

In 1944, White built a 'Desert Dwelling' for his mother-in-law, Esther Breedlove in La Quinta. This small house is one of the earliest examples of White's work in the desert, and shows how his style was shaped by the environment. White used stand alone masonry walls (to move independently in case of earthquake), interspersed with wood or glass doors and windows, a low hipped roof, and header beams were bolted together to prevent warping. Eventually, White expanded the house with a wing consisting of two bedrooms and connecting bathroom, and he moved in with his family.

SourceWalter S. White papers, Architecture and Design Collection; Art, Design & Architecture Museum; University of California, Santa Barbara.

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