

The J-House: New Orleans shotgun, with a twist

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The process of designing and building a new home always has twists and turns. For his own home, Tulane architecture professor Ammar Eloueini embraced the traditional shotgun house but added innovative twists that have puzzled passersby on Upperline Street.



Steel and wood in a unique, elevated design by architecture professor Ammar Eloueini bring a modern look to the traditional New Orleans shotgun house. (Photos by Paula Burch-Celentano)

“It's not your typical house,” admits [Eloueini](#) as he stands in the living area of his green-centric home, nearing completion after more than two years of work that definitely challenged subcontractors. “Neighbors are fascinated by the project, but it's hard for them to imagine what the space is going to be like.”

Dubbed the [J-House](#), the 2,200-square-foot home in uptown New Orleans was designed by AEDS (Ammar Eloueini Digit-all Studio), an award-winning design practice in architecture, product design and digital media.

Beirut-born Eloueini is a Favrot Professor in the Tulane School of Architecture whose arrival in New Orleans for the fall 2005 semester was interrupted by Hurricane Katrina. Undeterred, he reported in January 2006: "I was more interested than ever."



Large windows at front and back are designed to provide a panoramic view. The exterior, now with black waterproofing, will have wood cladding.

His house project grew from a post-Katrina exhibition at the Ogden Museum on new looks for elevated homes.

Eloueini's design, with living space elevated 10 feet, uses two footprint foundations for two tubes, each with a 90-degree rotation, that twist and interlock. When the curved red steel beams arrived, it looked like a rollercoaster, but next came outer wood cladding and black waterproofing.

Light pours in from a diagonal skylight and large glass panes facing the front and rear. The back overlooks a swimming pool and cabana whose roof has trays of greenery to create "a living quilt" effect, irrigated with water from an underground cistern.

Eloueini will occupy the \$600,000 home within a few months and expects very low utility costs. With the master bedroom and living space in the elevated section, and a smaller bedroom and parking at ground level, he will have the proportions of a shotgun house in a "very unique space."