

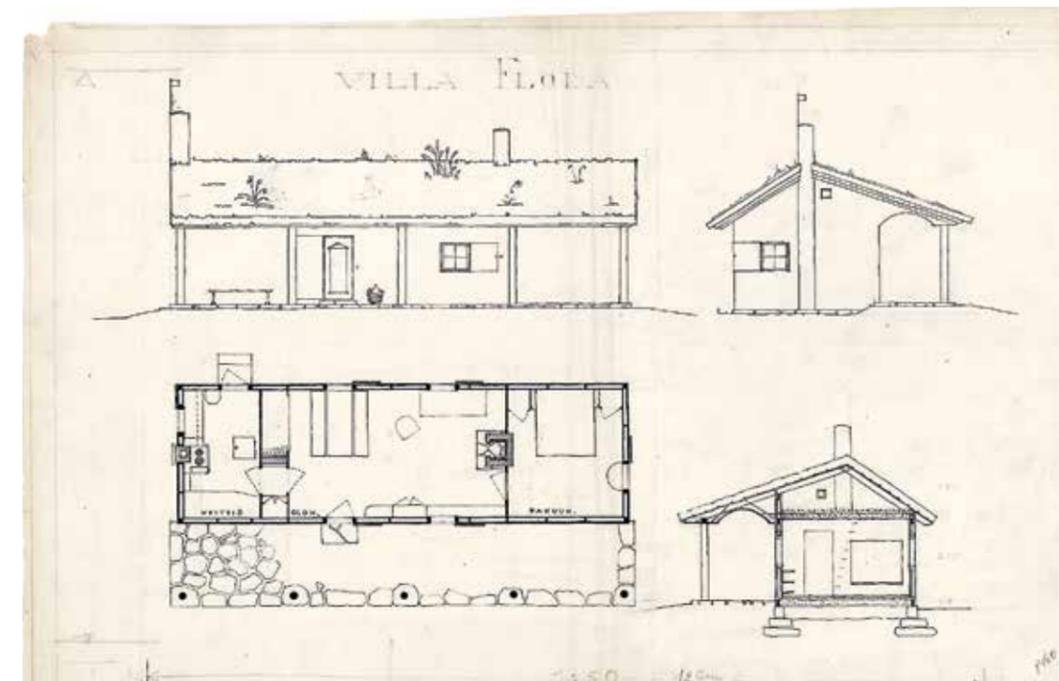
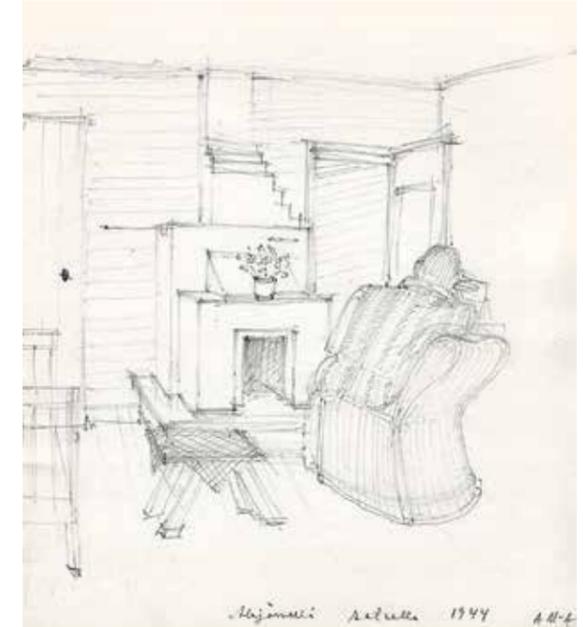


< Alvar Aalto's morning ablutions on the lake. In the background is the summer villa, with the family's 1929 Buick by the shoreline.

↳ Summer holidays with the Aalto family and relatives. Sitting in the front from the left; Hamilkar, aunt Flora, Aino and Hanni; standing: Aalto's father in a suit. The turf roof, wooden columns and traditional round-pole fence bounding the shoreline together create a traditional atmosphere at the villa.

> Aino's drawing of Alvar next to the fireplace, "Alajärvi in the rain, 1944. A. M-A".

∨ Facades, plan and cross-section.





<< The living room greets visitors with forest motifs and artworks. On the rear wall, from left to right, are Massimo Campigli's *Ritratto di Signora* (1931) and Juan Gris's *The Yellow Guitar* (1926).

< The staircase leading from the living room to the upper floor plays an iconic role in the forest landscape of the villa.

∨ The flower room, with bamboo shelves and rattan furniture.



and Chartres limestone used for the walls. The stepped east elevation turns to the southern façade where low volumes protrude toward the garden.

Maison Carré is situated on a small hill, and still in the 1950s it was surrounded by a typical French open rural landscape, though nowadays the views from the house are hidden by tall trees. Aalto's design task was not limited only to the building, but also encompassed the whole of the fairly large plot. Along the perimeter wall he designed a small symbolic vineyard, the upkeep of which over the years turned out to be too labour-intensive. The terraced stairs descending toward a swimming pool form a podium, from which the house rises. In Maison Carré, Aalto has perhaps created the strongest union between a house and the landscape. A similar monumentality exists, though, in the siting of the Muuratsalo Experimental House. In both, there is also a strong feel of Mediterranean culture.

> A view from the south-facing garden with travertine terraces in front.

v The main entrance facade.

Carré was a wealthy art-gallery owner, and for this reason artworks and a library had a natural place in the design of the house. Aalto was thus again, after Villa Mairea, given a fairly free hand to realise his architectural ideas without strict economic limitations. The interior spaces have the same elegant quality as the exterior. Both Maison Carré and Villa Mairea are distinguished by their abundance of details and variety of materials, although differing in character. The young architect of Villa Mairea showed a rich imagination and passion, which has grown into a mature and unified vision in Maison Carré. Here also many pieces of the furniture, lamps, and fittings were specially designed and custom-made for the house.

The main entrance hall is an inner landscape of the highest refinement, with a free-form, vaulted ceiling of Finnish red pine, which covers the space like a cupola and draws the visitor into the living room.⁵ The steps leading down to the living room accompany the movement, which

The swimming pool and adjacent changing room were built in 1962. (See p. 188–189)

