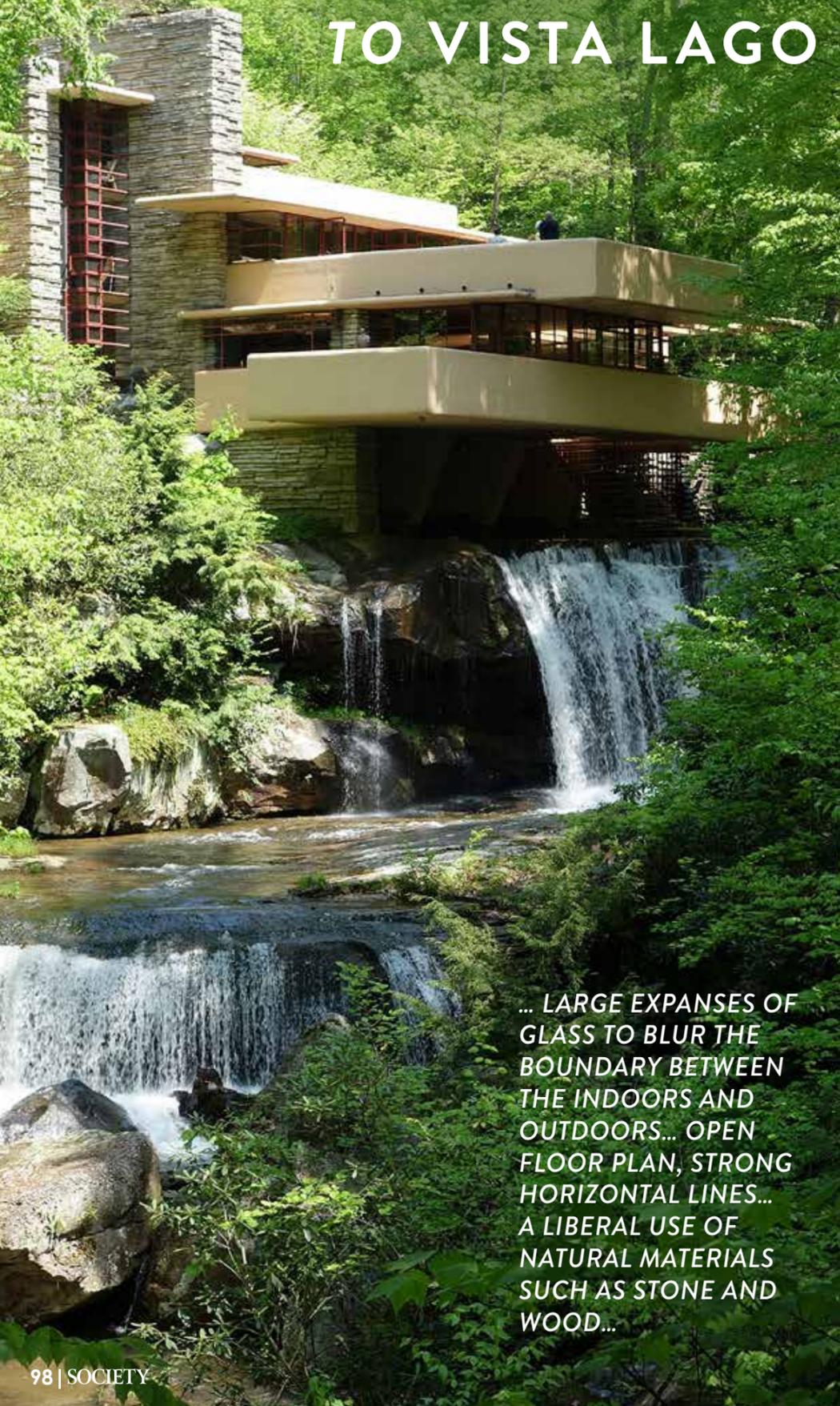


FROM LLOYD WRIGHT TO VISTA LAGO



... LARGE EXPANSES OF GLASS TO BLUR THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE INDOORS AND OUTDOORS... OPEN FLOOR PLAN, STRONG HORIZONTAL LINES... A LIBERAL USE OF NATURAL MATERIALS SUCH AS STONE AND WOOD...

A look at the progression of architectural ideas from the open-plan concept originated by Lloyd Wright to the classic UDesign house of today.

Article by Vivion O'Kelly
Photos courtesy of BRIGHT, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and The Frank Lloyd Wright Trust

Left: Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater House, located in the mountains of Southwestern Pennsylvania.
Below: A villa at Vista Lago Residences, located in the hills above Marbella

“**N**othing should be attached to the structure without considering the effect on the building's whole... large expanses of glass to blur the boundary between the indoors and outdoors... open floor plan, strong horizontal lines... a liberal use of natural materials such as stone and wood... an open floor plan concept allowing a free flow of space from room to room... sustainable concepts using local materials, southerly orientations for passive solar heating in winter and deep overhangs to shade rooms in summer”

An accurate description of the basic architectural concepts behind a Vista Lago villa? Well yes, fairly accurate. Part of a text on how the architects at UDesign go about their business? It could be.

