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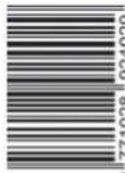
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ECO UPDATE: EDIBLE GARDENS · WATER WARRIORS · BOTANICAL BARS



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ISSUE

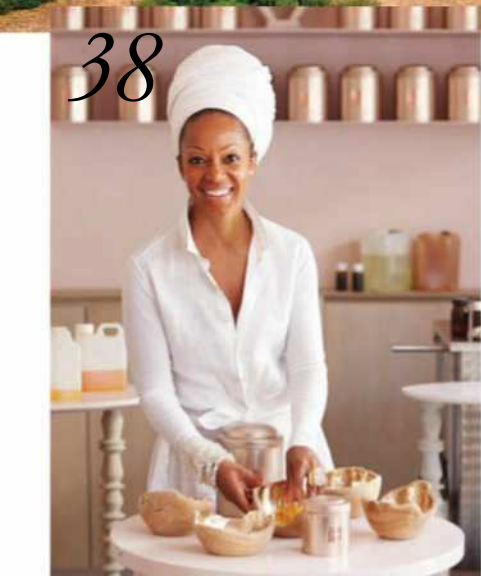
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Alfred, module sofa, Olena Aqua

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Versace dress R21 895 **Steve Madden shoes** R1 499 **Thula Sindi dress**
Khanyi's own **Roller table lamp** R10 000, Studio 19 **Legs11 powder-coated stool** (excluding fabric) R3 900, Studio 19 **Nesting bronze crescent table** R9 500, Studio 19 **Diamond Shuttle Weave Dhurrie Carpet** R2 995, Weylandts

Early autumn, with its stunning palette of russets, ochres and other earthy tones, is a gift nature gives us before the months of cold weather: something to warm the heart and fire the soul. So in this issue, with its theme of 'green living', we're celebrating the nexus between environmental responsibility and fabulous decor, because the two are entirely compatible.

Our spotlight on homes in London and Cape Town reveals how clever use of space, balanced proportions of exterior and interior accents, some quirky touches and a few superb classic pieces can imprint a unique signature on a living space. By contrast, the Mexican home featured in this issue is a glorious homage to that country's colourful culture and history, with contemporary additions that root it in the present.

Talking of culture and history, we also explore *Black Chronicles*, an international photographic intervention, which examines the way black people view their historical (and, by implication, their present) identities. It's a fascinating prism into the ethnic paradigms that generated much of the prejudice we see today and throws up many important questions about how those paradigms have shifted.

And for those with a touch of wanderlust, our travel feature on Australia should be enough to have you planning a trip Down Under soon.

Enjoy these pages and have a great month!

Khanyi

'We're celebrating the nexus between environmental responsibility and fabulous decor, because the two are entirely compatible'

PHOTOGRAPH SHAUN MALLETT; MAKE-UP BY CLARA BANK



Willasto Bar, Silo Hotel. Photograph courtesy of The Royal Portfolio.
Ogjie FSC European Oak Legno Herringbone finished with WOCA Denmark Castle Grey Oil - 15/4 x 122 x 810mm

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‘Healing ubuntu value – the notion of “I am because we are” – is something we can bring to the world’

W

hile we were compiling our April issue with its focus on all things eco-conscious, sustainable and, as ever, visually inspiring, the timing happened to coincide with the Design Indaba conference and the Africa Luxury & Wealth Summit. If you’ve had the opportunity to attend either, you’ll know the edifying effects on both head and heart

from being on the receiving end of such a wealth of knowledge and so many brilliant ideas and motivating stories, shared by speakers from across the globe. There were several talks and moments of wisdom that especially stood out for me.

Kenyan multi-media designer Mark Kamau returned home after a spell in Berlin so that he could apply himself to ‘real-life issues’; one of the results, the genius BRCK, a hardy, solar-powered wifi device that’s succeeded in transforming even the most inaccessible rural schools into digital learning centres. Kamau believes that design is ‘the most powerful tool in Africa’ and that it’s time for the continent’s designers to take the stage. It’s a sentiment shared by Zimbabwean filmmaker Sunu Gonera, who reflected on the concept of Afro-futurism by drawing on the interpretations of friends and family alike. The overwhelming message was the necessity of African voices and stories to be shared and heard well beyond our borders.

It resounded again at the Africa Luxury & Wealth Summit, where entrepreneur Swaady Martin questioned what it means to be an African luxury brand today. Her answer, Luxe Ubuntu, proffers a soulful and even transcendent understanding of a more inclusive kind of luxury, one that contributes to a redefinition of the continent without falling into ethnic stereotypes. ‘Healing ubuntu value – the notion of “I am because we are” – is something we can bring to the world,’ she says. ‘We should all be champions of it and we should all own it. It comes down to authenticity, which is really needed today.’

The DECO team was overjoyed to be invited into Martin’s recently extended tearoom and studio space in Maboneng’s revived Cosmopolitan building, a beautiful venue in which to experience her Yswara brand of natural, all-African teas. We hope you, too, enjoy the peek inside and her remarkable story. May your April be truly inspired!

Leigh

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PHOTOGRAPH ADAM LETCH



BONGANI MADONDO

Jo’burg-based author and journalist Bongani, who penned *The Aristocrats* (page 34), has written for titles such as *The New Yorker*, *Rolling Stone* and ELLE, and creates specialist content on African/black photography for *Aperture* magazine. His latest book *Sigh, The Beloved Country* (Picador) was the 2017 UJ Literary Awards Main Prize finalist and was shortlisted for the Brittle Paper Literary Awards.



INGE PRINS

Cape Town photographer Inge, who shot the images for *Not Your Garden Variety* (page 80), specialises in homeware, décor and interior architecture, contributing to titles such as *Monocle* and *Wallpaper*. She majored in photography when analog cameras ruled the earth and digital retouching was in its infancy. She’s known for her attention to detail, boundless energy and multitude of striped garments.



PIETER VON WIELLIGH

ELLE Decoration’s talented décor intern is a recent graduate from The Design School of Southern Africa, where he obtained a degree in interior design. He also graduated top of his class for his Higher Certificate in art and design a few years before. Pieter has been involved in various projects such as redesigning the head offices for Uber Southern Africa and sculpture design for Microsoft.



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tenfold salon

Céline

THE STYLISH LIFE OF GEORGIA SHEKESHE

The Johannesburg-based founder of tenfold, a health-centric salon bringing a more mindful approach to the market, shares aspects of her style and life's inspiration

Tenfold, a modern nail bar located within the Maboneng Precinct, is not so much a salon as a homage to a trendy downtown apartment. Convinced that what sells is being oneself in the most honest and authentic way possible, Shekeshe believes the next generation will be a lot more natural, toxin-free, socially responsible – and chic.

What inspires you? The women around me – the tenfold team and our clients. I feel very fortunate to be in this race at a time when women, particularly mothers, have such bravery in the workplace, as well as in their communities. In such a fast-paced world, I find the most inspiration in slowing down and letting my mind wander. It's an incredible exercise – perhaps even a skill – to simply let your mind rest and follow its lead.

Which designer would you love to have lunch with? Phoebe Philo, the former Creative Director of French design house Céline. She's a sophisticated, somewhat enigmatic and intensely private woman. There's something intriguing about her, not to mention her feminist, empowering air.

Which fashion collection changed your life? Céline SS11 – this was the first time I was exposed to the label. There's a sense of *wabi-sabi* in it, from the fabrics used to the natural hair and make-up. It felt effortless.

What decor trend are you loving at the moment? Minimalism – clean, modern lines with lush, seasonal greenery. I believe that a 'clean' look leads to a clear mind.

Next destination on your holiday travel list? Ubud in Bali, Indonesia, as part of my spiritual journey.

What's the most important element of your everyday style? Comfort. I wear pretty much the same type of clothes day in, day out, like a uniform of sorts. I know what works for me practically. I need to be able to move around: I really dislike being restricted. I love a well-fitting blazer and also enjoy the androgynous, clean look, which accords with the tenfold aesthetic. I also always wear a leather bracelet or a cuff.

Favourite furniture item you own? An oval-shaped Eero Saarinen tulip table in white marble. It's a dining table, but I use it as a desk. It's timeless.

Who's most influenced your career? In the beauty industry, Alicia Keys and Gwyneth Paltrow. Both are style icons who value natural products. Both are slightly offbeat and quirky, discerning and elegant, but approachable. I admire their consistency in advocating for natural beauty and they've proved that going natural can be fun and cool.

Favourite material to work with at the moment? I love the art of layering to create a room that feels very textured. My favourite materials are reclaimed wood, marble, linen and a touch of black and brass.



Eero Saarinen tulip table

Phoebe Philo



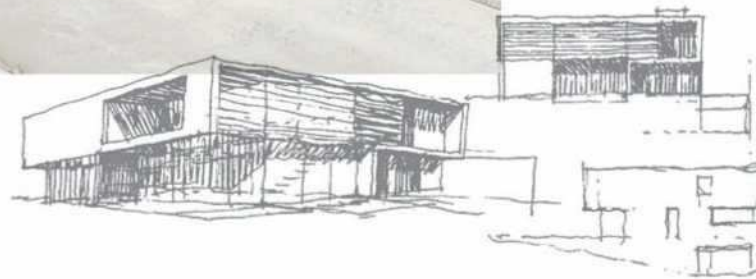
Ubud, Bali

“Architecture is how the person places herself in the space. Fashion is about how you place the object on the person.”

Zaha Hadid
Award-winning Iranian architect



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WILD AT HEART

A virtual safari through DECO's pick of luxury lodges across southern Africa, starting with a terrific decor sighting at Lion Sands Ivory Lodge in Mpumalanga.



HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

Expert Mary Maurel gives green-fingered tips for magnificent gardens.

ELLEDECORATION.CO.ZA

EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY

Eye candy from DECO's Insta feed. Get ready to regram Ini Archibong's new collection...



AESTHETICS CORNER

Miami Deco fuses tropical hues and 1920s accents for a hot twist on old glamour. Famke in Cape Town shows us how it's done.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

DECO dishes on great plates at local restaurants; dessert at 1987 Eatery is a treat.

GO EAST

Hong Kong's on our hit list. Explore this port city in new ways – Osteria Marzia in Wan Chai delivers inspired surprises.



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PHOTOGRAPH SARAH DE PINA COURTESY OF LEMON

Design studio Lemon takes DECO on a tour of its Kramerville offices (p23) and we visit Swaady Martin of Yswara at her Jo'burg tearoom (p38). Discover designer Ini Archibong's furniture collection for Sé (p34) and explore photographic exhibition, Black Chronicles.



