


A modern bathroom with white marble walls and a ceiling with horizontal wooden slats. A large, white, freestanding bathtub is positioned in the center. To the right is a long vanity with a white countertop and wooden cabinets. A large window in the background offers a view of a lake and a forested hill. The ceiling features several rectangular skylights and two circular recessed lights.

VELUX®

BRINGING THE OUTSIDE IN

**A coastal villa in
Søgne, Norway**



"The fluid form of Villa AT was a response to the coastal topography, the weather patterns and the need to frame key views out across the water. The building nestles into the rocks, while a ziggurat of stone steps leads down to the fresh water swimming pool and pool terrace, which sit within a natural cleft in the landscape."

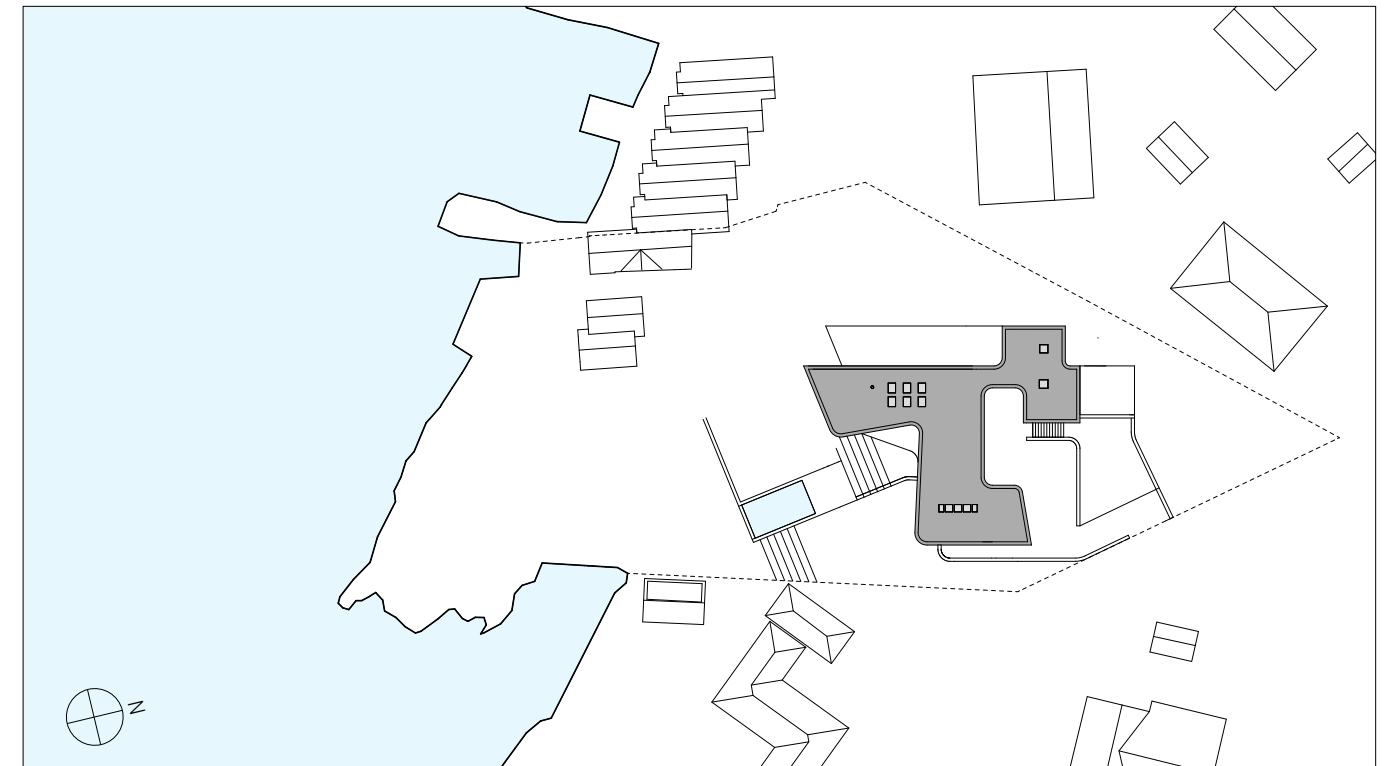
Todd Saunders, Architect

MODERN LIVING IN TOUCH WITH THE LAND

Villa AT, in Søgne near Kristiansand on Norway's southern coast, is a stylish, single storey family home, set on a rocky outcrop overlooking the sea.

