgevend Ingenieurs B.V.

Landscape architect: Puur Groenprojecten

Brick: D91

Joints: 1 part white Heidelberg cement,

1 part Wittekind Portland cement,

8 parts masonry sand,

finished with a hard broom.

Text: Tina Jørstian, architect

Photos: Paul Kozlowski



The building is on a corner, and is flanked by two roads and a roundabout, from which it shields itself off.



The architects chose a brick with shades of grey reminiscent of the roughcast façades for which the previous generation in the studio was renowned.

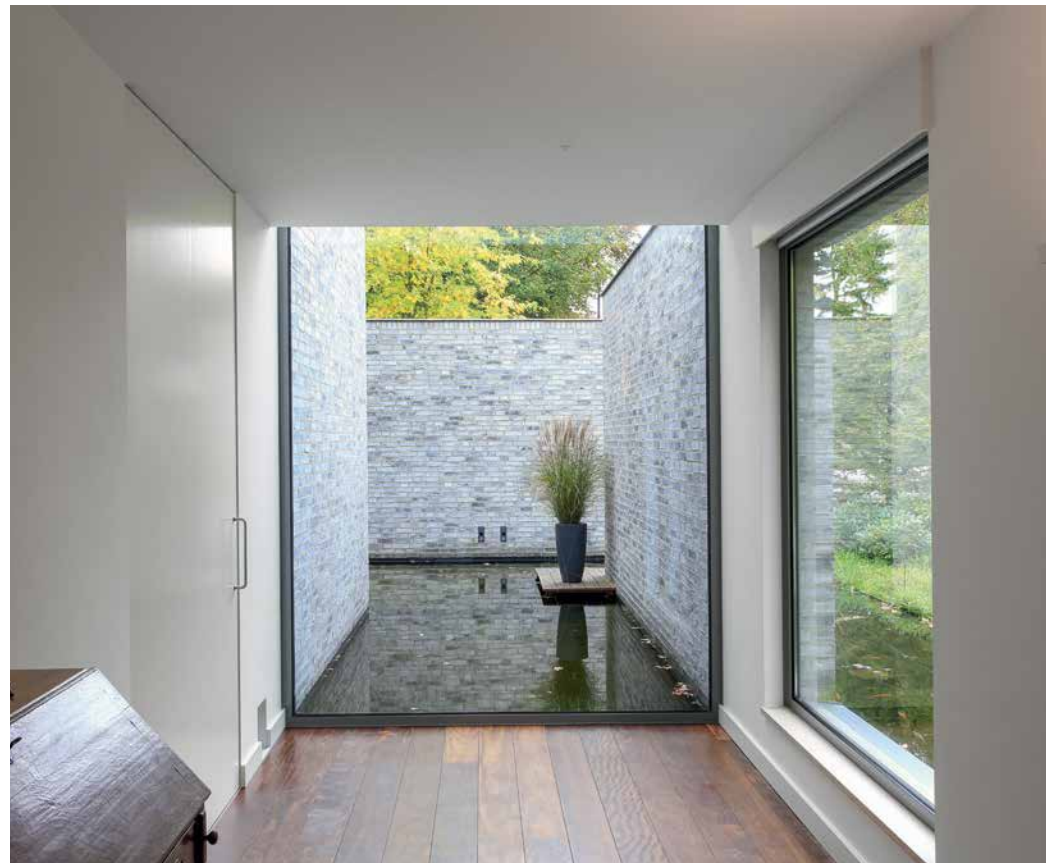


A glass façade faces onto the garden. The garden is sheltered by walls on two sides and greenery on the third.

From the hall there is a view of the pond through a large glass window.



Ground floor and first level.





Villa Rotonda is tight and precise, with gable-end chimneys and a 44-degree pitched roof.

CONTRAST AND ILLUSION

WITH ITS REFINED BALANCE OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY, THIS DUTCH HOUSE IS AT THE SAME TIME OPEN AND CLOSED, ASCETIC AND EXTRAVAGANT – AND SUBTLY TRANSCENDS ITS OWN IMMEDIATE TYPOLOGY.

Villa Rotonda towers behind high protective walls, tight and precise, with a sharply-delineated, steeply-pitched roof crowned by two gable chimneys. On the face of it, this is a beautifully-proportioned interpretation of a typical, rectangular two-storey house.

The houses in Goirle, in the south of the Netherlands, are characterised by precisely the kind of traditional Dutch style echoed in the slender, symmetrical profile of Villa Rotonda's gables. The protective outer walls also echo the building's clean, simple lines and draw on a classic architectural motif. The overall impression is refined, almost ascetic.

The house stands on a corner plot, flanked by two roads and a busy roundabout. At first glance, you might think that the location explains the high protective walls. But they are partly an illusion – indeed, one of several.

Shielding the house from noise and onlookers, the walls do have a protective function – but they are much more than just walls. They partially constitute the house's outer façades at ground-floor level. The footprint is therefore not rectangular, but L-shaped. One wall forms the exterior of the side wing, while the one that lies flush with the façade forms the exterior of the entrance.

The whole complex is built in greyish brick, while dark-grey slate covers the pitched roof. The materials exude honesty, quality and a certain solidity, which is subtly counteracted by the gently rippling effect reflected from the pond in front of the house.

The façades and wall elements facing the road are all but closed, broken only by a single window in each of the angled, protective walls.



With the exception of a single window, the angle at which you approach Villa Rotonda is completely closed. The patio and reflecting pool under it reflect daylight into the building.