SOFT EXPRESSION

Get an eyeful of The Ninevites' textile collaboration with Spanish design company Studio Carreras, which includes handwoven rugs and mohair throws, crafted by women artisans in the Western Cape. 'Our Imitha collection draws inspiration from the patterns used in different craft forms in Southern Africa, such as pottery, mural painting and beading,' says designer Nkuli Mlangeni. theninevites.net, [@the_ninevites](https://www.instagram.com/the_ninevites)



Au Naturel

Free-flowing organic shapes, raw materials and gnarled textures represent the essence of the natural world indoors



clockwise, from top left Smoke rug by Adam Hunter, R45 585, The Rug Company; Okavango lampshades, R350 each, Ashanti Design; Wooden seeder, R490, Cécile & Boyd; Haematite specimen, R34, Top Stones; Alabaster vase, R380, Terracotta nude statue, POA, both Liam Mooney; Wip Bench, from R17 580, David Krynauw; Wild Sea Pol granite slab, R4 900/m², WOMAG; Round Wire 3, POA, David Krynauw; Hue Pale rug by Christopher Sharp, from R38 901, The Rug Company; Pansay coffee table, R5 500, SHF; Stone facade, R4 999, La Grange Interiors





BRAAMFONTEIN RISING

New kid on the block in Braamfontein, 99 Juta St, is a development that reconfirms the Johannesburg neighbourhood as a hotspot for design innovation. The renovation of the approximately 80-year-old building is the collective vision of property developers Consolidated Urban, Play Braamfontein and celebrated product designers Dokter and Misses, who took on the remarkable interiors and fittings. Designed by architects Local Studio, the building is intended to function as a modern-day local design department store – each of the showrooms is accessible from a central vintage staircase, with tenants such as Joe Paine, Urban Native and Mash T, among others. The local product design hub will be complemented by a curated food, drink and retail component on the ground floor. Follow @99juta on social media for updates.



VELVET TOUCH

If there's one fabric to get your hands on for an on-trend update to upholstered pieces, it has to be velvet. Look to the high-quality, deep-pile cotton velvets available in the new Epoque collection by Mark Alexander, which launched at Paris Deco Off, as well as London Design Week in the Romo Group's refurbished showroom in Chelsea.

romosouthafrica.com



LEMON AID

As far as workplaces go, it doesn't get more inspiring than those of multi-disciplinary design company Lemon. Located in an industrial building in Jo'burg's Kramerville, the 1 500m² triple-storey space, with its raw finishes (it once housed a hydraulic parts factory), provides a striking setting for the design, manufacture and installation departments to create their collaborative magic, as well as a showroom for the Lemon product range. The multi-functional space was designed in partnership with Hesse Kleinloog Studio, with whom Lemon had worked extensively on projects. 'Our belief is that beautiful and functional spaces improve quality of life. All of Lemon's products are designed with this thinking at the forefront,' says its owner, Kevin Frankental. 'When conceptualising our own space, we wanted to show how our products could be used in our "perfect world", a theatre for our work.' madebylemon.co.za, hkstudio.co.za



clockwise, from top
 Quiet room with Japanese linen wallpaper by Lemon; the entrance hallway; an open-plan office space with the quiet room in the background; meeting suites



CREATIVE COLLAB

Australian clothing brand Trenerly has founded The Trenerly Guild as a means to connect with South African creative talent, as well as reward its shoppers. Select stores will feature activations and exhibitions until July by collaborating designers and artisans, such as textile artist Pierre Fouché, luxury tea brand Yswara, craft distillery Pienaar & Son and perfumer Marie Aoun of Saint d'Ici. Best of all, customers can look forward to receiving limited-edition gifts with their purchases.

DIARISE THIS 25-29 April

Don't miss experiencing KAMERS/Makers at its inspiring new Jo'burg venue, St David's Marist Inanda in Sandton, where you'll find more than 150 makers selling their handcrafted wares in a beautiful historical setting. But if you can't make it, look to the online store for year-round shopping. shop.kamersvol.com



Mulamula's Tears Stool

Nwa-Mulamula Chaise



PHOTOGRAPHS | HAYDEN PHIPPS

HAUTE SEAT

DECO loves it when fashion and furniture design collide! And all the more so when it's the initiative of a rising star like Rick Mnisi. Launched at Southern Guild's 10th-anniversary *Extra Ordinary* exhibition (on until 14 April), the clothing designer's first foray into interiors is an organically sculptural chaise in navy leather paired with a stool set on a bronze base. The pieces, named Nwa-Mulamula and Nwa-Mulamula's Tears, respectively, pay homage to his great-grandmother, an 'ever-present guardian whose teachings live on through storytelling', he says. southernguild.co.za

Ini Archibong



CELESTIAL PERFECTION

We're smitten with Swiss-based designer Ini Archibong's much-anticipated Collection IV, created with European furniture brand, Sé, in celebration of its 10th anniversary. Following on from work with Damien Langlois-Meurinne, Jaime Hayon and Nika Zupanc, Sé considered Archibong for the 'spirit of sensual beauty, celestial perfection and sensitive fragility' that permeates his pieces. The collection, entitled 'Below the Heavens', references the threshold between earth and heaven, a place of serenity that Archibong feels encompasses the spirit of Sé. The 22-piece collection will be released over the next two years. designbyini.com, se-collections.com



Helios laquered



Heracles table

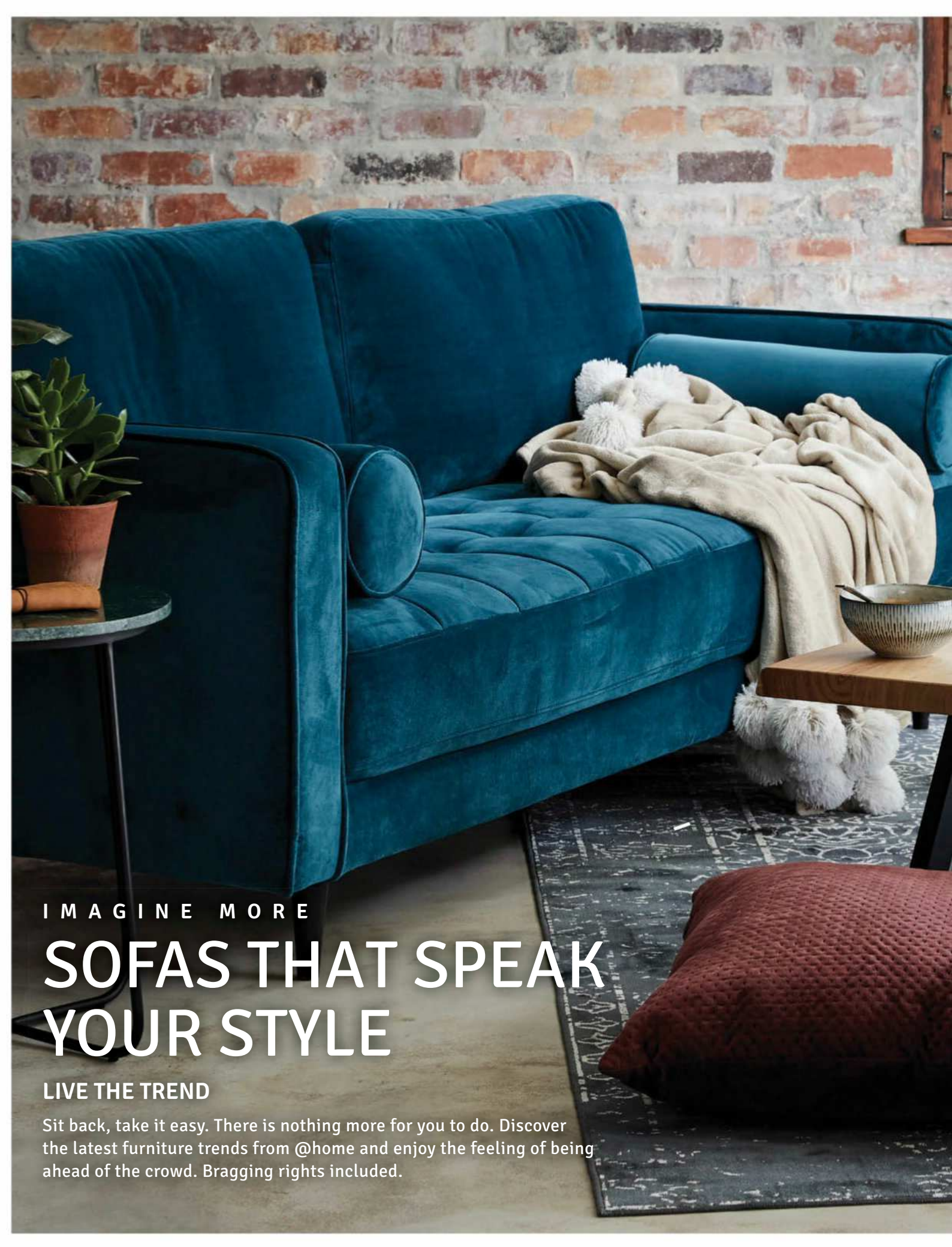


Circe chair



Eos table

PHOTOGRAPHS FRANCK JUERY



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THE ECO UPDATE

From sustainable craft and design, innovative dining concepts and water-wise gardening practices to people championing a more conscious approach to work and life, DECO's green list highlights a few reasons to feel good about our corner of the planet

THE ZERO-PACKAGING INITIATIVE

A trend the DECO team hopes will catch on across SA is the zero-packaging store. Nude Foods in Zonnebloem, Cape Town, offers a plastic-free shopping experience that allows consumers to buy their produce, whole foods and earth-friendly products without having to grapple with wasteful packaging. 'Our goal is to make plastic-free shopping easy and accessible to the everyday shopper, while supporting local suppliers and other waste-reducing initiatives,' say the Nude Foods team.

nudefoods.co.za



THE FOOD DESIGNERS

Hannerie Visser and her company, Studio H, have created conceptual taste experiences for the likes of Woolworths, Nando's, Moët et Chandon and Heineken, and recently raised the issue of Cape Town's severe drought in an initiative, the S/Zout Future Food project, that considers the different uses of seawater. 'Food design isn't about making something pretty, but about using design to solve problems,' she says.

Tell us about the S/Zout concept. We started doing research on using seawater in agriculture last year for our exhibition at Dutch Design Week in Eindhoven, in the Netherlands. We found a farm in Texel that has been researching the irrigation of crops with seawater for over 10 years. It's had great success, particularly with cabbage, potatoes, tomatoes, strawberries, carrots and lettuce. As food designers, we look at challenges in the food system and design solutions and experiences around them. We often collaborate with specialists such as chefs, farmers, scientists or even psychologists. In this case, our solution is speculative, based on the 'what if?' of using seawater in Cape Town for agriculture – or 'what if' we had no more fresh water? We're developing a future food pantry and menus using only ingredients that will survive in a post-fresh-water world.

You've hosted a series of waterless dinners? Our main objective was to spark conversations about the water crisis – and it worked! We've been interviewed by local and international podcasts, radio stations and news outlets, from a Canadian newspaper to CNN. We really want to host more of these dinners. If we can create more awareness of the topic and find practical solutions for people at home, as well as for bigger industries, I'll be happy. studio-h.co.za, [@studio_h_](https://www.instagram.com/studio_h_)



2.

Grotto Way design by Wolf & Wolf

THE BUILDING CHECKLIST

Wolf & Wolf Architects likes to practise what it preaches. Not that the firm's big on preaching; instead, the architects remain true to their ethos of designing sustainable buildings, interior spaces and products with minimal environmental impact and maximum visual sway. 'The future home is one that efficiently integrates the water cycle, energy cycle and nutrient cycle into its functioning,' says Wolf. Here's his checklist for a fully sustainable home:

Choose your site well. Then orientate your house correctly – this will optimise your ability to create a passive home.

Understand the systems you want in your home and ideally integrate them into the planning from the outset.

Use natural, sustainable materials: they offer breathability, natural humidity regulation and low embodied energy. Stone is timeless, while hempcrete – a combination of hemp fibre, lime and pozzalans – presents an old material in a new way. Combined with a timber structure, hempcrete creates a super-insulating wall, which has low-embodied energy and makes a home wonderfully warm in winter and cool in summer.

