

A Home That Invites Nature Inside

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HOUSE IN
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This characterful family home is arranged as a singular, largely open-plan space with an indoor tree growing at its center. Located in a quiet residential area, the site's tight dimensions allowed no room for a garden, and windows on the external walls had to be kept to a minimum—instead, light pours in through a series of skylights. Japanese cypress, or hinoki—a lightweight timber providing good insulation—is the dominant material throughout the home; it is a popular choice for traditional Kyoto houses due to its lemony smell, its beauty, and its functionality.

“The timbers are left in their natural state, allowing the wood’s fragrance to come through,” the architects explain. A staircase leads up from the ground floor to a corridor that wraps its way around the upper level, opening to bedrooms and a tatami room—a traditional Japanese space with a floor covered in tatami mats, and enclosed by a fusuma, or sliding wooden screen. The bathroom, with its full-height glazed partition, is a focal point; residents can bathe in “open air” in the privacy of their home.

→ The bathroom was designed so that residents can bathe openly in the privacy of their home, next to the indoor tree. ↓ The home features a tatami room on the upper floor, a traditional Japanese space with a sliding wooden screen for sleeping. →→ The clients preferred an open plan where they would be able to keep an eye on their three children.

