

Objektbericht *Project Report*

Project: Residential building Ratingen, Germany

Consistently modern: A residential property on the outskirts of Ratingen

Several design approaches finally lead to the ideal composition of wood and titanium zinc.

The gable-roofed house on the outskirts of Ratingen, near Düsseldorf, stands out in a neighbourhood dominated by ordinary single-family homes. Today, there is a multitude of modifications of the original type of all residential houses with often times highly exaggerated design details that want to represent something special. The design created by Klaus Bürger Architektur from Krefeld is proof that it is also possible to do things differently. Architect Klaus Bürger and his team chose a reduced, clear structure with a façade that harmonises pleasantly with the classical form: The two striking materials, wood and titanium zinc, lend the surface structure and a varied surface effect.

Master plan

It took some time, however, before the actual planning could begin. During the first viewing, the 1,350 m² plot initially appeared to the architects as an oversized front garden of a bungalow set back from the road. "Quite with a beautiful view of impressive groves of trees as far as the eye could see," recalls architect Klaus Bürger. According to the concept and building regulations, the bungalow was to be preserved, the plot divided and a master plan developed with the two new owners to determine the location and shape of the houses, the access road and the distance between them. In accordance with the development plan and conditions regarding height, storey height, roof shape and pitch, two almost identical structures were created, which were designed, planned and built independently of each other. This was the very sober starting point for a residential building that the architects completed in 2019 and brought to life for a young family of three.

Titanium zinc as a contrast

Building regulations and specifications can be constricting, so this project was in need of some good ideas. The bungalow's impractical location and proximity to neighbours sensitised the architects to use clever arrangement of open and closed spaces to bring a certain generosity to the property to life and create unimagined views. As for the exterior design, the architects did some intensive planning. After four drafts and numerous discussions concerning materials, the result was clear. It started with the vision of basing the gable-roofed house on the façade cladding typical of the Bergisch countryside with slate slabs, black studding with white clay latticework, white windows and green folding shutters. The first design proposed a "scaled skin" of slate panelling extending from the roof over the façade; as a contrast, the dormers and garage were clad in titanium zinc, with typical accents of white windows and green sliding shutters. This was followed by the second design: the slate slabs were exchanged for a tile roofing of titanium zinc; wood was planned for the gable walls. One design further on, the dormers were fitted with curved overhead glazing with the effect that the attic opened up to the sky like a kind of orangery. A spectacular design, but the costs were exorbitantly high. "It was a constant back and forth in this design phase. We didn't really

Objektbericht *Project Report*

feel comfortable with the first three designs," Klaus Bürger tells us in all honesty. Anyone who thinks that the fourth and finally realised design must simply be a compromise is mistaken. The development of this design phase is exciting in that, in the end, over the many intermediate steps, a residential house emerged that is clearly and comprehensibly structured on the outside and inside, with two materials that give the home an unmistakable character.

Modern gable roof house

The result is a modern gable roof house with a roof made of blue-grey coloured RHEINZINK titanium zinc panels and a wooden façade. In addition to the striking horizontal battens made of Robinia wood, the vertical RHEINZINK titanium zinc panels form a beautiful and refined contrast, making it a true eye-catcher in its surroundings. "From the start, our clients were very enthusiastic about the idea of using titanium zinc. However, it was not only the appearance that was decisive, but also the positive properties of the material, such as freedom from maintenance and durability," says architect Klaus Bürger. The fact that wood and titanium zinc also age did not bother the client or the architect; on the contrary, the fact that a bit of naturalness is retained was important to both of them. "With all the materials we use, we always think about how they will look in ten, 20 or 30 years. We want to give the materials and thus the entire building the opportunity to live and also be allowed to change," Klaus Bürger emphasises and consequently adds: "Plastic can't do that." The cooperation with RHEINZINK began in the very early design phase and was always professional and positive, he says. "We discussed properties and design in depth and were provided with many material samples and useful tips, such as how to realise the internal gutter," reports Klaus Bürger. The subsequent works planning and execution were carried out by the site manager and the roofer. The roof was built in RHEINZINK-prePatina blue-grey surface quality using the angled standing seam system.