The flowing design pays homage to the surrounding landscape, dynamic weather and breathtaking views.

The owners, Svein and Bente, had lived in a holiday home in the village for many years and were intimately familiar with the area: their knowledge of the views, the climate and the changing light throughout the seasons were all considered in the design by Saunders Architecture.



SAUNDERS ARCHITECTURE

Saunders Architecture was founded by Todd Saunders in 1998. The Canadian architect has lived and worked in the Norwegian town of Bergen since 1996, following his studies at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax and McGill University in Montreal. Saunders' studio has completed residential and cultural projects across Norway, in addition to working in over ten other countries around the world.

Saunders Architecture brings an experimental approach to materials and building systems that it fuses with a traditional, craft-led approach, often exploring vernacular forms and methods. Their extensive experience working within landscapes demonstrates the studio's understanding of the importance of place, from wild protected environments to a more traditional suburban location.

BUILDING WITH LIGHT IN MIND

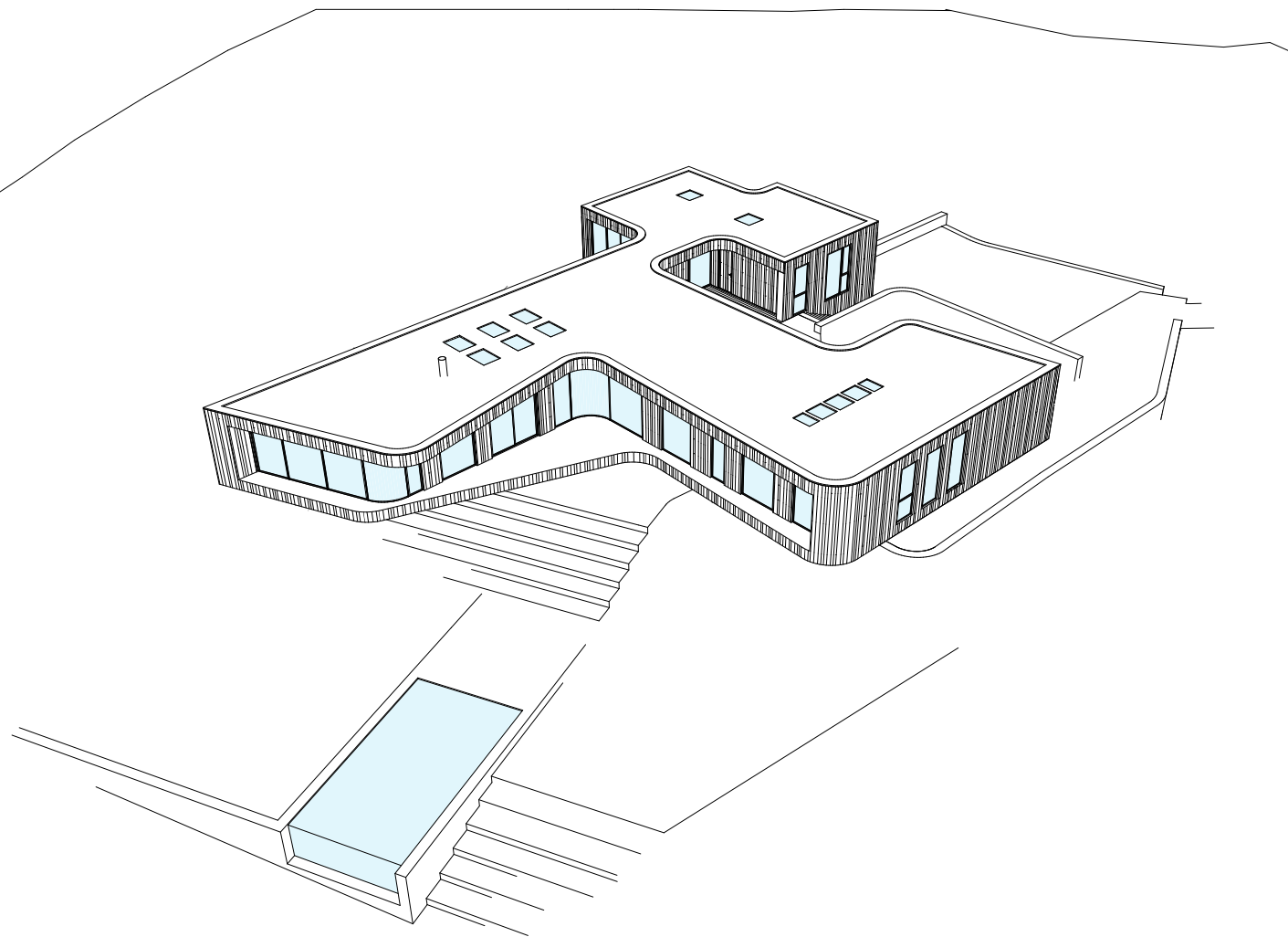
The build, which measures around 310 square metres, is tailored precisely to the location, hugging the rocky shoreline and staying out of the sightlines of properties nearby.