Ensure you're using sustainably managed timber. It's a great natural material with excellent aesthetic, structural and insulating properties. Rhinowood is a natural, local alternative to imported hardwoods.

Insulate your home with natural fibres like sheep's wool, timber fibre, hemp or kenaf fibre, or hemp mycelium panels.

Incorporate rainwater catchment and storage tanks and make allowances for greywater recycling – you don't need to flush with potable water.

Explore alternative energy sources. A bio-digester utilises the methane from your waste for heating and cooking. Solar water heating or a heat pump are a must for reducing electricity consumption.

Grow your own fruit and vegetables and compost all your vegetative waste, which helps reduce landfill and allows you to return nutrients to the soil. wolfandwolf.co.za

3 THE BOTANICAL BAR

The focus of this flora-centric bar and eatery in Cape Town is the use of local, seasonal ingredients, incorporating South African indigenous botanicals into drinks, bitters and bites. Botanical Bar only serves locally made, small-batch alcohol, alongside a mezze-style selection of dips, breads and pickles.

thebotanicalbar.co.za,

[@thebotanicalbar](https://www.instagram.com/thebotanicalbar)





THE HEALTHY LIVING ENTREPRENEUR

At just 29, Mmabatho Mtimkulu is the founder and CEO of Selina's Farm Fresh in Jo'burg, a concept store that encourages people to live their healthiest lives by eating its offering of GMO-free, natural and organic foods. Everything's sourced ethically and through local producers and farmers. The store also educates people on healthy living through activities such as cooking classes and an organic workshop.

I was inspired by my late grandmother, a farmworker, to open Selina's. It's named after her. I was surrounded by local producers and farmers who had great products, but nowhere to sell them, and I wanted to close the gap.

5

I went the free-range and organic route because I believe in sustainable farming methods. I wanted to create an outlet for farmers and producers whose products aren't in the big retail space. I also wanted to bring indigenous knowledge and products from the rural areas into the city. In addition, we wanted to make people aware of the difference between organic, free-range and GMO-free foods. For example, our chicken is free-range, but not organic, while our vegetables are organic. Hence why it's simply 'Selina's Farm Fresh'.

- **For me, green living means caring for the environment** any way you can. It can be as small as not throwing your bottle of water out of the car window while driving, not throwing away stale vegetables, but rather putting them back into the soil, encouraging people to utilise their backyard space to grow herbs or helping to create more conscious eaters so that we can support our local farmers and producers. **Selina's Farm Fresh, 56 6th St, Parkhurst, Johannesburg.**  [@selinasfarmfresh](#)



THE SUSTAINABLE CRAFTERS

'The natural home' is both the tagline for and cornerstone of Coral & Hive, the Somerset West-based interiors brand specialising in handwoven rugs that not only look and feel luxurious and impeccably stylish, but are also manufactured with lashings of heart and soul. Founded by Jeannine Birch, the company employs a team of skilled women weavers whose well-being and growth are as integral a part of its sustainability journey as the provenance of the handspun karakul wool, cotton and mohair used to make their wares. 'Our weaving team is like a family,' says Birch. Inspired by the colours, patterns and textures of Africa, Coral & Hive's growing collection of rugs are created on purpose-built traditional looms. With fresh designs popping up every season, large custom pieces can also be woven to order. **coralandhive.com,**  [@coralandhive](#)



THE MODERN APOTHECARY

Step through the door of an elegant black-and-white painted building just off Cape Town's Bree St and you're met with the soft fragrance of fynbos emanating from shelves laden with scented candles, aromatic creams and amber-hued elixirs. This is the domain of Marioara de la Tara, the creative and business head of Wild Olive African Artisans, the small company she bought some 11 years ago, which is now a thriving natural perfume, cosmetics and lifestyle brand. Right behind the shop is the factory where Wild Olive's mostly organic products are made, while upstairs is De la Tara's laboratory, where she crafts and refines bespoke perfumes for clients wanting a signature scent, perhaps, or where she experiments with a plethora of plant extracts – mostly from fynbos varieties and other Cape species – ahead of her next creative collaboration.

'Sustainability is a vast topic,' laughs De la Tara. Yet it underpins her business in every way, from the development of her staff to her business set-up, the natural oils and butters she uses in her products and her own ecologically aware lifestyle. Originally from Romania, but married to a South African, she bought Wild Olive because she recognised its potential for job creation. Friend and colleague Nokubonga Liwani, who runs the cosmetic laboratory, has been with her from the beginning.

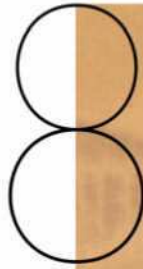
Education and more specialised training are provided for all her staff. But educating consumers is equally important. 'Everyone claims they're on the wagon to save the planet, but not everyone's prepared to go the extra mile to do so,' she says. With its focus on bath and body, the product range is based on a 100% biodegradable formulation. Packaging is minimal and completely recyclable. And she's all for supporting quality local brands rather than opting for imported goods. 'SA is the incubator for some of the most remarkable global ideas,' she adds. 'The mission of our brand is to be the ambassador of well-made African products. It's also about providing a range of honest, authentic wares that will resonate with people seeking a closer connection with nature.'

wildolive.eu



THE ARCHITECTS

Architecture company MAAK's Ashleigh Killa, Georgina Campbell and Max Melvill deliver engaged, socially conscious designs for world-class public buildings. 'When we sat down in 2016 to conjure up what is now MAAK, we wrote a short manifesto. Under the sub-title: 'Thoughts on How to Make Good Architecture', we wrote about being open, progressive, appropriate and beautiful. These are our founding principles,' says Melvill.

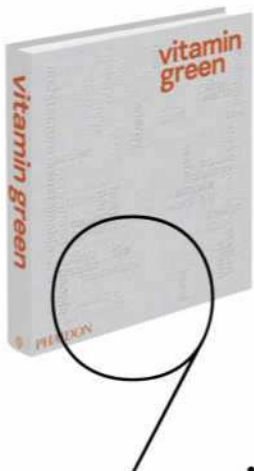


Tell us about your Nyanga project, The Community Curtain.

It's a new public arts space in Nyanga, one of the oldest townships in Cape Town. It's defined by its operable 'pop-up'/'pop-down' curtain element, which is made up of crowd-funded fabric squares donated at R330 each by the public. This simple curtain feature (which is being put together with the help of a local sewing initiative) replaces existing walls that are no longer needed in the building, creating a new, multi-purpose space at the heart of the scheme. This will hopefully increase the reach and use of the facility, as well as improving the amount of natural light and ventilation. It's already won the Michael Ventris Award for Architecture, but the work isn't done yet: we still need more squares to be donated before realising this amazing initiative.

What's your take on sustainable design? We always talk about 'holistic sustainability', which incorporates everything from how something's made to what it's made for. Many of our projects are in areas where well thought-out design isn't the norm. It's our responsibility to challenge this and present an architecture that thoughtfully considers not only the environments we're hoping to shape, but also how these spaces can, in turn, shape the environments around them.

themaak.co.za, [@the.maak](https://www.instagram.com/the.maak)



THE COFFEE-TABLE INSPIRATION

Vitamin Green (Phaidon) covers sustainability with the sort of flair that makes this both an invaluable resource and a beautiful tome for your coffee table or bookshelf. Featuring discussions about architecture, landscape architecture and product design, as well as current projects nominated by international designers, curators, critics and thinkers, it's a must-have resource on green design around the world. phaidon.com, [@phaidonsnaps](https://www.instagram.com/phaidonsnaps)

(above left) The High Line reclaims 22 blocks of abandoned railway in downtown New York, turning them into an elevated urban park and a vital public space; (above right) The Improved Clay Stove is 60% more efficient than a typical Sudanese stove, reducing smoke and air pollution and halving the time needed for wood collection.



THE EDIBLE GARDEN

Since opening to the public in 2010, Babylonstoren has enthralled all who've experienced its thoughtfully designed and curated offerings. A new book, *The Garden of Babylonstoren* (Penguin Random House), by Franchesca Watson and Heidi Bertish, is a visually rich celebration of this ever-evolving locale. Designed by master garden architect Patrice Taravella, it encompasses a vast and varied food garden and impressive botanical collections. 'The aim of the garden is to grow food

- in traditional and organic ways, and to share such knowledge with visitors. With this comes the beauty of natural forms and geometric patterns, the pleasure of being grounded to the land, as well as the aspiration that we can all take a little of this away into our everyday lives,' writes Watson.

babylonstoren.com, [@babylonstoren](https://www.instagram.com/babylonstoren)



THE DROUGHT KITCHEN

Until the end of May, celebrated chef Luke Dale Roberts will be running his pop-up venture, The Drought Kitchen, at his award-winning Cape Town eatery, The Test Kitchen. 'I've had to re-evaluate how we approach what we do in the kitchen and the restaurant,' he explains. 'From preparation to plating, service and cleaning up, everything's impacted by using less water. It's been an eye-opener.' The restaurant takes practical water-conserving measures such as not using tablecloths, but rather disposable napkins, serving each of its six courses on disposable cards, rather than crockery, and preparing dishes with minimal sauces, thus reducing the need for water in cooking. thetestkitchen.co.za,

[@thetestkitchent](https://www.instagram.com/thetestkitchent)





The Afristocrats

Black Chronicles, an international photographic intervention that scrutinises how black folks gaze back at their historical selves, is celebrated for renewing debate on, among other things, the ‘souls of black folk’ in the history of the photographic medium

TEXT **BONGANI MADONDO**

This page clockwise from top left:
Charlotte Maxeke (née Manye), The African Choir. London, 1891. By London Stereoscopic Company.
© Hulton Archive/Getty Images. Courtesy of Hulton Archive, and Autograph ABP, London.

Wellington Majiza, The African Choir. London, 1891. By London Stereoscopic Company.

Eleanor Xiniwe, The African Choir. London, 1891. By London Stereoscopic Company.

Peter Jackson. London, 1889. By London Stereoscopic Company.

WHAT? An Autograph ABP touring exhibition, presented in partnership with the Visual Identities in Art & Design Research Centre (VIAD), Faculty of Art, Design & Architecture, University of Johannesburg. Curated by Renée Mussai of Autograph ABP, London. Featuring *The African Choir 1891 Re-Imagined*, with songs composed and arranged by Philip Miller and Thuthuka Sibisi.

WHEN? 13 April - 4 May 2018

WHERE: FADA Gallery, University of Johannesburg, Bunting Rd Campus, Auckland Park.

A visual treasure of previously unseen, unacknowledged and thus erased photographs of black folks, particularly cultural, political and economic achievers in the late 18th and 19th centuries in England (to wit the ‘Black bougie’ of the Edwardian and oh-so chic Victorian eras), *Black Chronicles* is the brainchild of Autograph ABP Senior Curator and Head of Archive & Research Renée Mussai. It debuts in South Africa this month.

Of specific poignancy to local audiences is the inclusion of *The African Choir 1891 Re-Imagined*, a sound and image installation in collaboration with South African composers Philip Miller and Thuthuka Sibisi. The story of what was alternatively known as ‘The Native Choir’ is part of a singular, tragic and ultimately heroic South African cultural and political narrative, one not told often enough.

