



**100 BEST NEW HOUSES**

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VACATION HOUSES COUNTRY HOUSES BEACH HOUSES APARTMENTS VILLA



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## Riverhouse Niagara

**Architects:** Zerafa Studio llc.  
**Location:** Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada  
**Architect of Record:** Chapman Murray Associates Architects Inc.  
**Structural Engineer:** ACA Engineering  
**MEP:** Hallex Engineering LTD.  
**Program:** Private Residence  
**Project Area:** 464.5 sqm  
**Project Year:** 2009  
**Photographs:** Tom Arban

The 4700 sq.ft of interior living space and 1200 sq.ft of covered terrace of the house resting off the Niagara River were crafted to embrace the site feature and find a balance between the relative transparency encouraged by the views and the privacy concerns of the owners.

The house is comprised of three distinct horizontal volumes. The north-south massing is defined by 2 overlaid rectangular shells. The shells are clad in silver metal panel and are mostly opaque to provide privacy from adjacent properties. The open east and west ends of

the shells reveal the River and garden views. All exposed interior surfaces of the shells are lined with t&g cedar siding to provide a warm interior transitional environment. The ground floor shell floats 3 ft above the ground elevation. The upper level shell is offset from the one below to create an exposed roof terrace to the north and a dramatic 17 ft cantilever to the south. The large cantilevered volume creates a covered entry to the garage area. The third volume clad in charcoal quartzite is a single story shell that slips under to support the cantilever and extends west into the rear garden.

The ground floor is comprised of two primary program groups separated by an east-west glazed circulation space that bisects the house. The service and ancillary spaces, garage, storage, guest suite and access to the basement level area contained within a single-story bar that runs east to west to minimize the obstruction of views. The primary living spaces are distributed in a linear bar across the width of the site to maximize exposure to river views. The home office, kitchen/dining room and double height living room extend the full width of the north-south bar to mediate the front and rear gardens and establish a strong visual connection to the outdoors. The more private spaces including an expansive master suite, two additional bedrooms with ensuite bath and laundry facilities are distributed in a parallel bar on the second floor accessible by a dramatic sculptural stair.