But it isn't. This text was written by Victoria Hale some years ago for an American heating systems blog (WarmlyYours), and refers to the work of Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959), one of the most famous American

architects of all time. More specifically, her references are primarily to his Prairie Style period, dating from the beginning of the 20th century, of which the Robie House in Chicago is one of the best-known examples.

None of Lloyd Wright's houses of that period closely resembles a classic UDesign house of today, but a key concept which affects the structural integrity and appearance of a house unites the two. This is the cantilever, a rigid structural element extending horizontally and supported at only one end. Wright used them in his *Fallingwater House* to project large balconies, and they have widely used in bridge construction over the past century. Their great advantage in building design is that they allow for free space underneath a beam without any supporting columns

or bracing. In other words, open planning.

In ordinary homes, as distinct from office buildings, the open plan concept first began to gain widespread popularity in the 1960s and 70s with the opening of the kitchen and sitting or dining room areas into

LLOYD WRIGHT WAS ONE OF THE FIRST IMPORTANT MODERN ARCHITECTS TO DESIGN FLAT ROOFED HOUSES IN HIS LATER PERIOD, THE MOST FAMOUS EXAMPLE BEING HIS FALLINGWATER HOUSE, BUILT IN 1937.

one, allowing the cook - usually the housewife - to interact with the rest of the family while preparing meals. The installation of extractor fans mostly eliminated the problem of kitchen smells, while the absence of interior walls provided for increased sunlight throughout the main lounge area from windows in the exterior walls.

Lloyd Wright was one of the first important modern architects to design flat roofed houses in his later period, the most famous example being his *Fallingwater House*, built in 1937. This concept has also carried on into the 21st century, although slower than might have been expected, given





Lloyd Wright's famous Robie House in Chicago

that ordinary people have a natural tendency to cling to what they know; in this case, a house looking like what they already know to be a house, complete with pitched roof. Here in Spain, poor housing in the south, where shovelling snow is rare activity, was often no more than a simple block shape. Not surprisingly, the typical warm-weather UDesigned house of our day is flat roofed.

perfection is still alive and well. But he would not see, at first glance, the huge advances made in the area of environmental friendliness and sustainability. Which is not to say that he was oblivious of the problem. His mid-20th century ranch houses had high ceilinged living rooms and open kitchens, and along with large glass windows, they presented a challenge to heat efficiently, as heat rises and remains trapped in high spaces. His response was to install radiant floor heating, thus taking advantage of rising heat.

So what would Lloyd Wright say if introduced to a UDesign house of today, such as a Vista Lago villa? He would undoubtedly be pleased that his ideas have survived into the 21st century, and happy to see that the architectural artistry he practiced to

He was one of the early pioneers of sustainable building design, first using his textile concrete block system



A Vista Lago villa, designed by UDesign

in 1923, providing, as he stated, "fabrication as infinite in colour, texture and variety as in that rug". This enabled him to link the structure to its site by a series of terraces that reached out into the landscape, making it an integral part of that landscape. Think Vista Lago.

From concrete block construction to the high-tech systems we now use, from simple underfloor heating to the numerous high-tech heating and cooling options we have today, think Vista Lago. And from what were then advanced hidden wiring solutions to our present-day state-of-the-art illumination and security technology, think Vista Lago. BRIGHT's homes reflect luxury housing design of the future, but they are also conscious of the debt they owe to one of the great architects of the past.

Visit The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation for more information on his work: frankloydwright.org

For more information on Vista Lago Residences visit: vistalago.es or call the Sales Team to reserve your villa: (+34) 648 981 111 info@by-bright.com



VISTA LAGO RESIDENCES

Vista Lago Residences is a development of 18 luxury sustainable villas located in the 200 hectare country estate of Real de la Quinta, overlooking Marbella. Each villa has breathtaking views across the Mediterranean Sea to the coastline of Africa. The outside/inside concept is found throughout each villa, with the lounge and terrace seamlessly merging into one huge living space. In key parts of the villas, both at ground level and upstairs, the windows will disappear into the walls, ensuring perfectly clear views and bringing the outside in. Luxury minimalism would be a reasonable description of the style used, where nothing is excess and nothing gets in the way of the unique view these villas offer.

The developer of Vista Lago is BRIGHT, who is partnered with UDesign, an award-winning architectural and interior design firm established in Marbella since 2008. With vast experience in designing luxury houses in various part of the world, the UDesign architects have designed innovative and environmentally sustainable villas that are an integral part of the land upon which they were built. The Marbella-based architectural firm González & Jacobson, now celebrating their 25th anniversary in business, are the architects working in collaboration with UDesign on the technical development and construction of Vista Lago Residences.

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