Light plays a major role in bringing the mood and atmosphere of the surroundings into the building. The windows are carefully planned to capture the shifts in the quality and tone of the light as the weather changes, day turns into night and the seasons progress.

During the design process, the architects noticed that it was getting a little dark in the centre of the house. Saunders therefore drew some VELUX skylight openings above the kitchen in the 3D model. "This made the room look completely different, as you no longer needed artificial light above the worktop," reports Saunders.

A total of six VELUX flat roof windows were therefore installed in the kitchen and dining area. Three run along the entire length of the kitchen island and three more parallel to it above the dining area. The direct incidence of light from above, known as zenith light, penetrates deeper into the room and provides up to three times as much daylight than light coming in from the side through façade windows, especially on overcast days.

The use of artificial light can therefore be significantly reduced.



“Our job as architects is to capture natural light in an interesting way.”

Todd Saunders, Architect





LIGHTING FROM ABOVE

Five additional VELUX flat roof windows were installed in the main bathroom, positioned on the ceiling above the wall rather than in the middle of the room.

This thoughtful placement helps natural light bounce off the white marble wall, spreading brightness more evenly throughout the room and creating a calm, welcoming atmosphere.

"There is something about VELUX roof windows, when we pull them up against the wall, the light would drag down to the surface."

Todd Saunders, Architect

DESIGNED TO EMBRACE THE VIEW

Todd Saunders describes the floor plan, which is centred around a long, curved glass façade with a view of the coastal landscape, as “fitting like a glove”. At the core of the home’s layout lies the entrance area, which is protected from the weather but already offers a view of the water. The house is divided into two different areas.

