

THE DACHA WHICH CAME FROM THE SOUTH

UMBERTO ZANETTI

*Words by Laura Ragazzola
Photography by Yuri Palmin*

TESTATINA



HERE: The house is raised on metal pilotis and thanks its L-shaped volume, lives into the existing trees, without cutting.

A FASCINATING WOOD HOUSE IN A FOREST CLOSE TO MOSCOW RECALLS THE RUSSIAN TRADITION WHILE OFFERING HIGH COMFORT AND SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS. SURPRISINGLY, EVERYTHING WAS MADE IN ITALY



LEFT AND UNDER: The living-dining room is located on the first level (see the photo of the exterior) and has large windows facing the beautiful landscape.






ABOVE AND LEFT: The bedroom and the bathroom. The furnishing, designed by ZDA Zanetti, are made by Essequattro; lights by Kreon.
ON FACING PAGE: The staircase for access to the house from the ground floor.

Not far from Moscow, in the forest area within the golf club of Pirogovo, you can find a contemporary dacha which has been completely designed and built in Italy, combining high innovation with Russian traditions. "Building a house that can stand up to Russian weather was a challenge", says Umberto Zanetti, the Milan based architect who signed the project. "Temperatures range from 30 degrees in the summer to -40 in the winter. The other challenge was to insert the house into the beautiful natural setting with minimal disruption". With over three decades of experience in the international scene, Zanetti has a wide experience of projects in Russia. For the new dacha, he chose wood as the primary material and designed an L-shaped plan to best position the house amid the existing trees. To provide more insulation and a 360° view of the nature outside, the residential spaces has been elevated on metal piloties with different diameters, asymmetrical positions and a particular zinc texture, so that they could blend with the birch trees all around. At the ground floor, a large covered terrace makes it possible to stay outside, protected from the strong summer sunlight and early winter snow. There is also a



glass area with controlled microclimate which recalls the typical verandas that in Russian dachas act as a buffer between indoors and outdoors. The facades are oriented to maximize daylight exposure and natural ventilation. Innovative solutions, including a geothermal system with a highly efficient heat pump, have been implemented to increase sustainability and comfort. Even more innovative has been the construction process. "We pre-assembled the dacha in Italy and made the final assembling in Russia" reminds Zanetti. "It took 15 trailers to haul all the pieces.

A journey of 3000 km, but it was worth it. Once in Pirogovo, the worksite lasted only few weeks." Which proves that industrialized processes, while not setting limits to creative design, can allow for more control on quality, time and costs. 

FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: The house lives in symbiosis with the landscape: all the magic of the Russian winter appears from the deck of the ground floor, thanks to the elevated arrangement of the design. This covered terrace offers the possibility to stay outside, protected from the winter snow but also from the strong summer sunlight.



UZ

Umberto Zanetti

He obtained a degree in civil engineering at the Politecnico in Milan, Italy. He lives and works in Milan where in 1982 he opened his own studio - ZDA Zanetti Design Architettura - specializing in architectural design, interior design and industrial and graphic design. He has designed and carried out various projects in Italy and abroad (the U.S.A, France, Belgium, Switzerland e Russia) pertaining to residential buildings, retail outlets and offices. The projects in St. Petersburg and Moscow (Russia) have been selected for the IN / Arch Award "Best Italian project abroad" 2014 and as a finalist for the 2015 Italian Architecture Gold Medal. In the Milanese hinterland of Cascina Merlata, the "Up Town" residential district project won the Confindustria Ceramica international award "ceramics and the project-2019". In addition to the design activity, he also is exhibition curator and essayist.

BLOW UP



A Veranda is a buffer between indoors and outdoors.



The Prefab Structure was made by italian company Woodbeton.