The Gezzis were from the beginning one of the couples who most participated in forming the beach Association, and their house in Lima was the centre of multiple meetings for decision-making, stimulated by their contagious enthusiasm. They were the first to build, and their house continues to be a focal point for group gatherings.

With this spirit, and with the activism of Pilar, a decorator and a leader, this house was the product of three preliminary projects. Its power is in its simplicity and in its distillation of informal living, desert construction, and a declivity of sand with a view of the sea.

As a pioneer house, it represented a model for many neighbours in its ancestral language, a novelty for city-dwellers. The design is a social and an architectural success; every weekend friends and family gather on the great roofed terrace, where bright colours frame the informal gaiety of these meetings. The panorama of nature is framed by cane poles whose Franciscan poverty is never noticed.
The Prado and Valdez families are in-laws who own neighbouring lots and who, by common agreement, decided to make twin houses and share entrances, patios, and a terrace (which they later divided). Members of a large family, the Prados are quite united and every weekend invade the houses and use them fully.

The owners are also leading members of the beach Association and the dwellings follow the prototype discussed for area homes. Following a request for direct access to the beach from the social area and isolation of that area from the bedrooms, the houses have a double system of terraces, one shared and the other private. Although several changes were made (some unhappily), the general project has been respected and the owners are pleased, though they would like a bigger kitchen for the many guests arriving each weekend.

The structure is of whitewashed masonry with concrete roofs, though the original design was more rustic. After much discussion, the homes were painted in a bright yellow which has pleased all of the family.

The Prado-Valdez houses form part of a group of seaside residences along the Peruvian coast, 40 miles from Lima.
Above: A view of the twin houses seen from the La Barca Beach below.

Left: The upper-level bedrooms of the two houses are separated by a terrace and two sets of stairs.

Below: The house have separate entrances and terraces which communicate with each other.
The Marrou-Yori Houses
La Barca Beach, Peru

Project Data
Location: La Barca Beach, Peru
Architect: Juvenal Baracco
Completion date: 1985
Site area: 612 square metres
Built area: 213 square metres

The Barca Association was founded when Marulu and Ricardo were a couple. Later each went a different way, leaving behind a lot on the beach. When we discussed the project, they wanted houses that could be built in two stages, which Marulu finally did. Ricardo only completed the first.

Each house was to have one bedroom and occupy 45 square metres in its initial stage, to be converted into three bedrooms later and to add a social area and services on the second floor. Maximum use was made of a retaining wall applied to two floors, with the inevitable problem of going down from the entrance and designing a stairway that would present the least interruption of useful environment. The social area is one uninterrupted space that includes the kitchen and enjoys total linking with a roofed terrace above the bedrooms. The salon has double height in which the stair descends beneath a ray of apex lighting that diffuses the harsh light of the beach.

Some ancestral teachings are remembered, the precolombian dwellings of the desert: their scale, simplicity, and adaptation to the environment with a maximum of economy in materials. This is possible due to an informal lifestyle centred on the roofed terrace, which in turn defines the scale of the vistas and is a structural framework for the panorama of the Pachacamac islands.

The construction is of bearing walls of brick, painted in rosy ochre, with clay and brick veneer for final protection. The overall structure is a series of cubes, 3.2 metres per side, which secure high roofs to avoid heat radiation, which is dissipated by ventilation through high windows in the colonial style.

Carpentry is wood with small glass panes, painted in the traditional lime green, and the terrace is formed of eucalyptus poles which sustain the roof and produce rich shadows in the social area.
Juvenal Baracco was born in Lima, Peru in 1940. The son of a civil engineer, he graduated from the National University in architecture where he has also taught while pursuing a private practice in Lima. A book on houses designed by him, entitled "A Universe Within the House" was published in 1988.