

Haven Sent (text by Luke Tebbutt)  
in *Grand Designs*, December 2009, London

Shining like a beacon in a crowded Japanese street is this compact home that deals with its challenging site in an ingenious fashion.

Forget the star of Bethlehem. In Japan they have what looks like a man-made version, fallen from the sky on to a tight plot near Tokyo. By the door there's a sports car instead of Frankincense, gold and myrrh, and inside glossy floor tiles take the place of hay. The house, clad in rust-proof steel, was designed by wise man Satoshi Okada ([www.okada-archi.com](http://www.okada-archi.com)), who wanted to create a wow-factor building on the tough site, wedged between houses at the end of a narrow lane, on a riverside that's prone to subsidence. His solution was to tilt and trim walls to avoid being too close to neighbors, and use a lightweight wooden structure and length of supported by three legs to decrease the number and length of support plies needed beneath the ground. As Belinda Carlisle would say; "We'll make heaven a place on earth."