



# Villa Astrid

Gert Wingårdh, architect

**Wingårdhs Arkitektkontor AB** was established in 1978 and has since then grown to become one of Sweden's best known and most reputable architect firms, with offices in both Gothenburg and Stockholm.

**Gert Wingårdh** has the ambition to work with buildings that become attractive public landmarks. Among other things, he has his name on frequently discussed projects such as the Swedish Embassy building in Washington D.C., the control tower at Arlanda airport and Quay 01 in Malmö. [www.wingardhs.se](http://www.wingardhs.se)

I designed Villa Astrid in the summer of 2002, and Karin detailed and improved the plans during the fall. The site was squeezed in between two detached houses and consisted mostly of a harsh and rather steep hill. The detailed plan prescribed a roof edge at maximum 3.5 meters height and a roof fall of 14-27 degrees. My commission principal had a building program for a two-storey building. The solution was to "pull down" the second storey. It sounds easy, but took several weeks of sketching.

Villa Astrid is low and light as it sits below a large pine tree at the end of a narrow road. The carport and storage are on the left side and the entrance is placed in the otherwise solid gable. Inside the front door the lowered courtyard is a total surprise. What appeared to be a low building suddenly becomes three stories tall. For a while I considered covering the entire courtyard with a dark surface of water; this would have created the illusion of a six-storey building. However, for practical reasons the court-

yard is now a warm and sheltered outdoor sitting area and an ideal place for the family's newborn girl, Karin.

Villa Astrid has an open kitchen, a secluded guest dining room and a large living room in between the courtyard and a sea view with afternoon sun and sunset. The latter



are the reason for the turn of the house. At the end of the floor there is a work shelf raised one level over the rock. The gable facing the rock consists mostly of a large insulated glass window that has been lowered into a drilled rock slit. On the floor below there are two children's bedrooms, a family room and a master bedroom. All



rooms have direct contact with the outside through sliding doors and insect-protected ventilation windows.

The house is perhaps technically not the best the firm has designed. The roof was cast in concrete at the site, insulated with foam glass and covered with sheet metal. The walls are solidly built in concrete brick, plastered inside and outside and clad with sheet metal. The black copper sheeting will slowly patinate.





Freed copper ions will be bound by crushed limestone at the foot of the house. It is pure and maintenance free. The garden is not yet finished but is designed by NOD and consists of a Japanese section outside the kitchen window and back entrance, and a genuine west coast meadow below the sea view.



**Address:** Hovås, Gothenburg municipality  
**Architect:** Wingårdh Architect Firm AB,  
**Head Architect:** Gert Wingårdh  
**Managing Architect:** Karin Wingårdh  
**Managing Engineer:** Danuta Nielsen  
**Assisting architect:** Joakim Lyth  
**K:** F B Engineering AB, Sven Blomgren, Per Hilmersson  
**V:** N.V.K. VVS Kontroll AB, Göran Wigermo  
**E:** Schönbeck Elprojekt AB, Rolf Andersson  
**Projektleddning:**  
 Wickenberg Byggnalys AB, Mats Johansson  
**Landscaping:** NOD, Natur Orienterad Design (not shown on the photos)  
**Building proprietor:** Private  
**Contract type:** General contract  
**Building Contractors:**  
 Bergman & Höök Byggnadsaktiebolag  
**Sheet metal Contractors:**  
 Varla Sheet Metal, Kungsbacka  
**Total area:** 400 sq.m.  
**Building cost excluding land:**  
 10 million Swedish crowns  
**Building methods:**  
 Prefabricated concrete, lightweight concrete, facades and roof in pre-patinated copper, Outokumpu  
**Foundation:** Foundation plate on ground  
**Building time:** 2003-2004