

# HOMES & GARDENS

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# A FORCE OF NATURE

Built with a green ethos and full of stunning natural materials, this inspiring Cape Town home shows the endurance of authentic design and considered decoration

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WORDS JO LEEVERS STYLING SVEN ALBERDING PHOTOGRAPHY WARREN HEATH/BUREAUX


## INSPIRATION

### POOL HOUSE

The beauty of stone and timber is that as they age they become more beautiful and unique.

Design: Wynand  
Wilsenach Architects



A photograph of an outdoor seating area. The background is a wall of vertical wood slats. A ceiling fan hangs from the top. In the foreground, there is a patterned sofa with grey and white cushions, a wooden coffee table, and a white armchair. A large piece of wood sits on the floor. To the right, a doorway leads to an indoor space.

**SEATING AREA**

The owners wanted every part of the house to settle seamlessly into the natural surroundings so chose a palette of earthy colours.

Outdoor **sofa**, Layton by Artwood at Latzio Living is similar. **Armchairs**, Weylandts; for similar, try Graham and Green

**SITTING ROOM**

Doors leading outside can be shut to create an intimate feel. Leather and velvet are two luxurious additions.

**Sofa.** Moorgas & Sons.

**GranTorino leather**

**armchair.** Poltrona Frau.

**Coffee table.** vintage Boffi.

Try Vinterior for a similar

rattan **side table**

**DINING AREA**

**A circular deep-pile rug echoes the shape of the table and helps define this part of the open-plan space.**

**Table.** Pierre Cronje.

**Chairs,** Moorgas & Sons.

For a similar **light**, try the Visual Comfort range at Lumiere. The Rug Company's Mohair Slate round **rug** would work



**T**he rustic timber cladding on the exterior of this house in Constantia, a suburb of Cape Town, belies the airy and open feel once you step through the front door. However, owner Caroline Topat wanted to keep a sense of intimacy, so that the rooms gradually reveal themselves as you progress through the house, rather than being confronted by one overwhelmingly large, echoey space. 'While I love open-plan living, there are times when it's nice to close off an area when you're entertaining, if the children have their friends over or simply to keep a sitting room cosier,' explains Caroline. 'A completely open-plan space can lack warmth, but our home has so many options and interesting corners.'

This property's layout resembles a series of areas that are connected but unfold as the visitor walks through them. Eventually, all paths lead to the front deck, which is glazed so that the inside transitions naturally into the garden and links with the spectacular landscape beyond.

For architect Wynand Wilsenach, this inside-outside feel was central to his adventurous design. 'What is nice about modern barn-style architecture is the scope for untraditional openings,' he says. 'Now, the family can open the entire front facade to the terraced lawn, pool and mountain views.'

For Caroline, this enriches her family's day-to-day life. 'We are reminded to take small pauses in our day, to look at an eagle in the sky or a heron flying past or to notice the changing foliage through the seasons,' she says. In a subtle but significant way, 'we are constantly interacting with nature,' she adds.

However, Caroline also values the way that the main sitting room fosters a feeling of cosiness and sense of privacy, with furniture positioned to facilitate conversation or watching TV together. There's a second seating area in a large work room,

a space the family all use regularly, whether they are working from home or doing school work.

Internal finishes such as stone and timber also contribute to the inside-outside feel. 'The use of natural materials and textures was the foundation of this home, which needed to settle seamlessly into the environment and beautiful garden,' says Caroline. A benefit of using stone, metal and timber is that 'as they age, they become more beautiful and unique'.

This attention to detail was followed through by interior designer Andrea Graff, who added layers of texture and furniture that all come together to create a sense of rootedness. Then she sprinkled a few playful elements through the house, from a hand-painted wall treatment in the bathroom that (almost) outshines the view from the window, fireside armchairs with 'deconstructed' frames and lighting that dazzles with striking shapes and surprising scales. Andrea continued the natural texture theme by taking her colour cues from nature, including plenty of forest-like greens and greys, worked into schemes alongside rattan, moss-like velvet and earthy, organic-shaped ceramics.

Fittingly, this house is also built with a green ethos, designed to make the most of seasonal heat gain and with highly efficient insulation. The eco features continue out in the garden, where water runs through several tranquil, plant-filled ponds that act as a natural filtration system for the water that flows down into the family's swimming pool. A secluded pool house and a fantasy tree house provide further escapist spaces. Inside and out, this is a home that taps into the calming power of nature and allows for quiet contemplative corners. 'We really have got the best of both worlds,' says Caroline. 🌿

■ Wynand Wilsenach Architects, [w2.co.za](http://w2.co.za);  
Andrea Graff Interior Design, [andreagraff.co.za](http://andreagraff.co.za)



**MASTER BEDROOM**  
From the bed there are amazing mountain views, so the decor in here is pared back in order not to interrupt the vista. Bespoke **bed** by Andrea Graffi; try Poliform for similar. **Cushion**, Ralph Lauren Home. John Lewis & Partners sells a **throw** like this one





**MASTER BATHROOM**  
A bespoke, hand-painted chinoiserie-style pattern and a cloud-like pendant make this a dreamy bathing space. Find a slipper bath at Drummonds. Pendant light, Moooi. For a similar hand-painted wall treatment, try de Gournay

**EXTERIOR**  
An eco swimming pool  
is fed water from a  
series of natural  
filtration ponds





**GARDEN**  
The tree house has a bird's-eye view of the stunning landscape. Tree house designed by Wynand Wilsenach Architects



**EXTERIOR**  
Soft grey tones blend with the surrounding colours and echo the garden's stone walls. Garden furniture, Tribu, available at Exterior-Interior



**POOL HOUSE**  
A lofty picture window allows the garden's lush greenery to feel like part of the space. Chairs, La Grange Interiors; for similar, try Exterior-Interior

**INSIDER INSIGHT**

Interior designer Andrea Graff shares her style vision and loves

**GO-TO COLOUR** Green is my favourite, plus a dash of animal print, which I, personally count as a colour!

**MOST SUCCESSFUL PART OF THE PROJECT** The fact that the clients have become great friends and we've continued to work together on more projects.

**INSPIRATION SOURCES** Travel, Instagram, literature and history.

**FAVOURITE WEBSITE** 1stDibs – I am hooked on hunting for beautiful furniture.

**YOUR STYLE IN THREE WORDS** Colourful, exuberant and timeless.

**WORDS TO LIVE BY** I believe in honesty, kindness and mentorship.