Led by King Williamstown (Qonce) entrepreneur Paul Xiniwe, the 16-member choir, plus two British tour managers, two youngsters (11-year-old Albert Jonas and 13-year-old John Xiniwe) and South African Native National Congress (SANNC, later the ANC) co-founder and educator-activist Makgomo ‘Charlotte’ Manye (later Maxeke) and her sister Katie, travelled to England in 1891 expressly to raise funds for the construction of educational colleges in the Eastern and Northern Cape. They performed for Queen Victoria, a factoid re-imagined with evocative gutsiness by Miller, Sibisi and their 15-member choir in a new adaptation of Thomas Arne’s ‘God Save the Queen’, part of the exhibition’s accompanying CD that revisits the choir’s original songbook.

While *The African Choir 1891 Re-Imagined* has had runs at Iziko National Museum in Cape Town and the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg, the University of Johannesburg’s FADA Gallery is now hosting the most extensive range of photographs from the *Black Chronicles* exhibition, of which *The African Choir 1891 Re-Imagined* forms part. *Black Chronicles IV* comprises some startling material, including 200 images reproduced from African-American intellectual WEB Du Bois’ iconic *American Negro* exhibition from the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris.

Since the exhibition series' conception in 2011 and later under the auspices of The Missing Chapter, an ongoing educational project by London-based photo advocacy and charity organ Autograph ABP, *Black Chronicles* has not only been directly involved in the reappraisal of the history of blackness (and migrations from 'shithole countries', Mr Trump!), but has helped animate local and global discussion on the erasure of black people from popular history and media. It has also morphed into a cross-generational visual dialect with which black recent pasts and presences converse and coalesce around questions of self-affirmation and pride.

Black Chronicles offers the viewer a testament to the presence of the black man and black woman in the Western firmament at a crucial time in [the West's] cultural and industrial development and explores the way that complicates the current brands of cultural purism and racial fascism in Europe and the West at large.

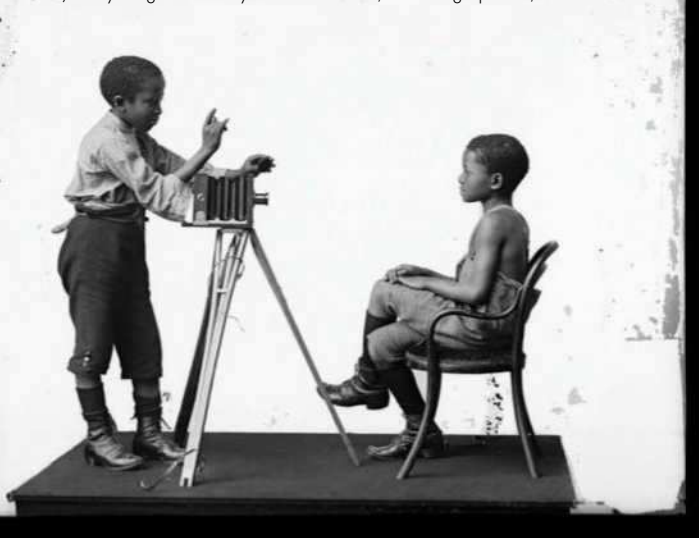
The exhibition also poses a plethora of questions that can't easily be theorised or marketed into a straitjacket: What is black style or African visual genius? What is its place in how people feel about themselves today? Who should speak for it? Better still, what does 'black sophistication' mean and why does it matter?

I spoke to Reneé Mussai, the curatorial light behind *Black Chronicles*, on the eve of the show's opening.

How did you discover the African Choir story and what compelled you to include it in *Black Chronicles*? The original glass plates were deeply buried in the Hulton Archive, one of the oldest and largest image archives in the world, amidst a collection of 40 000 negatives – untouched for decades, still wrapped in their original brown tissue paper and string. After reviewing surviving albums by the London Stereoscopic Company, we came across small reproductions of the individual choir members' portraits, each inscribed with a set of numbers; they were neither named nor dated.

'These extraordinary portraits – unseen for more than 125 years – constitute the most comprehensive body of photographs depicting black and African figures in Victorian Britain'

Albert Jonas and John Xiniwe, The African Choir. London, 1891. © Hulton Archive/Getty Images. Courtesy of Hulton Archive, and Autograph ABP, London.



Based on my research to date, these extraordinary portraits – unseen for more than 125 years – constitute the most comprehensive body of photographs depicting black and African figures in Victorian Britain. Unearthing them during the early months of collaborative in-depth research turned a speculative endeavour into a feasible, deeply exciting exhibition project. Having access to original archive material to produce large-scale exhibition prints is rare; it enables a transformative, contemporary gallery encounter with historical imagery, brought alive through fascinating biographical research and context.

Bringing the photographs to South Africa today, four years after the inaugural London exhibition in 2014, as part of *Black Chronicles IV* and together with Miller and Sibisi's music in *The African Choir 1891 Re-Imagined*, constitutes a symbolic homecoming.

What inspired you to research and devote time to this show?

The exhibition forms part of Autograph ABP's *The Missing Chapter: Black Chronicles*, an archive research programme with the explicit mission of unearthing the earliest photographs depicting black presences – African, Caribbean, South Asian, African American, black European and other hybrid identity formations – in 19th-century Britain. Prior to this research, very few photographs in public circulation evidenced black figures during the Victorian era: Britain's diverse national history is generally constructed as a post-war moment of 'arrival', through the prism of the *HMT Empire Windrush* in 1948.

Our aim was to gently disrupt this notion and expand the narrative of migration and representation to the early days of photography. The project was inspired by a remedial visual desire for visibility and excavation, an attempt to interrogate the archive for new knowledge and annotate the cultural history of photography.

How long did the project take you, from start to finish?

Black Chronicles is a long-term project rooted in many decades of continuous investment, research and advocacy in photography, race, rights and the politics of difference. The specific curatorial research for the exhibition series began in 2013 and continues today with new iterations and institutional, as well as artistic, collaborations. Its visual imagery is primarily drawn from *Black Chronicles II*, the series' critically acclaimed inaugural exhibition in 2014. The initial picture research was conducted in partnership with the Hulton Archive, a division of Getty Images, whose generous support was instrumental to our mission – the project wouldn't have been possible without their commitment. Other research partners include the Royal Collection Trust and the National Portrait Gallery.

You are black and British. To what extent does this show express your own place in the British, European and broader Western socio-cultural space and continuum?

I'm Afro-European – of mixed Somali and Austrian heritage. The trajectory of the *Black Chronicles* project constitutes an integral part of our scholarly, research-based, decolonial curatorial work at Autograph ABP. Those of us with diasporic roots share a desire to see ourselves represented; to see our past presences visualised. It humanises and enlightens. One of [academic] Stuart Hall's key citations in the exhibition brilliantly states: 'They are here because you were there.' Hence, in this iteration of *Black Chronicles*, in partnership with VIAD, we're connecting WEB Du Bois' *1900 Paris Albums* with the 1891 LSC portraits of The African Choir and other black Victorian figures.

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Wide
Wonky Bottle
R395

Tall
Wonky Bottle
R495

Simone
Grey Vase
R295

A woman with a white towel wrapped around her head, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, is standing behind a counter made of light-colored, veined marble. She is looking down at a notebook or menu on the counter. The counter is set with a golden teapot, a glass, and other items. In the background, there are shelves with golden containers and a large window with two wooden pendant lights hanging from the ceiling. The floor is made of light-colored wood. The overall atmosphere is warm and elegant.

AT WORK: *SWAADY MARTIN*

*This entrepreneur, writer and founder of Yswara's
tearoom in Johannesburg has created an
environment that resonates with her truest self*

TEXT **NTOMBENHLE SHEZI** PHOTOGRAPHY **GRAEME WYLLIE**



from left A serene corner of the tearoom. The couch is from Studio 19; blue cornflowers used in the Makeda of Sheba Rooibos tisane; Yswara's range of beautifully packaged teas **opposite page** The atelier where the teas are blended



Over the past five years Yswara, purveyor of bespoke teas, has built quite a following of traditional African tea-making methods that are both meditative and soulful. 'Tea is about that meeting [one has with] time. It's a communion with nature, the earth, the farmers and with the tea-blenders,' says Martin.

She describes herself as someone who loves simple and soothing spaces, and the tearoom's enveloped in hues of pink, her favourite colour. The shade of it on the packaging of the main Yswara tea range is one she spent time creating herself at the printer and it's reminiscent of an African desert before sunset. 'I love silence. For me, that pink is my way of being in that silent desert,' she says.

In designing the space, Martin worked closely with Mia Widlake from Studio 19. The wooden floors are part of the aesthetic of the Cosmopolitan Hotel in which the tearoom's housed. Up until the end of last year the tearoom was in the hotel's courtyard, before moving upstairs to a bigger space, where Martin and her team produce the tea, dream up new flavours and allow the public to walk in for a cup of their preferred blend.

Copper accents can also be seen throughout the space and are just one of the expressions of Martin's love for natural materials, as well as a homage to one of the oldest metals found on the continent. 'We're contemporary in our aesthetics and the materials are old. Everything we have is rooted in Africa and has a deep meaning,' she says. In this space you'll also find the Ty Wara, a totem from Mali from which the brand derives its name.

yswara.com, [@yswara](https://www.instagram.com/yswara)



STUDIO VISIT



TELL US ABOUT THE TEA-MAKING PROCESS. It starts with wandering deep into these immense, beautiful tea farms in countries like Rwanda, Kenya, Malawi and locally, meeting the farmers and testing leaves and other ingredients like spices. From there, I select samples of the different flavours and come back to experiment. Once I've created something I like that looks, feels and tastes good, the recipe is created.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR TEAM. Yswara is run by Charlene Jordaan, who's been with us for two years, though it feels like forever. She's in charge of everything operational. We also have a salesperson and a production team on site. It's a collaborative effort.

WHAT WAS THE FIRST TEA YOU EVER CREATED? I'll never forget it because all my love and imagination went into it. I'm more of a herbal tea-drinker, so it was a rooibos. I love roses, so it had a lot of rose petals, cornflowers and vanilla. It was a vanilla sparkling wine Champagne blend.

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE TEAS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS? Askia of Songhai, Omoluabi and Nandi of Zululand, all available at Yswara.

WHO WOULD YOU LOVE TO SHARE A CUP OF TEA WITH? My higher self.

WHAT'S YOUR COLOUR OF THE MOMENT? Pink, always.

WHAT BOOK ARE YOU CURRENTLY READING? *Choosing to Love the World: On Contemplation* by Thomas Merton (Sounds True Publishers).

WHAT'S THE ONE PLACE TO WHICH YOU ALWAYS RETURN? Six-fours-les-plages, my maternal hometown in the South of France, where my family still returns every summer.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE GUESTHOUSE? I love Satyagraha House in Orchards, Johannesburg, where Ghandi developed his soul-force movement and where I run workshops for my new company SHIFT WITHIN.

