

Elshani House

Rruga a Reqanit pn
Suhareke, Serbia

Architects	Gezim Pacarizi Suhareke, Serbia
Clients	Bislim and Fadile Elshani Suhareke, Serbia
Commission	2004
Design	2004 - 2006
Construction	2005 - 2006
Occupancy	2006
Site	500 m²
Ground floor	110 m²
Total floor	280 m²
Costs	62,500 USD
Programme	Responding to the nature and climate of its locality, the Elshani House has a simple, open and contemporary form constructed with locally available materials, red brick and exposed concrete, using local building methods. Built on a slope, the house is comprised of two blocks and has three levels in total. The generous interior is open and has a spatial continuity, with load bearing elements placed so that they do not obstruct the sense of openness, and south-facing windows that draw in warmth and provide views of the Shar mountains.





3702.KOS ELSHANI HOUSE 2005-2006, KOSOVO,
Gezim Pacarizi architect

Elshani house is situated on the outskirts of Suhareka, a town near Prizren, in southern Kosovo, on a street of seemingly incomplete red brick and concrete houses built after the 1999 war. The materials used in the surrounding houses are sub-standard. A few are whitewashed.

In contrast, the Elshani house is a portrait of clear, visible order. It is a small (8mx12mx6m), red brick house with a flat roof. The structure is built on a slope and comprises two blocks that overlap each other with a total of three levels. The northern block faces the road and contains a basement, a street-level workshop, and two upstairs bedrooms. The southern block sits at the base of the slope and leads to a garden; the ground floor contains the living room and kitchen; the upper floor has a bedroom and a full bath. The roof of the southern block doubles as a terrace.

The home's modest façade contrasts with a rich, expansive, open, and highly functional interior. Plentiful south-facing windows illuminate the interior details, draw in warmth from the low winter sun, and look onto the distant Shar mountain range. Non-load bearing elements are whitewashed. Concrete load bearing slabs and pillars remain exposed. Spatial continuity links the three levels such that a vertical ascension invites visitors to an architectural promenade.

Elshani house is a small-scale example of how architecture can respond to the region-specific needs of people. The site, climate, and natural surroundings were incorporated into the house's design. Its modest, clean exterior and generous interior make it a home that everyone wants to live in. The choice of materials may seem simplistic at first; yet, by using simplicity as a design principle, the beauty of the structural forms and materials is revealed, not hidden or obscure. The design is easy to understand and to use. The house can tell the story of its making. As with traditional Balkan architecture, man is placed at the center and invited to dialogue with nature.

ELSHANI HOUSE INTERIORS



1m 5m PLANS 1:200
north

