



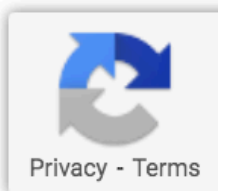
All photos by Dror Baldinger.

SPACES

This Modern Hill Country Dog Ranch is the Future of Kennels

Designed by architects at A.Gruppo, it offers circular yurts, natural lighting, and a wild, undeveloped landscape.

BY ROSIE NINESLING

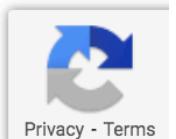


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Canine behaviorist and personal pet trainer Lara Stonesifer was over the long, linear horse stalls that dogs in boarding facilities are typically kept in. For one, walking up and down the narrow hallways proved to be tiresome and inefficient. And then there was the comfort of the pet. Cramped and dimly lit, the environment often disregarded the animal's level of comfort, which can lead to anxiety, aggression, and behavioral issues. Stonesifer decided to opt out.

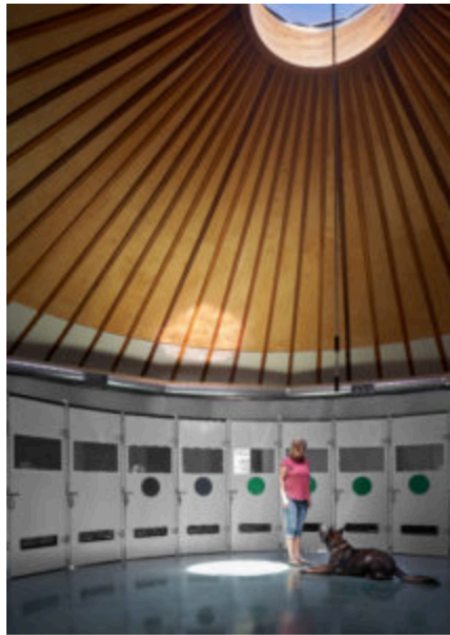
Her alternative? A modern Hill Country dog ranch, complete with yurt kennels, natural light, and a calming sage and terracotta color pallet. Hiring architects from [A.Gruppo](#) to design the new building for her boarding and training business, [Lara's Canine Solutions](#), she's now proud to offer a restful space for all guests—from visitors, to staff, to the German Shepards they specialize in.

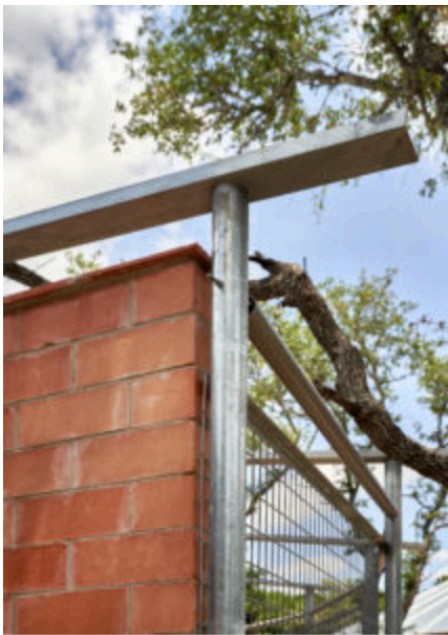


The ranch features two yurts made from standing seam roof metal: one for the kennel dogs, and one that acts as an administrative building. Within the first circular one, each animal is kept in a central climate-controlled chamber, cooled during the summer months, and warmed in the winter months through in-slab floor heating. Complete with a huge skylight located at the apex of the building, sunlight pools in, changing the lighting throughout the day. Each chamber also features a doggy door that leads to shared runs designed to radiate away from the building. This respects the territorial instincts of the animals; no groups are forced to look at each other (which is common in most kennels). Once outside, the space opens up into a play area with an undeveloped, wild landscape, carefully designed not to overstimulate.

Located a safe distance away from the kennel chamber, the administrative building proves to be meticulously designed as well. Emulating nature, the big idea for that space was to create a shell, says architect Andrew Nance of A.Gruppo. “The roof is kind of like this leaf that starts to curl and bend around.” On one side it welcomes visitors, while on the other side it acts as a barrier to block newcomers from the view of the kennel dogs.

In the end, designing the space turned out to be “a good all-around kind of challenge,” says Nance. While the architecture firm typically designs for people, they *always* design for the comfort and safety of their clients—and this time, that included their four-legged friends.





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