

ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN, INTERIORS + PROPERTY

# identity<sup>®</sup>

ISSUE 231 / MAY 2023

The Design Issue

identity.ae

A MOTIVATE PUBLICATION

DHS 25.00 OR 2.70 BD 2.60  
SR 25.00 KD 2.10



6291100741137

# Mediterranean spirit

Architects Tiziano Vudafieri and Claudio Saverino  
have transformed a 1950s house in an Italian seaside town into  
a holiday home that embraces nature

WORDS BY JENNIFER COPLEY  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAOLO VALENTINI







Above: Vintage furniture and carpet. Bookcase designed by Vudafieri Saverino Partners. Previous page: Bed designed by Vudafieri Saverino Partners. Floor lamp by Servomuto. Vintage rocking chair

“Every place has its own *genius loci*, a suggestion that is already contained within it, and that can be physical or immaterial,” explain Tiziano Vudafieri and Claudio Saverino, founders of Milan- and Shanghai-based architectural firm Vudafieri-Saverino Partners. It is this understanding of context and place that distinguishes their approach, and one that is unmistakable in their new project – a holiday home in Tuscany’s sought-after seaside destination, Versilia.

In their renovation of a 265-square metre 1950s house, the partners have captured this *genius loci*, or ‘spirit of a place’, by creating a home that is characterised by light and warmth and has a distinct relationship to its natural surroundings.

Central to the client’s brief was creating a vacation home that welcomed family and friends, in an atmosphere that recalled southern Italy and Greece, which the architects sought to incorporate into the design while also considering the property’s specific location. “Our work always starts with defining the ‘story’, which is the most difficult part,” the duo explains. “It is necessary to establish a strong bond with the client, to understand what to tell and how to tell it, and then to check whether we are telling it in the right way or not.”

With the Versilia property, there is a clear design story of a holiday home made for relaxation and entertaining, and where the garden and exterior are intrinsic to the interior living space. This was



achieved by enhancing the glazed areas: installing large windows and glass doors that frame the surrounding lush greenery. Here, the architects not only redistributed and enlarged certain areas in the home to create volume, but also created permeable spaces. This is most notable in the design of the outdoor deck, adding depth to the living room on one side and welcoming in the changing light and verdant foliage of the garden on the other.

The seaside town of Versilia is known for its sandy beaches, riviera and alpine backdrop. In their careful selection of natural materials, textiles and lighting, Vudafieri and Saverino's design story subtly pays tribute to these notable elements of the town. There is continuity woven into every design detail – from the Mediterranean colour palette, rattan ceiling panels and bleached oak flooring to the striped textiles

and white terracotta tiles. There are also references to Southern Italy, as seen in the beige Marmorino finish created by the artist Filippo Falaguasta in the master bedroom and bathroom. While the materials and finishes recall the property's surroundings and the client's reference points, they also create a richness in terms of surface and space. The house incorporates glass, stone and panelled wood, among other materials, creating a dynamic interplay between textures. The design is characterised by light and warmth.

“One of the features we are most excited and proud of is the overall welcoming and elegant atmosphere of the house,” Vudafieri and Saverino share. “[It has] a relaxing Mediterranean atmosphere [...] that we were able to realise through the dialogue created between the house, garden and outdoor spaces, which is the highlight of the entire project.” ■

Top left: Stone sink and shower walls designed by Vudafieri Saverino Partners. Top right: Hanging lamps by Santa & Cole. Floor lamp by Fontana Arte. Vintage wicker armchair and vintage rugs. Next page: Sofas by Talenti. Floor lamp by Marset. The open design unites the exterior and interior spaces

