

Program : Construction of 14 dwellings in a collective housing
Location : 01220 Divonne-les-Bains - France
Client : Semcoda

Surface : 1 220 M2
Engineers : Chapuis structures, Synapse
Economist : Cosinus

The project is located in Divonne-les-Bains, a french town close to the border with Switzerland. Once dedicated to agriculture, the area has progressively become an urban space with a trading estate, low-density housing and facilities. New facilities and apartment buildings recently appeared in the neighbourhood.

In 2005, a social housing development consisting of 4 blocks of 53 apartments was constructed on the piece of land neighbouring our project. Gathered on the 3 sides of a green space, the buildings are architecturally average and the beginning of a larger ensemble that wasn't eventually constructed.

South of the housing blocks, the city has made available a leveled piece of land, offering the opportunity to complement the construction with a building that closes the central space up. The programme sets to create 14 new accommodations for city staff and one for a family from Syria.

The project was conceived around the idea of simplicity of the volume, lines and materials.

The new construction is integrated in the environment by mimicking the proportions of the existing buildings and shape of their roof. Long balconies run across the main facade. Equipped with wood shutters for sun protection, these spaces become an extension of people's homes while preserving intimacy. The facade becomes animated by the inhabitants and the variations in how the shutters are being used.

The gables are coated with a clear finish and punctuated irregularly with windows also equipped with wood shutters. Inside, natural light is brought to the communal spaces through large bay windows placed on the facades. Most of the accommodations are dual-aspect or with multiple orientations.