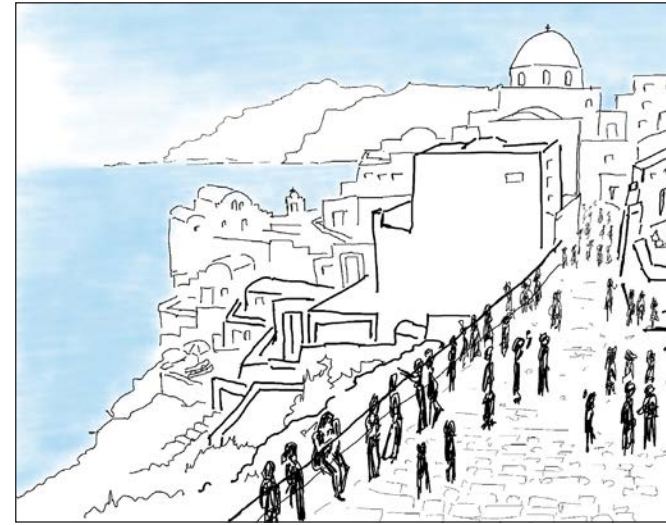


The village of Oia on the island of Santorini holds a special place in my heart. The whole island is incredibly unique and different than any other place in the world. Its breathtaking landscape includes the caldera of an active volcano; steep cliffs, which reach almost 1,000 feet; whitewashed villages that hang from the cliffs; and the black sand beaches on the outer perimeter of the island. There is beauty everywhere, from the maze-like villages and architecture to the magnificent views – as well as in my own memories, including delicious food, friendly people, gorgeous sun and skies, and of course the Aegean Sea.



CLUSTERED FORM (CHING)

The additive groupings of distinct elements – organized according to functional requirements of size, shape, or proximity – are unified compositions of forms. These clustered organizations are flexible to include forms or various shapes, sizes, and orientations. They can be organized as attached appendages to a larger parent form or space, they can interlock their volumes and merge into a single form having a variety of faces. They also can be related simply by proximity, articulating and expressing their volumes as individual entities.



Clustered structures of different shape and size



Paths with steps are the main form of pedestrian circulation

FORM OF THE CIRCULATION SPACE - STAIRS (CHING)

Due to the topography, stairs are needed to assist pedestrian movement in outdoor spaces. Some are steep, with 8-inch (or more) risers than can make movement tiring and psychologically unpleasant. While stairs can accommodate a change in level, they can also reinforce the path of movement, interrupt it, change path direction, or terminate it when entering another space.

THRESHOLDS - 'IN BETWEEN' PLACES (DEE)

Small spaces are everywhere in Santorini, 'sitting' between larger spaces and structures, or on the edge of streets. They are transitional spaces linking larger spaces together, and they serve as gateways or places to rest, eat, and socialize.



Seating areas on street edges



Dramatic landscape of steep cliffs and the black sand beach

EDGES - BEACHES (DEE)

The water's edge is a visual transition between land (the natural black sand beaches and volcanic cliffs) and water – an attractive element that allows recreational and social activities.

Compare/contrast 2 aspects of your favorite place to 1 of the sites we visited.

Pedestrian circulation and active edges. Like Old Town Pasadena, in Santorini movement through space is accomplished with walkable streets that are vibrant, with many stores and a great deal of pedestrian activity. Street edges are inviting, allowing people to move through spaces to stores or small squares, where they can take a break or be sociable. Unlike Pasadena, in Santorini there are no large fig trees or parks. The natural landscape of the island has been left undeveloped in many places – in others, development has been on the edges to complement the natural beauty of the bright sunlight.

What would Jane Jacobs say about your favorite place?

She would love Santorini. Unlike Garden City of Ebenezer Howard and the ideas of Decentrists, Santorini is filled with busy small streets and paths. The island is abuzz with human interaction, the town blocks are small, and the houses are facing the streets instead of isolated private backyards – and moreover, the towns were developed organically over time due to the topography and residents' needs, rather than urban planning. There are no freeways cutting through the towns, which are instead walkable and friendly – with vibrant streets that "eyes on the street" help keep public order and safety.

What change(s) to your favorite place would enhance the user experience?

As much as I love the topography, narrow streets, and stairs in Santorini, some level of ADA accessibility would enhance enjoyment for so many more people. One must be active and physically fit, with the ability to be on one's feet for most of the day to enjoy places and the scenic views. However, sometimes the imperfections are the heart of a place's uniqueness – and ultimately the uniqueness of Santorini is what I love the most, so I would make no changes.