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AUGUST 2015
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Antiparos Design Properties, Greece

ARCHITECTURE / 7 JAN 2011 / BY ELLIE STATHAKI



Vl's house designed by Nicos Valsamakis

Take a heavenly island location, add an enthusiastic, ambitious and very architecturally-minded young developer, as well as a range of internationally acclaimed architects and you get the extraordinary development that is the [Antiparos Design Properties](#) project in Greece.

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Take a look round this architectural gem of an island

It all started when businessman and art enthusiast Iasson Tsakonias of [Oliaros](#) developments visited the tiny island of Antiparos almost ten years ago, in search of the right location for his dream holiday home. He chanced upon the minuscule Antiparos, a short boat ride away from the larger and more popular Paros Island in the middle of the Aegean, and the idea was born.

'I immediately fell in love and decided that this was my island,' says Tsakonias. 'It was undeveloped, as Antiparos has a stricter building code than most of the other islands. I also realized that I knew almost nobody on the island. So, I decided that since I had to build my own house, I may as well convince good friends to get a house there too.'

But Tsakonias didn't just sit back and dream. He quickly started drafting the Antiparos Design Property plan for 24 residences, kicking off collaborations with architects Tala Mikdashi - a former Renzo Piano staffer - and childhood friend-and-Berkley alumni, Alexandros Vaitos of Deca Architecture. Also realising that the landscape would play an integral part in the project, Tsakonias asked for help from Athens-based landscape specialist Thomas Doxiadis of [Doxiadis+](#)

The scheme was planned for execution in different stages, with the first - comprising Tsakonias' own house, six more properties and the overall layout of the development - completing in 2005/6. Pulling in prominent names of local and international contemporary architecture, including Atelier Bow Wow, Harry Guggler, Fuhrman Haehler and Andreas Angelidakis, the second stage is planned to complete between 2010 and 2012.

The full roll call of Greek architects involved in the development spans several generations - including acclaimed modernist Nikos Valsamakis, established architect Katerina Tsigarida and young talents like [Deca](#). But Tsakonias has balanced these with a healthy assembly of international names too. 'I have grown to become a great supporter of contemporary architecture in Greece, but I don't believe there should be rigid geographical borders, as long as the architects and clients respect and address the local history, needs and characteristics of each site,' he says.

Tsakonias is giving Wallpaper* an exclusive look at two future properties: the [Katoikia](#) by Harry Guggler and the [Ring](#) by Atelier Bow Wow, both designed in collaboration with local architect Dionysis Zacharias, who is assisting on many of the properties in the development. The Katoikia will sit on the location of a former farmhouse, amid cedar trees and a fig grove. 'Its simple horizontal volume is designed to be perceived as an artefact, respecting the existing landscape to the utmost,' says Guggler. Meanwhile, the Ring will sit on elevated position, with expansive views over the sea and island. 'We were drawn to Iasson for his high design standards and were immediately taken by the beauty of the site,' says Atelier Bow Wow's Yoshi Tsukamoto.

As the properties are pre-sold, they are individually customised and built according to each client's needs. With 17 properties already sold to an international and well-heeled crowd, the Antiparos family now includes 'a Swiss contemporary art gallerist, a banker, a popular Greek singer, a retailer, an international software company leader, a ship-owner, a tech venture capitalist, a biotech venture capitalist, a French baker, an Indian private equity industrialist, and more,' says Tsakonias.

2011 will be a busy year for the developer, not only with five more houses being released for sale in Antiparos. Tsakonias also has his bold and brilliant KM properties project in Athens on the go. It ambitiously aims to enrich the rough-and-ready arts and entertainment hub that is the Kerameikos and Metaxourgeo neighbourhood with what will probably be the largest constellation of contemporary architecture in the Greek capital. Plans are being set in motion as we type.



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