HOW DO YOU CENTRE YOURSELF? I see life as a constant prayer and try to stay awake to the magic around me.

from above Rose-gold furnishings complement the pale-pink interiors; the copper-and-wood shelves are by Studio 19; pink cornflowers grown on a South African flower farm; the Ty Wara – the inspiration behind the brand's name; copper basin and tap by Studio 19





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The Art of Window Styling

Ailerons vases from
R12 050, Roche Bobois



Velvet cushion cover
from R429, Zara Home



Velvet cushion cover
R129, H&M Home

Parentesi earrings
R107 900, BVLGARI



Plain weave multi-coloured blanket
R1 299, Zara Home

Rays Luminaires table lamp by Marta Bakowski from R24 860, Roche Bobois



Bracelet
R7 000, BVLGARI



DIRTY *Pastels*

Playful designs get a grown-up edge in muted pastel tones and textured materials



Picardie pastel tumblers (set of six) R399, Yuppiechef



Jade fabric from the Magical Range
R353/m, Hertex



Morrocotto tile in Lilac R34/tile, Douglas Jones



Stresa chair
R8 840, Ligne Roset

Vessels by Utopia & Utility from
R4 000, establishment.co.za



Design Sala fabric in col 6 by Jim Thompson
R1 950/m, T&CO

Roller bar from
R68 540, Roche Bobois

Baenk bench by
Woud from R14 200,
establishment.co.za

Kiso fabric
in Night Sky
from
the
Chemistry
Range
R775/m, Hertex

Chocolate Truffle slab
from R2 451/linear metre,
Caesarstone

Babylon planter
by Dedon
R19 000, Canetime

Plates from the Earth
Range with bronze trim
from R261, Mervyn Gers

Hot CHOCOLATE

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Combine different shades of
it and update the effect with
sophisticated design*

Hexagon stool
R4 200, Cécile & Boyd

Tibbo lounge
chair by Dedon
R32 100, Canetime

Episode
bedside
table by
MCD
R18 700,
Ligne Roset

Eldorado in Atelier d'Artiste
wallpaper by Élitis
R5 776, St Leger & Viney

Cuir leather wallpaper
by Élitis R4 915/roll,
St Leger & Viney

Unity stone earrings
R1 480, Matter of Fakt



TREND ALERT

Neve fabric in Mineral 332780 by Zoffany R4 266/m, St Leger & Viney

Aquila fabric in Seaspray from the Constellation Collection by James Hare R2 790/m, Halogen International

Gold Onyx from the Maximum Precious Stone Porcelain Slab Collection POA, Studio Masson

Iris lamp by Dix Heures R33 500, Casarredo

Mood 2.0 earrings R1 650, Kirsten Goss

Agata Blue Onyx from the Maximum Precious Stone Porcelain Slab Collection POA, Studio Masson

LC1 chair from the Maestri Collezione R53 950, True Design

Blue vase R2 750, SHF

Carved bowl R7 600, Okha

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Duke armchair R14 000, SHF

Felt and colour rug 200cm x 300cm R39 780, Ligne Roset

Monet centre table by Boca do Lobo from R322 825, establishment.co.za

Rex console R164 500, Weylandts

Side table tapered low in Black & White R3 200, La Grange Interiors

Black genuine soft sheepskin rug R1 950, Design Store



SHF



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Marketing Communications
Strategist

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glass is half empty or half full,
just fill it up."

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A woman with dark skin, wearing a gold turban and a long, flowing gold dress, is seated on a large, ornate wicker chair. She is looking to her right with a slight smile. The background features a white paneled wall and two large, ornate chandeliers with gold and crystal accents. The overall lighting is warm and elegant.

Generation



Rala Sofa R35 000



Prima Chandelier R6 500



Shanti Rug R8 500

Clemance Scatter R1 100



Flamenco Chair R8 500



Dali Coffee Table R2 750

Ernst Table R1 350



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Lizard Objet R1 000



Column Gold Planters From R350



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DR SAME MDLULI

The Johannesburg-based art authority on daily rituals and enduring inspiration

Recently appointed Manager of the Standard Bank Gallery, Mdluli holds a PhD in art history and also writes about the visual arts. Born and raised in Botswana and the USA, while her family were exiles during the apartheid regime, she returned after the country's first democratic elections in 1994. However, she still considers Botswana one of her homelands. 'What excites me the most about the continent right now is the fact that the world's looking to Africa for innovation, creativity and a renewed sense of humanity,' she says. These are some of her passions.

1. MAYA ANGELOU

One of my favourite quotes from this poet is: 'I've learnt that people will forget what you said and people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.'

2. NEW YORK AND PARIS

New York is a city I love falling asleep in after enjoying its nightlife, while Paris is the ideal place in which to wake up. It's amazing in the morning, with bakeries selling fresh bread and croissants. It's also a place where one can enjoy getting lost and experiencing its wealth of cultural activities.

3. MUSEÉ DU QUAI BRANLY

This museum in Paris is overwhelming in both a positive and negative way. On the one hand, it's a magnificent display of material culture from various parts of so called 'non-Western' countries. On the other, it can be viewed as a display of violent colonial conquest.

4. MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA

This film will always be one of my favourites in terms of cinematography, visual experience and captivating both the imagination and the emotions. It also has a beautiful soundtrack.

5. NINA SIMONE AND BILLIE HOLIDAY

These two artists frequently feature on my playlist because they're mood music. They both lived extraordinary lives and were very real.

6. DREAM DINNER PARTY GUESTS

Frida Kahlo, Miriam Makeba, Assata Shakur, Steve Biko and Maya Angelou. Kahlo inspired me to become an artist, Makeba lived an amazing life and had a profound love for her continent and people, Assata was revolutionary for a black woman in her time, Biko represented black men who know their story and Angelou reminded black women why self-love is important.

7. MY WORKING RITUAL

I start my day by reading a current affairs article or an essay on something art-related in order to keep up with contemporary trends and commentaries, both locally and internationally.

8. ONE BY DOLCE & GABBANA

It's a wonderful fragrance that lingers throughout the day.



Nina Simone



Frida Kahlo



Miriam Makeba

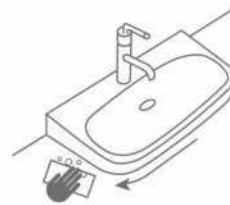
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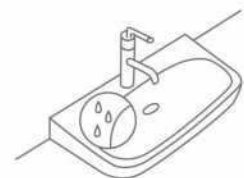
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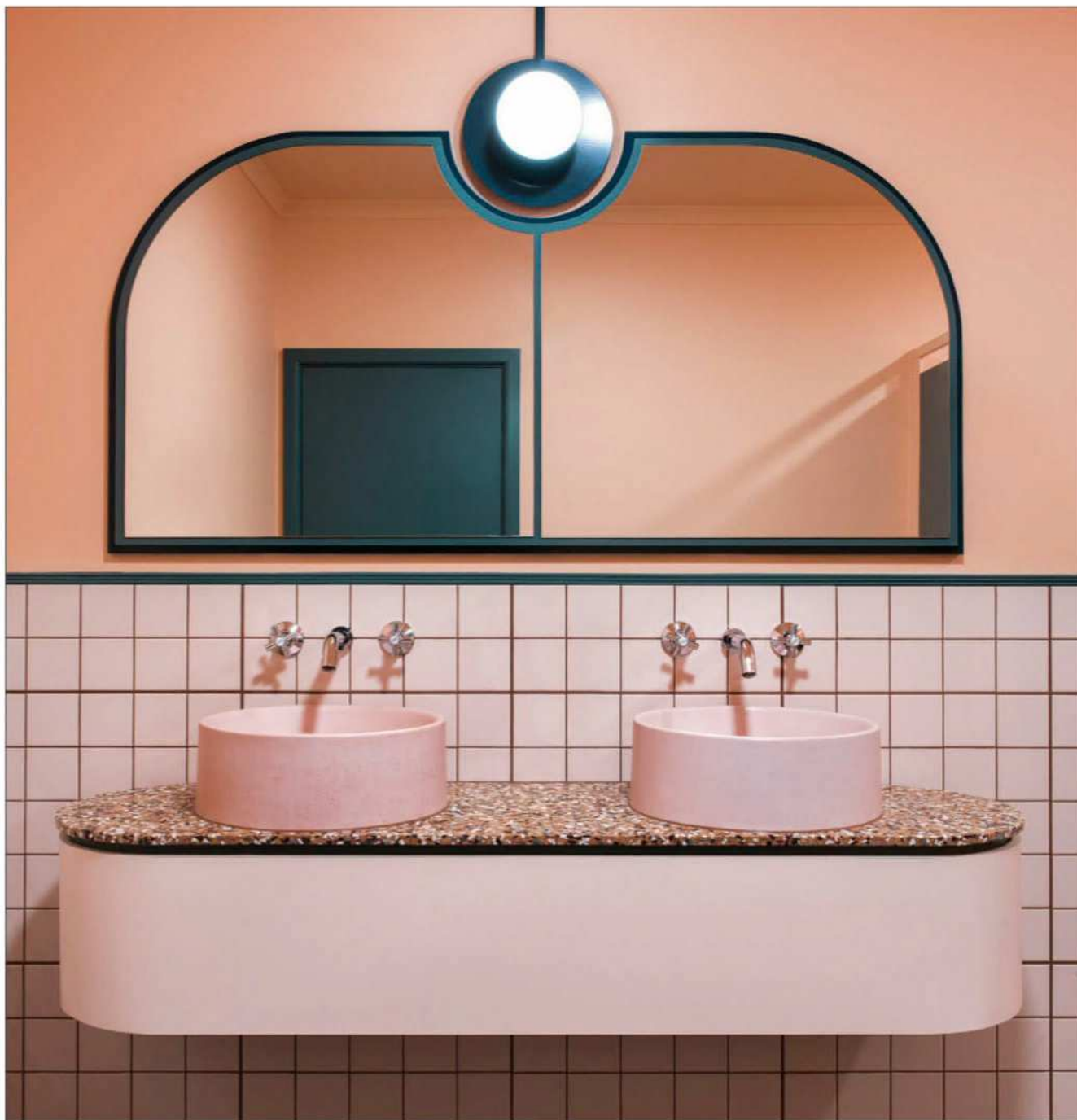
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MT ERICA HOTEL BY BERGMAN & CO BERGMANANDCO.COM

Spruce up your bathroom with novel ideas (p60). Organic shapes and raw textures take centre stage in the home (p52), plus design-forward, eco-savvy products for green-minded shoppers (p56) and pretty porcelain and glass objects to decorate with (p54).

