

ARCHITECTURE - PRIVATE RESIDENCE

Terra Mesa

Building with the earth, not against it



Figure 01 — Rammed earth walls and south patio, with the solar array beyond

01 THE PROJECT

A family with deep connections to the land and particular spatial requirements approached us to design their new home in New Mexico's semi-arid climate. They sought to build with the earth, not against it and understand what it takes to be good stewards of the land.

PARAMETER	PROJECT VALUE
LOCATION	Outside Belen, NM
BUILDING TYPE	Single-family residence
PARCEL	1005028163268000000
SITE AREA	5.36 AC
LAND USE ZONE	RR-1
BUILDING AREA	2,475 SF
CONDITIONED	1,980 SF
GARAGE	620 SF
TOTAL	2,600 SF
STORIES / HEIGHT	One / 12'-0"
SERVICES	Architecture

02 THE SITE

We pride ourselves in our love and understanding of Architecture as a practical science. That is why for “Terra Mesa” we integrate the many technical challenges and opportunities the land offers to deliver beauty in resilience. The site at the edge of a large mesa overlooking the Rio Grande Valley demands it.

03 WATER AND EARTH

Rainwater will be harvested and treated as the valuable life sustaining resource it is. On site treatment, recycle and re-use. It is under this understanding that Rammed Earth becomes an expression of the beauty hidden below our feet, whiling to provide us shelter if we are willing to understand it.

04 HERITAGE AND IDENTITY

“Terra Mesa” will embrace the land and respect its rich cultural heritage in a dynamic environment while staying true to a family’s identity and lifestyle.

05 CORE DESIGN STRATEGIES

■ Rammed Earth	Walls are built from the ground of the region, giving the house thermal mass suited to the semi-arid climate.
■ Rainwater Harvesting	Roof runoff is collected and treated as a primary water resource for the household.
■ On-Site Treatment and Reuse	Water is treated, recycled and re-used on the property.
■ Mesa-Edge Siting	A single-story plan sits low on the mesa and opens its living spaces to the Rio Grande Valley.



Figure 02 — Kitchen and living, looking toward the mountains



Figure 03 — Entry and garage elevation