



ATLAS

OF

BRUTALIST

ARCHITECTURE

PHAIDON



HOTEL EL BLOK ↓
Fuster + Architects
Esperanza (PR), 2014
Tourism

CONDITION



USE



The island of Vieques off the coast of Puerto Rico is a prime site for holidaymakers who come to enjoy the clear water, white sandy beaches and to snorkel above the coral reefs of the Caribbean island. The location of this boutique hotel is the quiet southern town of Esperanza and the relatively diminutive lodgings include twenty-three rooms, a restaurant and a roof terrace. The hotel's plan is organized as an undulating

square, set around a central oval atrium that permeates all three floors. Wrapping around the upper two floors of this organic shape are panels of pale glass-fibre reinforced concrete (GRC) that are patterned with irregular holes. The architects conceived of the design as 'a block of coral removed from the sea', and this facade detail underscores the reefs for which the island is known while giving guests privacy

and allowing filtered light and fresh air indoors. The perforated patterns repeat in substantial concrete columns on the roof terrace, and the hotel's porous speckled facade is framed by white exposed concrete. The patterns of frames wear the shutter-marks of the timber formwork; this is repeated in the central stairwell and walls, creating a robust yet textural composition.