Straightforward architecture

Just as clear and reduced as the design of the façade are the interiors of the approximately 300 m² house. While the entrance, guest toilet, storeroom and staircase are oriented towards the neighbour behind the largely closed façade, the living area and centre of life opens up across the entire width of the house into the garden. The kitchen, dining room and living room all merge into one another and provide wide openings with unobstructed views of the greenery through the floor-to-ceiling lift-and-slide doors. The open fireplace serves as a visual partition between the living and dining areas. The adjoining living room offers a welcome retreat with additional views via a large glass façade in the gable wall.

A double flight of stairs behind the kitchen leads to the attic, which is entirely dedicated to private spaces. There, the children's room is located first, and a walk-in dressing room leads to the parents' large bathroom with a second fireplace; behind it, on the gable side, is the master bedroom, from which you can enjoy the views over the garden. Hard to believe: there is further living space in the basement. This part of the house was planned as a partially self-sufficient living space. On the northern gable wall, an external staircase leads to the basement, which, with its separate entrance, is intended to serve as a study or later as a teenager's room, complete with spacious bathroom. Above the washstand there is a skylight strip that lets in the longed-for daylight. Furthermore, a large fitness/play room, the building

Objektbericht *Project Report*

services room and a laundry room are located in this area. "Our idea of a laundry chute directly from the dressing room in the attic down to the basement proves to be very practical," Klaus Bürger tells us.

Clear concept

In keeping with the straightforward architecture, the client and architect chose a clear material and colour concept. A wooden floor made of white oiled planks was laid on the ground floor. The surfaces of the kitchen were finished with a horizontal grain pattern in oak veneer and colour-coordinated with the parquet. The built-in cupboards were manufactured according to the architects' designs in order to create a uniform appearance. The fronts were painted white with the effect of making them appear inconspicuous like the white walls. The striking stove in the living room was made of attractive black steel and is also custom-made. The parquet flooring continues into the attic. Only in the bathroom was the floor laid similar to a ship's deck with black expansion joints. As a contrast, gold-coloured mosaic was laid in the shower to bring sunshine into the bathroom, especially during the darker months of the year. The single-family home is rounded off by networked building technology. The home automation system ensures, for example, that systems such as lighting, heating and sun protection can be conveniently operated either via a central tableau or a smartphone.

The long planning journey and the confrontation with different materials have been worth it. Instead of pursuing a specific look in advance, the architect and client only made their decision in favour of wood and titanium zinc after a thorough familiarisation with the materials and their positive properties. They have thus achieved their vision of creating a charming unity with two natural building materials: "We were very careful to choose something that would age gracefully and acquire a beautiful patina over the years, says Klaus Bürger in his concluding words.

Construction panel

Planning architect: Klaus Bürger Architektur, Krefeld, Germany

Executing architect: Klaus Bürger Architektur, Krefeld, Germany

Technical data: Roof 180m², RHEINZINK-prePATINA blue-grey, angled standing seam system.

Objektbericht *Project Report*

Captions



This single-family home in Ratingen, North Rhine-Westphalia, is a modern interpretation of the traditional Bergisch house. Photo: Uwe Spoering/RHEINZINK



The roof was clad over an area of 180 m² with RHEINZINK-prePATINA blue-grey in the angled standing seam system, the timber façade is made of Douglas fir.

Photo: Uwe Spoering/RHEINZINK



The clear, linear façade harmonises perfectly with the titanium zinc roof.
Photo: Uwe Spoering/RHEINZINK

Objektbericht *Project Report*



Both RHEINZINK-prePATINA and wood are durable and environmentally friendly materials, making them perfectly suited for sustainable construction. Photo: Uwe Spoering/RHEINZINK



Beautiful views inside and out. Photo: Uwe Spoering/RHEINZINK



The building, which features a networked home automation system, has a total living space of 283 m². Photo: Uwe Spoering/RHEINZINK

Objektbericht *Project Report*



Liveable living space with a wealth of beautiful details. Photo: Uwe Spoering/RHEINZINK