Natural GLOSS

Decorative design elements in organic shapes, paired with the sleekness of glass and natural stone, make for a space filled with contrast and interest



PHOTOGRAPHY **SARAH DE PINA**
PRODUCTION & STYLING **SANRI PIENAAR**
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT **ELLIETTE FRANSMAN**
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT **PIETER VON WIELLIGH**



this page (from left, top) **Slime line terra-stone tile** from R342,06/m², Union Tiles; **Nero Marinace Pol granite slab** R4 560/m², WOMAG; **textured glass** R500/m², Linden Glass Works; **Maroxy polished/translucent slab** R2 200/m², The Tile Gallery; **Zizi white polished slab** R2 700/m², The Tile Gallery; **Maroxy polished/translucent** R2 200/m², The Tile Gallery; **textured cathedral glass in Warm Purple** from R1 120/m², The Cutting Edge; **Opaque glass** R500/m², Linden Glass Works **opposite** (clockwise, from left) **Jovi model paste white** R55, Builder's Warehouse; **Moss black slab** R3 876/m², WOMAG; **Snowstorm BM granite slab** R3 990/m², WOMAG; **Glammo white tumbled culterra** R75/bag, Kilnerpark Kwekery; **Jovi model paste grey** R52, Builder's Warehouse; **Glammo brown tumbled culterra** R75/bag, Kilnerpark Kwekery; **Gardenia Taste Pece** R600/m², Ferreiras

OH YOU PRETTY THINGS

*Embellish with ornaments made of porcelain, glass and wood,
grouped together for a layered effect*

PHOTOGRAPHY **SARAH DE PINA** PRODUCTION AND STYLING **SANRI PIENAAR**
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT **ELLIETTE FRANSMAN** PRODUCTION ASSISTANT **PIETER VON WIELLIGH**
FLOWERS **JONETTE ENGELBRECHT @ THE BOTANICUS**



1. Ode gold 25cm vase by Rosenthal R7 890, Spilhaus 2. Large green paperweight R6 978, Roche Bobois 3. Atomiser by Seletti R1 365, Generation 4. Bulcky Smaragd vase R3 200, Casarredo 5. Wooden sphere ornament by Cassina R240, True Design 6. Atomiser by Seletti R1 365, Generation 7. Dewdrop grey tealight by Rosenthal R349, Spilhaus 8. Limited-edition My Crown by Seletti R1 880, Generation Store 9. Giftology perfume bottle Lismore tall crystal 15cm by Waterford R2 119, Spilhaus 10. Lenti vase by Rebecca Vallee R8 576, Roche Bobois 11. Coral barnacle statue white R595, Block & Chisel



Lavender tinted orb urn
R2 000, Liam Mooney



Pyrite sphere
R3 299/kg, Top Stone



Gufo owl vase by Manolo Bossi for Bosa
R5 400, Limeline



Unlock bell by CtrlZak for BOSA
R1 900, Limeline



Holmegaard medium canister
R1 100, Liam Mooney



NewWorks Gear candle-holders from
R1 350, each establishment.co.za



Glacier
R12 750, Okha



Eames house bird
R2 479, Cube Gallery



Flower ceramic decor plate
R140, Mr Price Home



Architectural plates
from R723 each, Couth



NewWorks Pi No Pi vases
R1 920 each, establishment.co.za



Decorative marble piece
R629, Zara Home

GREEN WITH ENVY

From a water-saving shower to a flame-powered speaker and a viridescent sound system, these tech innovations take their cues from green as a theme

► **NEW FLAME** The unique, energy-efficient Pelly Bluetooth speaker is powered by thermal energy in the form of an oil lamp. In contrast to the generally coldly sleek designs for digital speakers, the Pelly's housed in a ceramic vase with a wooden base crafted by Italian artisans. The glass container for the oil lamp is a clever touch, ensuring an atmospheric feel to accompany your music. pelly.it



► **BLOW OFF STEAM** With a design premised on conserving water, the experience of the meticulously engineered, beautifully realised Nebia Spa Shower is nonetheless astonishingly immersive: 10 precision-tuned nozzles atomise the flow of water, creating a warm, enveloping mist and spray that, in addition to feeling like a spa-grade steam room, deliver enough moisture for a wash and rinse as thorough as a traditional shower. The real plus of this design, though, is the fact that it saves up to 70% of the water that would have been used in a standard shower. The Nebia Spa Shower is also super-easy to install – Nebia promises that there's no need for contractors, plumbers or even a broken tile. nebia.com

► **TURNING GREEN** Playing on the organic trend, Bang & Olufsen's limited-edition Harmonies Collection includes five top wireless speaker systems (BeoSound 1, BeoSound 2, BeoPlay A9, BeoPlay M5 and BeoSound 35) in a spectrum of organic Infantry Green tones with brass, Kvadrat fabric, black aluminium and smoked oak accents. On aluminium surfaces, the Infantry Green tone alters from dark gold to green, depending on reflections and intensity of light. Similarly, the fabrics used in the collection appear both green and earthy brown from different angles and in different lighting – perfect for decorative verdure. The speakers are equipped with the Bang & Olufsen multi-room functionality, a seamless connection between speakers that allows a tune to flow throughout your home. bang-olufsen.com



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Vinyl - Peninsula | Colour: Yellow Meranti | Carpet - Abstract | Colour: Faded Canvas

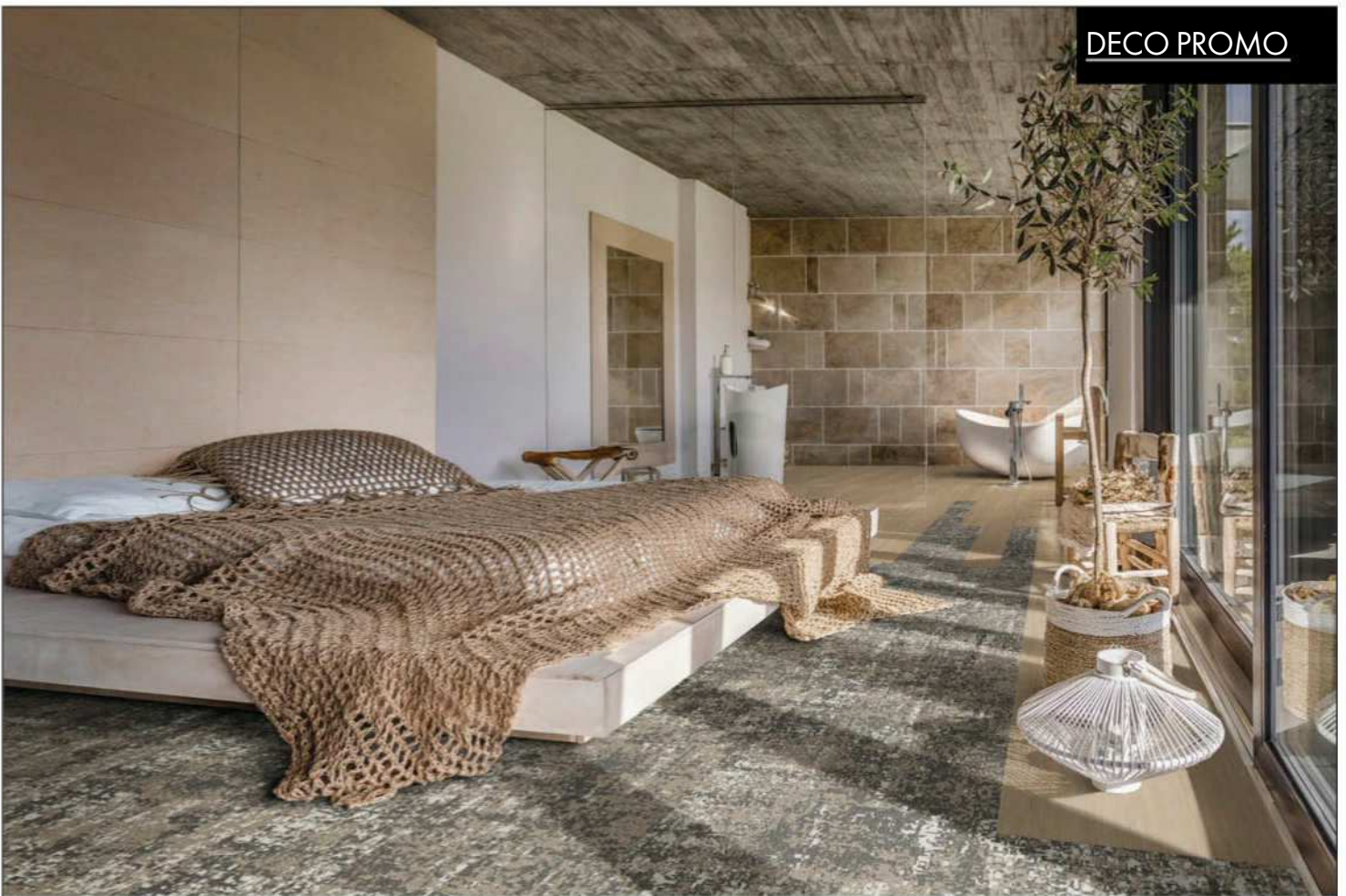
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Penninsula (*shown above*) is a water-resistant, durable and convenient vinyl flooring solution for high traffic areas in your home, such as open-plan kitchens, dining and family room. It is available in a deep range of textured finishes and wood-look planks for a natural aesthetic. Peninsula is suitable for heavy traffic commercial use.

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From left **Abstract Pencil Tip**, **Penninsula Bolivian Rosewood**,
Abstract Faded Canvas, **Penninsula Yellow Meranti**.



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For a smaller bathroom, try a free-standing circular basin. Open up the space even more with an oversized rectangular mirror and sleek, simply designed taps.

THE BUDAPEST CAFÉ BY BIASOL. PHOTOGRAPHY: JAMES MORGAN BIASOL.COM.AU

ROYAL FLUSH

Play a winning hand in the bathroom design stakes with tips and advice from industry experts. From planning to selecting finishes and the best sustainable products available, here's all you need to know.

COMPILED BY **SANRI PIENAAR**

COLOUR

Bright hues combined with minimalist features takes center stage in 2018. To add depth, play with textures and finishes.



TANN BY ANDREAS ENGESVIK FOR HAY HAY.DK



**SIOBHAN THOMAS
FLUSH BATHROOMS**
flushbathrooms.com

Hottest bathroom trend for 2018? Colour. Black tapware and shower frames are massive at the moment. So too are champagne and bronze hues.

‘Pair a custom vanity and matt black shelves with bronze taps for a softer, more glamorous end result.’

Biggest bathroom luxury? A high-tech paperless toilet. It is huge in Japan, and extremely environmentally and health conscious. The toilet has a hygienic built-in bidet spray with warm water, as well as a dryer. It also has a male and female option.

Smartest water-saving gadget? Aerators (Neoperl is a tried-and-tested range). Install these on taps and shower heads to reduce water usage. For instance, if you have a Hansgrohe basin mixer the flow rate is usually 5l per minute. If you would like to reduce this you can replace the aerator (the small nozzle part of the basin mixer) to either become a 1l, 2l or 3l. When it comes to shower roses, a water flow reducer can lessen the amount of water used by as much as 60% without you even feeling much difference in performance. These little aerators sell for about R60 each, so it's an easy and affordable solution.

Must have eco-friendly bathroom item? Ceramic toilets and basins coated with Ceramic Plus. The coating protects the ceramic, so that it stays looking cleaner and whiter for much longer, this in turn allows homeowner's to use less harmful detergents and toxic cleaning materials.



Small metal tray
R147, H&M



Soft edged mirror by Arkivio R2 390, Design Store

Rise and Shine wall mirror by NewWorks
R7 731, establishment.co.za



Rondo basin
R4 500, Studio 19



Meir black MB02 round basin D/M
R2 832, Flush Bathrooms



Temple oils
R100 each, Wass



Raised stripes cotton towels From R199, Zara Home



Borosilicate glass jar
R289, Zara Home



Crete Cote in Sand Dollar
POA, Cemcrete

Metropol 110 basin mixer by Hansgrohe
R4 276, OnTop



Copper and pink cluster 3 pendant by Hoi P'loy R2 190,
Design Store



Washed linen dressing gown
R599, H&M



Patterned fringed bathmat R295,
Weylandts



Dark wood bathroom set R369,
Zara Home



Laundry fundo From R580, Ashanti



Raw finishes, layered textiles and greenery add a modern twist to classic-style bathrooms.



Liquorice floor baskets From R1 090, Knus

**RUDIE BOTHA
WERKHOF ARCHITECTS
werkhof.co.za**

Bathrooms – what's new? The focus is moving away from objects, and rather falling on the space. This allows for the bathroom to take on any surface treatment because the way in which the space is considered is changing. The everyday use of the space and how light and ventilation takes place become more important.

What to consider when choosing surfaces? Trends will come and go, so the best way to counter redoing the bathroom every second year is to choose timeless materials as the primary focus for walls and floors. The closer these can be to natural or raw materials the better the chances of it surviving.

