

Pål Ross

PHOTO: JAMES HOLM

ROSS ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

In January 2017, Swedish Ross Architecture & Design added one more prestigious award to its CV: "Best of Design on Houzz". It was only fitting that the world's leading platform for home and design gave the award to one of this century's leading architectural firms for upscale living and working environments.

Pål Ross is a native of Stockholm who after 13 years of residency and study in Spain returned to Sweden and in 1996 founded the firm Ross Architecture & Design. Inspired by anthroposophy, architects like Frank Lloyd Wright and Frank Gehry and his American wife Deirdre, Ross has created his own unique, eco-friendly, artistic and unconventional style combining early Scandinavian functionalism enriched with international and organic impulses.

- When I started the business 20 years ago, there was no private market in Sweden or Norway for home building, Ross remembers. – Everything was pre-fabricated. I couldn't believe the bad products sold by catalogues, many of them containing materials damaging to your health. People bought them because they didn't know any better.

- A lot of people were then, and still are, living in homes that make them ill, and that is a big problem. Everybody should be able to live in a home that at least lets you keep the health you have. Preferably it should be an environment not just to live in, but to get energy from. Your home should be an environment that gives you a tail wind, a place that helps you get along, where the soul of the place is flowing with you. We have the know-how to create the kinds of environments that make people both feel better and happier.

«Live in A
work of art is
our motto»

NORDIC SWAN CERTIFIED HOME BUILDER

Ross Architecture & Design is eco-certified by Nordic Swan (Svanen), a thorough and strict eco-labelling that evaluates a product's impact on the environment throughout the whole life cycle. Every component is thoroughly checked to make sure it does not contain any components hazardous to health. – The difference in keeping or losing your health is everything to us, Ross says.

- I often compare architecture to music, he continues. – Almost everyone can relate to music. You get in a better mood when you hear something you like. You may even start dancing. Architecture is the same. The difference is that bad music you can turn off. Bad architecture you are stuck with.

When asked to describe his creative process when starting a project, Ross answers:

- I start by having deep interviews with my clients – all the adult family members - where I ask them about their hobbies, their dreams and their interests. At the same time I explain the way I work, so that my clients know what it is I provide. At this point we also agree on a fixed price. Nobody else does that. I prefer to guarantee results, 100% satisfaction. Others are selling hours, we sell results.

When the design process starts, Ross works for a month or so without customer interference before presenting the results. – At that point we are open for changes. So far we have finished more than 300 projects and have almost without exception been spot-on right the first time.

After the last inspection, when the project is finally approved, Ross signs it with a silver plaque. – We take pride in what we do, he explains.

Ross Architecture & Design is also the only operator that guarantees acquiring all the permits necessary. – A typical question is: Is this really possible in Sweden? But I take the risk. I deal with all the complications. I know the regulations and restrictions and I get the permits approved.

VENTURING INTO THE COMMERCIAL FIELD & LOOKING ABROAD

In the last few years Ross has ventured into the commercial field applying the same strategy as with home owners, by interviewing the employees in order to create an ambient working environment.

Ross architecture & design has already designed a sports facility, office environments and a restaurant in the Swedish capital, a shopping center in Malmö, a holiday resort in Turkey and an ongoing project with 50 houses, a hotel and training facilities on a golf course in southern Sweden, just to mention a few.

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From top left: Villa Viken, Limited edition. Villa Andromeda, Royal edition. Villa Victor, Exclusive design. Villa Saturnus, Limited edition. DESIGN PÅL ROSS - PHOTO: MIKAEL DAMKIER.

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When we tell Ross that there are First hotels in Spain, Iceland, Finland, Denmark, Norway and of course in his home country Sweden, he says he already has one project in Norway, one in Finland and one in Denmark in addition to the many in his native Sweden.

We are also pretty big in Turkey, he says. – But we are really open for more projects abroad. We have both the capacity and know-how for bigger projects. You mentioned Spain. There are eight of us in the main office. Four of us speak Spanish fluently. So we are very ready for Spain. Mallorca, for example, is such a fantastic meeting place for all Europeans. We’d love to have something going on there.

- And Iceland, of course, would be a dream. The more dramatic the nature, the happier I am. That is one reason our buildings are not square. The more I think about it, the less logical it is that 99.99% of all living quarters are square.

Ross likes the challenge of “awkward” lots. – Twenty years ago we implemented a building technique that made it possible for us to build in complicated environments. I am 100% sure our architecture and the volcanic landscape of Iceland would melt together like milk shake.

- Property and building need each other, he continues. – A lot of times people look at certain lots and think they cannot put anything there. That is when I ask, have you heard of ROSS? Finishes Pål Ross, CEO and founder of ROSS ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN.

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