

La Corona

Ciudad San Cristobal, Guatemala

PROJECT DETAILS

Project Area: 11 acres
Client: Techo S.A.
Year Designed: 2004

For more information, visit doverkohl.com and castilloarquitectos.com.



A commercially-oriented square for La Corona and surrounding neighborhoods features the stout arcades that are typical in Guatemala.



A plaza slopes toward a fountain and staircase. The plaza is detailed as a curbsless shared space, where parking, gathering area, and drainage features are distinguished by changes in paving materials and patterns.



Cottages, courtyard houses, and apartment buildings sit side by side on a green park.



The Project

La Corona was designed to become an integral part of an existing neighborhood that surrounds it and also to become its mixed-use center. The plan includes residential options that reinterpret traditional Guatemalan house types while providing for a wide range of households, including expanding young families, couples, singles, and the elderly. The intent was to allow for as many types of households to live within close proximity of each other and to deliberately place people of different generations and socio-economic levels within walking distance of common open spaces and amenities. In conventional developments in Latin America, a neighborhood of this size would be gated off, and access points would be reduced to just one or two. La Corona, though it has secure access points, connects to the surrounding street network in no fewer than seven locations. In the future, if crime rates or the perception of crime diminishes, the streets can be made fully open to the public. This built-in flexibility distinguishes La Corona from its peer developments in the region. Even though the neighborhood is compact, there is a wide range of open space types. At the west, a deep forested ravine can be viewed from an overlook park. Toward the northern part of the site, there is a green space that can accommodate play fields. Near the center of the neighborhood there is a hardscaped turbine square and also a more organically shaped green that preserves a stand of mature cypress and pine trees. In the southeastern corner of the site is a commercially-oriented square which is useful not only to residents of La Corona, but also to residents of the surrounding neighborhoods. Rather than internalize the commercially-oriented square, La Corona's square is completely open and accessible to the public. A network of narrow streets and pedestrian paseos weaves throughout the neighborhood, connecting higher areas to lower parts through staircases and gently sloping paths.

Process

La Corona was designed by Castillo Arquitectos and Dover, Kohl & Partners during a week-long charrette in Guatemala.