

Juniper House Gotland, Sweden Designed by Hans Murman and Ulla Alberts



When Hans Murman and Ulla Alberts set out two years ago to build a summer home on Gotland, an island south of Stockholm, Alberts's family teased them about spoiling the compound. Her mother and five siblings all have neighboring vacation homes on Gotland, all traditional white stone cottages. Murman and Alberts are architects with adventurous taste and it was clear they would dissent. "Everyone was a little nervous about what we might build," Murman says. "They're afraid of modern architecture."

In mischievous response to the familial concerns, Murman photographed the grove of juniper trees on his site and printed the images on a broad swath of plastic netting, which he then wrapped around three sides of a simple two-bedroom box of oiled pine the couple constructed themselves for \$100,000. The netting acts as camouflage, allowing the house to vanish among the trees at dusk.

Graphic trickery aside, the house does make use of its surroundings, particularly the late-summer sunsets. To take advantage of the lingering Scandinavian light, the couple and their three children eat dinners cooked on a woodstove in a kitchen that can be opened wide to the western sky. Extending outdoors from the kitchen is a wooden platform that feels more like a dock than a deck. Murman and Alberts amble out on their maritime deck to meet arriving friends, but because it has no furniture, when they close the sliding doors and withdraw into total privacy, the platform takes on a blank, almost inhospitable character. "When [the sliding doors] are open we're inviting people in," Murman says, "and when they're closed the house is just for us." ▶

The Juniper House on Gotland, a Swedish island retreat for Stockholm residents, has a kitchen and open eating area with a pocket door that slides open so family members can

enjoy the long Scandinavian evenings. The deck is unfurnished to promote a docklike feel—and because the chill off the Baltic Sea often inhibits outdoor lounging.





Hans Murman and Ulla Alberts built their home from pine (top) cut to exact specifications on the mainland so they could easily assemble it onsite with neighbors and nephews.

A small kitchen (above) affords just enough space for the family. The plastic netting (right) covers three sides of the house, including an outdoor shower, like arboreal exterior wallpaper.