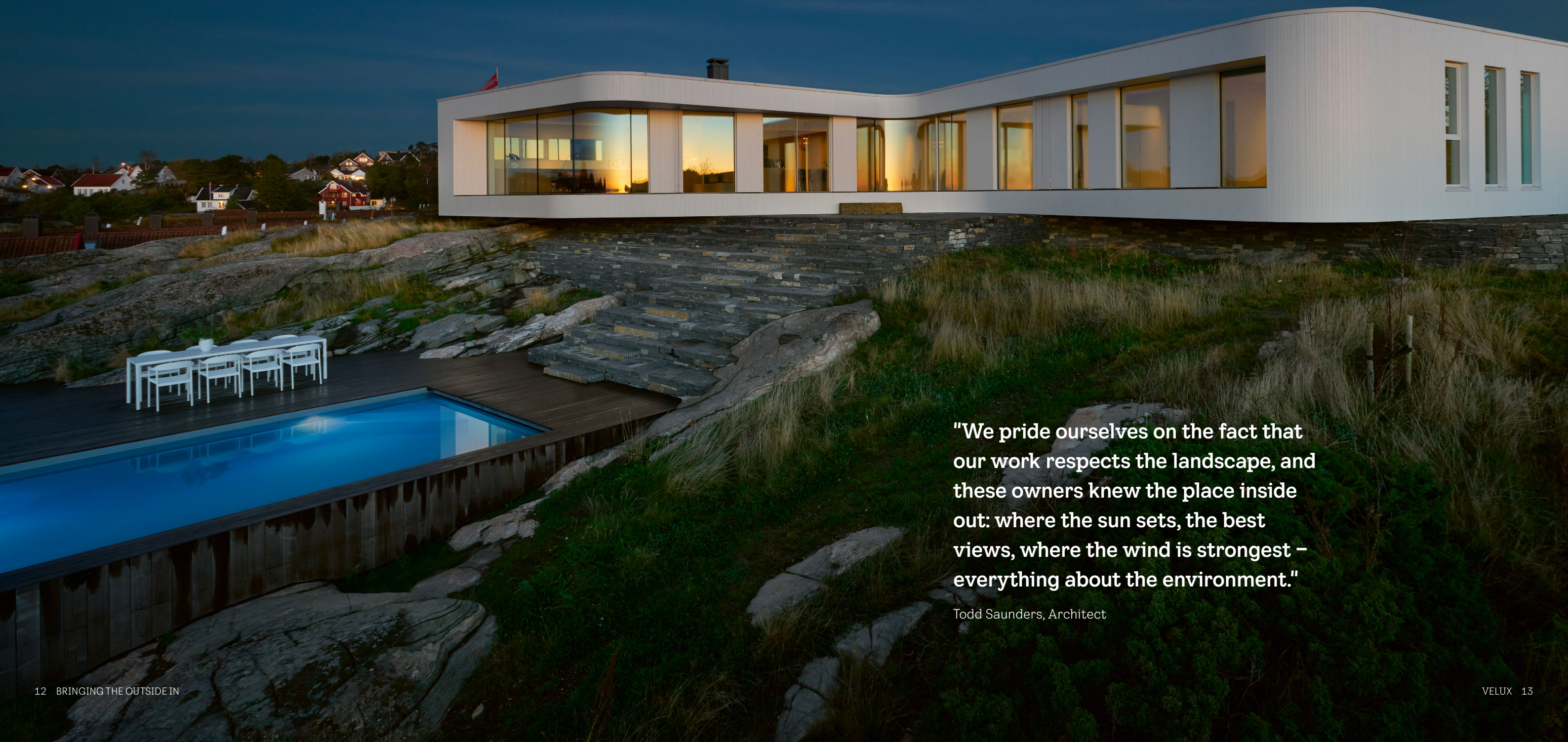
To the right of the entrance is the open-plan family living area, with a marble-clad concrete fireplace that separates the kitchen and dining area from the living room. To the left, a glazed corridor leads to two children’s bedrooms, a family bathroom and the master bedroom, which also offers sea views.

In addition, the family wanted a detached guest house for relatives or friends, which is located next to the house on the driveway. A corridor leading to the bedrooms and bathroom creates an avenue of light that benefits the two children’s bedrooms, the family bathroom and the open-plan master bedroom.

Plan 1st floor



IN HARMONY WITH THE LANDSCAPE



"We pride ourselves on the fact that our work respects the landscape, and these owners knew the place inside out: where the sun sets, the best views, where the wind is strongest – everything about the environment."

Todd Saunders, Architect



BEAUTIFUL VIEWS FROM EVERY PERSPECTIVE

"The view is always part of the house and follows you; it is constantly moving and changing in the corner of your eye as you go about your day."

Todd Saunders, Architect



MINIMALISM AND NATURAL MATERIALS

The interior is simple and minimalist, with white walls and oak floors, customised joinery and a library wall.

The ceilings, clad in white wooden slats, mirror the soft-white spruce wood of the exterior façade and further temper the geometry of the minimalist design. Oak flooring and customised joinery round off the stylish, uncluttered interior.

"The little nook creates the feel of a separate room in the hallway. It's a great place to sit and read, take a nap or just take in the view."

Todd Saunders, Architect





PROJECT DATA

Client:	Private
Location:	Søgne, Norway
Architecture:	Saunders Architecture - Bergen, Norway
Interior designers:	Hannes Wingate + Matt Morrison
Construction:	Konstruksjonsteknikk AS, Erling Olsen
Year:	2018
Photography:	Bent René Synnevåg

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