Best value-for-money surface options? A stucco finish for floors and walls, interrupted with another material, such as marble slabs or timber, always make for a good economical solution. The idea is to use the stucco as a backdrop or canvas and then fill it in with smaller amounts of more expensive materials.

What to keep in mind when designing a bathroom? The most important thing to remember is that the space will be used primarily for cleansing of the human body, this means water at showers, baths and basins. Threshold spaces between these water using areas should be used to create dry zones.

Statement bathroom idea? Nothing speaks louder than a thick slab of marble or a shower bench made from a fallen forest tree.

Must-have sustainable product? The new intuitive water control by Hansgrohe called SELECT.

'Create a living surface in your bathroom by installing a vertical garden or moss wall.'

Chaise on Art Deco bathtub R19 300,
Victorian Bathrooms



Bathmat memory foam R329,
@home

CARLTON NORTH, VICTORIA. APARTMENT BY HEARTH PHOTOGRAPHY; LAUREN BAMFORD HEARTHSTUDIO.COM.AU



'The most important light in a bathroom is natural light – if this is achieved then the idea of cleansing in nature is also emphasized.'

SURFACES

Experiment with unconventional materials and placement for a fresh take on walls and floors

FINISHES

Create bespoke, high-impact spaces with finishes in rich, sultry colours and gold tapware and accessories

Choose one or two statement pieces to accomplish this look and pair it with a serene white basin for a modern contrast.

**DANIE STEENKAMP
SKIN ARCHITECT AND INTERIORS**

Be bold and move away from the generic type of 'white-on-white' bathroom typology we all know. Even though the latter won't go out of style, this year is it's all about bold accents. Using unique shaped tiling to accentuate a feature wall or choosing coloured fixtures to add a splash of life to bathroom interiors, it has turned into a space of artistic expression.

Material you're most excited about? Bamboo. Often overlooked, it is very versatile and can be formed and molded into various shapes. It can start as a cladding on the shower wall and transition into the floor finish. It can also be used as a tile, it is up to the designer's imagination. It is also one of the most sustainable materials to use.

Wow design idea? Use full length tiles to cover wall surfaces. For example, if you choose something with a natural stone finish, it creates the affect that your wall has been cut from a single slab. Contrast this with brass or matt black fittings for a very impressive look.

What to keep in mind when choosing lighting fixtures? Lighting must be layered. For general lighting you can use LED down lighting. The next layer will be task lighting, such as your vanity lights.

How do you choose a sustainable bathroom feature that is still beautiful? Luckily the new age designer sees aesthetics and sustainability in the same light. A more refined designed fitting also ticks the sustainability box. Sustainability does not only apply to how it consumes power or manage water, but also to where you source it from. Try and look at local options before ordering something that needs to be shipped from Italy...

Bathroom reno tip? Replacing old shower doors or curtains with a single frameless piece of glass will immediately update the space.



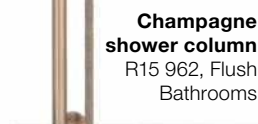
Derring on Carillon round wading pool sink
R10 000, Kohler



Shiny gold soap dish
R199, Zara Home



Mystic Brown marble slab
POA, Rudi's Choice



Champagne shower column
R15 962, Flush Bathrooms



Sigm40 amber glass R6 500, Gerberit

Marble and brass block candle holder by NewWorks
R1 279 for 4, Establishment



Twins mirror
R2 900, Design Store

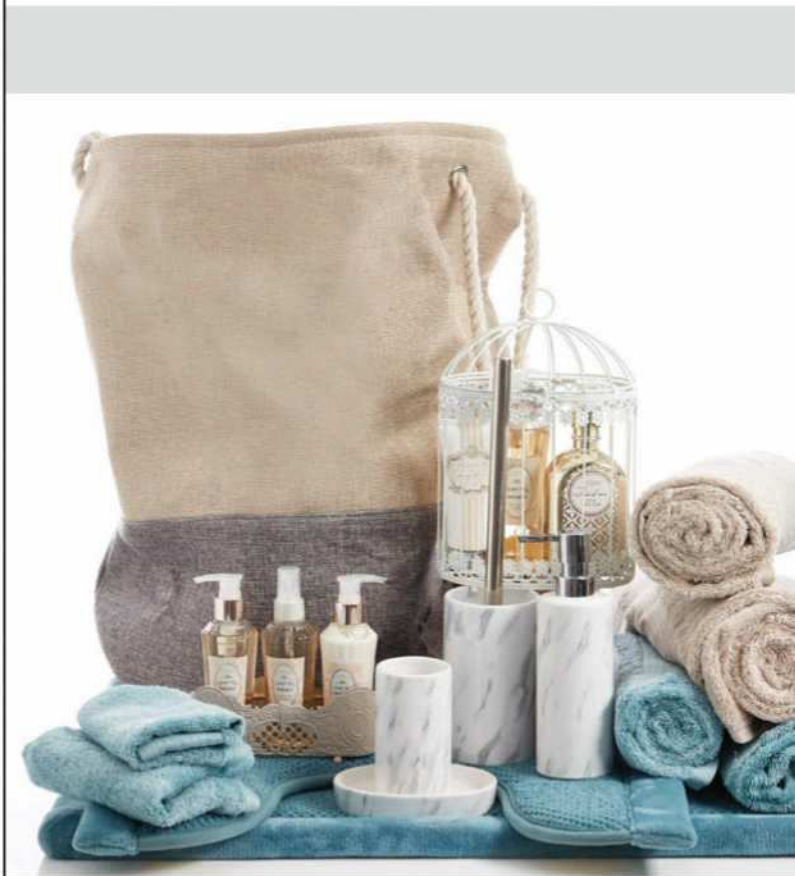


Natural Straight PTS in Brushed Bronze
R11 249, Bathroom Butler



In-Out marble freestanding bath tub R190 380, Lavo Bathroom Concepts

'Choose sanitaryware in the same shape. If you have a round bath, opt for a round basin, too.'



From top left: Large cotton rope laundry bin R399,95; Birdcage four-piece (salt/bodywash/foam bath) R269,95; Bamboo facecloth R49,95; Hand wash and lotion in caddy R229,95; Memory foam bath mat R459,95 and pedestal R295,95; Marble tumbler R79,95; Marble soap dish R69,95; Marble toilet brush R169,95; Marble dispenser R99,95; Bamboo towel R299,95; Bamboo bath sheet R459,95; Bamboo hand towel R175,95; Bamboo guest towel R89,95



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Clockwise, from left: HC large wooden frame R149,95; **Velvet scatter cushions (in Natural, Sage and Ivory)** R199,95; **HC glass and wood Roman clock** R599,95; **Two-stem white orchid in pot** R349,95; **Embossed sherpa throw** R1 699,95; **Small wooden frame** R109,95; **Medium wooden frame** R129,95; **Room spray 100ml Orchid and Aloe** R129,95; **Room spray diffuser 100ml Fig** R189,95; **Four-pack SC Rose and Geranium** R79,95; **Goose down duvet inner double** R3 599,95 (also available in queen, king and super king sizes); **300 thread count organic cotton duvet cover double** R1 499,95 (queen R1 499,95, king R1 599,95, super king R1 699,95 and XLK R1 799,95 sizes); **22cm Potted succulent** R89,95; **7cm Potted succulent** R49,95; **18cm Potted succulent** R89,95



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PHOTOGRAPH BIRGITTA WOLFGANG/SISTERS AGENCY

A Mexican home fuses contemporary architecture and age-old craftsmanship (p70), while a cool and airy Cape Town home blurs the lines between inside and out with flora and art (p80). Eclectic glamour best describes this designer abode in London (p90) and a smart seaside house on the West Coast charms with earthy delights (p100).

RAW

The weekend villa of Mexican interior designer Martha Pérez merges bold, contemporary design and traditional craftsmanship, all in magical harmony with its natural surrounds

TEXT **MARZIA NICOLINI** PHOTOGRAPHS **NIN SOLIS/LIVING INSIDE**

BEAUTY

this page Angular lines lead to the villa's entrance, with a view of the El Tepozteco mountains at the back. The house was designed by Cadaval & Sola-Morales architects, its contemporary concrete planes softened by plantings of grasses and Bethlehem star plants. 'I love the integration of old and modern in the same place and being surrounded by the mountains and the mystic atmosphere one breathes in the town,' says Pérez.





this page In contrast to the simple concrete and glass architectural detailing, the furniture and textiles have character and warmth. Most are restored Mexican pieces from the Fifties and Sixties, such as the armchairs which were bought by Pérez at a flea market. The traditional Mexican chimney is from Chihuahua

opposite Pérez and her partner; furnishings representative of Mexican modernism, one of Pérez's favourite movements and periods.



Natural light floods into every corner of the spacious contemporary house where interior designer Martha Pérez and her partner spend their free time. Located just 60km away from Mexico City, this villa is actually their *'buen retiro'*, the bolthole to which they escape on weekends to find respite from life in the busy metropolis. So remarkable is this space for its laid-back and uplifting mood that you wouldn't mind being a neighbour so you could pop in for a visit from time to time.

There's also something palpably mystical about its setting on the outskirts of Tepoztlán, a small, picturesque village – also known as 'The Magic Town' – on the slopes of El Tepozteco, an archaeological site in the Mexican state of Morelos.

The villa was designed by renowned architectural studio Cadaval & Solá-Morales and is notable for its thick stone walls, a swooping concrete roof and large expanses of glazing to frame the dramatic mountain views. Whether it's due to the harmonious arrangement of open and enclosed spaces, the intentional use of raw materials or the mix of traditional craftsmanship and iconic design pieces, there's a sense of being able to breathe easily in an atmosphere of serenity and quiet. This effect's also due in no small part to Pérez's touch as an interior designer. 'My goal was to create an ambience based on the identity of the house, while representing modern Mexico,' she says.

The strong architecture and rational layout were her main points of reference. Boasting a generous 325m² footprint, the villa comprises three voluminous areas arranged around a large triangular courtyard and connected by a pair of sheltered patios. On its north side is the convivial living area, a private sleeping section and the service and

activities space, where a playroom, a laundry room and an office-studio are located. The main bedroom, which faces south, has huge windows stretching from floor to ceiling, from which you can see a beautiful robinia tree from the bed.

'This house represents the intersection of traditional Mexican craftsmanship and modern Mexican design,' notes Pérez. She drew particular inspiration from the imposing presence of the concrete used liberally in the building's construction, choosing to complement it with rough textiles, simple, elegant utilitarian pottery from Oaxaca and Mexican furnishings from the 1950s. 'I relied especially on the warmth of the beautiful traditional textiles from locales such as Chiapas, Oaxaca, Tlaxcala and Hidalgo. They're notable for their fine, intricate embroidery and the striking rawness of the wools used in ceremonial outfits.'

The pieces are further enhanced by their arrangement in the capacious, airy rooms. 'I also integrated some elements of new Mexican design: wonderful pieces crafted by very talented young Mexican designers, but always choosing the ones using traditional craftsmanship, which is the common thread in the house's aesthetic.'

Pérez's favourite spot in the villa is without a doubt her kitchen, with its views over the gorgeous mountain range and comfortable layout. 'There's so much harmony between all the different elements, from the black carpentry and pottery, the textured grey concrete, the roughness of the sink and fine fixtures to the bright tropical flowers from the garden. It's elegant, but not pretentious; organic, but not rustic.'

This house is proof that seemingly opposite personalities can co-exist perfectly. And find a new identity. ■



this page The open-space living room with a concrete floating staircase suspended from a steel beam by metal poles, reaching the reading mezzanine. Large panes of glazing line the internal courtyard to allow natural light to enter the space. On the concrete counter demarcating the kitchen, traditional Mexican ceramics make a striking display along with tropical flowers picked from the garden.



“

*It's elegant, but not pretentious;
organic, but not rustic*

”

this page A pop of yellow in a modernist armchair and the Hidalgo embroidery on the cushions make a statement against the textured concrete in one of the bedrooms. **opposite** Architectural volumes in the bathroom, with its custom-designed countertops and sink; a monolithic bed made of concrete, dressed with handcrafted embroidered textiles; on a mezzanine level, a living area features a hammock from Yucatan.



“
*This house represents the
intersection of traditional
Mexican craftsmanship and
modern Mexican design*
”

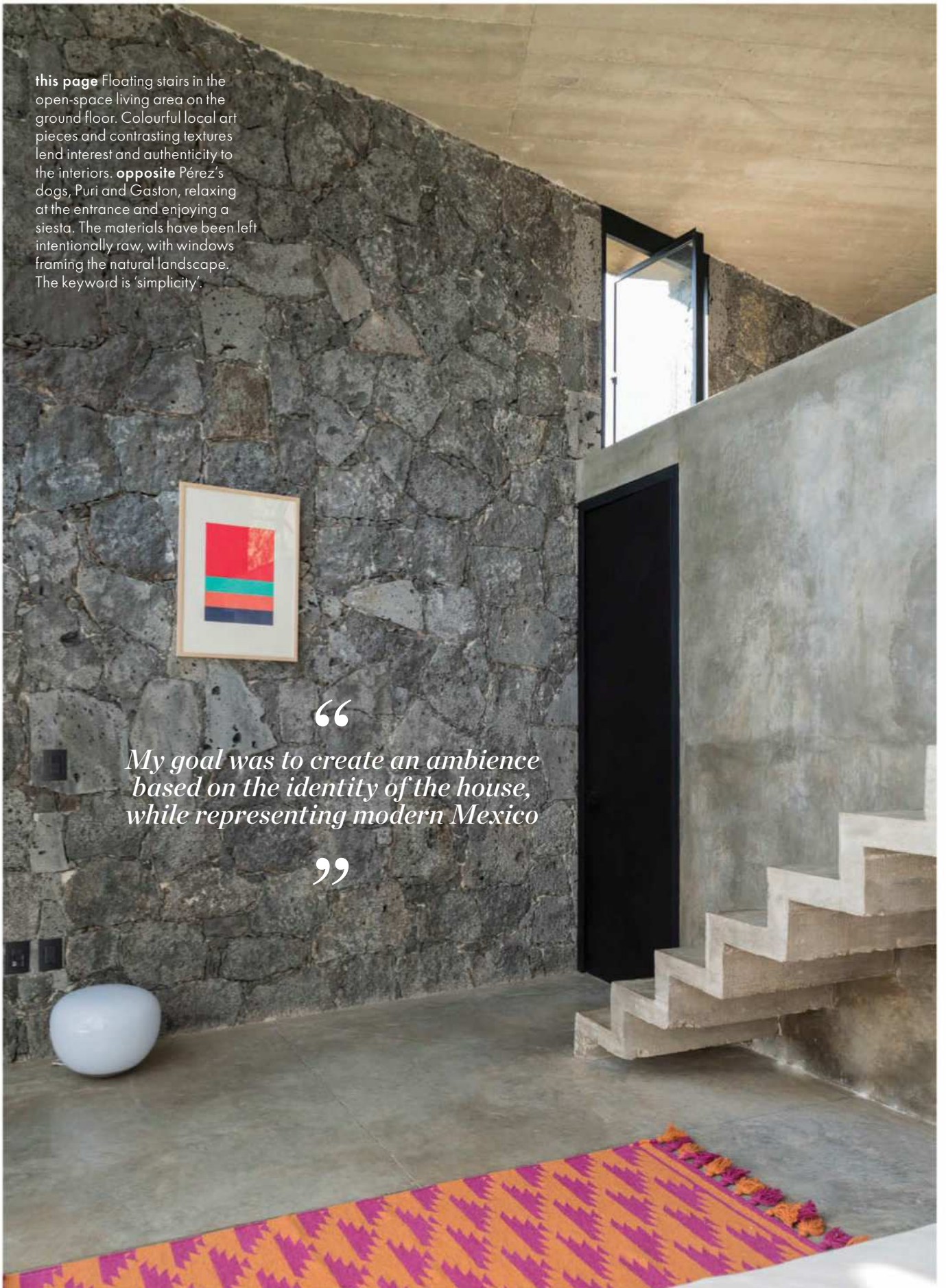


this page Floating stairs in the open-space living area on the ground floor. Colourful local art pieces and contrasting textures lend interest and authenticity to the interiors. **opposite** Pérez's dogs, Puri and Gaston, relaxing at the entrance and enjoying a siesta. The materials have been left intentionally raw, with windows framing the natural landscape. The keyword is 'simplicity'.

“

My goal was to create an ambience based on the identity of the house, while representing modern Mexico

”





this page Landscape designer Mary Maurel's Cape Town home is filled with contemporary furnishings and cherished collectables, from paintings to ceramics. Here, a Gregor Jenkin bench sits beneath a work by Lorenzo Nassimbeni. **opposite** Red *klompie* bricks in the courtyard and hallway lend to the sense of flow between indoors and outdoors.





NOT YOUR GARDEN VARIETY

Landscape designer and art collector Mary Maurel's home in the heart of Cape Town is a stylish, contemporary greenhouse of sorts, filled with botanicals, paintings and prints alike

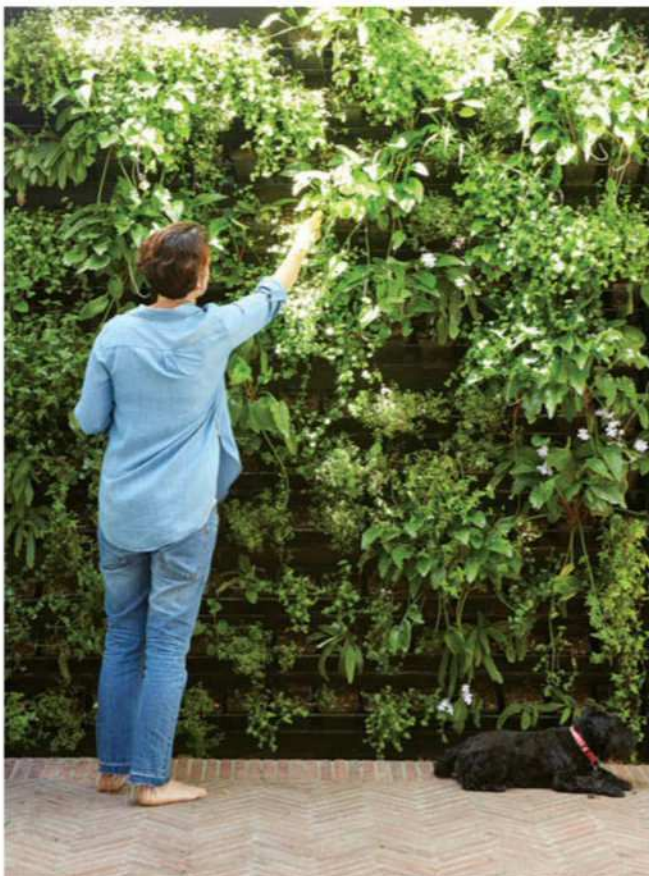
TEXT LEIGH ROBERTSON PHOTOGRAPHS INGE PRINS



this page Clever built-in seating with concealed storage space in the dining area, where a table by Gregor Jenkin, one of Maurel's first furniture purchases, and a server from LIM take pride of place. The ceramic shelves display works by Lisa Firer, Anthony Shapiro, Sarah Walters and various others.



this page Maurel and her eldest son, Thomas, alongside clipped spheres, neat plumbago hedges and a sculptural Chinese elm. The table in the hall is by James Mudge and the paintings by Gabby Raaff and Hanien Conradie. Maurel tending her wall planted with a selection of crassulas, streptocarpus and drimiopsis, with dog Lily.



In the heat of a summer's day in Cape Town, during the city's driest spell in decades, the residence of landscape designer Mary Maurel is every bit the urban oasis that might be expected of a person who spends her days mapping out garden plans and working with plants. Step through the front gate and you're immediately welcomed into a luxuriant courtyard replete with a lushly leafed living wall, well-tended beds of foliage and a slender, sculptural tree that reaches all the way to the house's upper level. It's an inviting taste of both the verdure and artistry that lie within, for Maurel's also a passionate collector of paintings, prints and *objets*.

The green not only surrounds, but also permeates the beautifully ordered interior spaces of this cool and bright contemporary family home, which has the feeling of being considerably farther from the city than it is. Robust, leafy numbers all but spill from the outside in and almost every surface is topped with ornamental arrangements overflowing with cuttings and plants. Yet the effect's also considered and restrained, in keeping with the inherent classicism of the house, with its clean, modern finishes and palette of crisp white, tones of green, blond timber and raw brick.

One of the most compelling reasons the property first caught the attention of Maurel and her husband some 12 years ago was its large garden, which was uncharacteristic for the area. As a qualified architect, she'd also immediately recognised the potential of the quirky arts-and-crafts-style house with its tiny windows and red clay roof. 'It hadn't been touched for 30 years,' she notes. An initial renovation had made the house merely habitable, re-orientated to make the most of its position on the generous site and to optimise the space inside. But it was the third and most recent renovation (each time with the help of Maurel's friend, architect Victoria Perry of Loudon Perry Anderson) that she was able to reimagine it entirely. 'We might as well have rebuilt the house!' she laughs. And indeed, it's hard to fathom that this elegant, clean-lined structure was ever anything but a new build.

Having worked as an architect for a short spell in the UK, Maurel returned to SA seeking a change. That she grew up on a farm in Elgin with horticulturist parents who run a specialist nursery makes it entirely logical that her path would lead to designing gardens, rather than buildings. An opportunity to learn under the wing of landscaping maven Franchesca Watson would result in the founding of her own business, Mary Maurel Gardens, several years later.

While her parents' farm has been her base for experimentation and play with planting and design, she's been stricter with her own, deliberately tough Mediterranean-style garden. 'If a plant doesn't make it in my garden, out it goes! I only use water-wise and hardy varieties, not only because of our water restrictions now, but also because of the windy conditions in the City Bowl,' she says. 'Because I work with other people's gardens every day, I don't necessarily have the time to tend my own, which is deliberately very structural, pared-down and green.'

The structural garden perfectly frames the lines of the house, providing a harmonious counterpoint to the architecture. The same sense of balance is seen in the interiors, from the sculptural staircase connecting its two levels to the wrap-around built-in seating in the living room and sun room that cleverly conceals ample storage space. 'I've become more Scandi with age,' she notes of her taste in decor. But she's also a self-confessed eclectic, mixing old and new with abandon. Furniture pieces by Gregor Jenkin and James Mudge sit easily beside a vintage library cabinet and a timeworn leather armchair. Then there's Maurel's extensive collection of artworks, which she's been adding to for the past 20 years. 'I'm running out of space,' she says. 'But what I tend to do is shuffle the works around the house every so often. If you initially chose it because you love it, you'll always love it.'

In among the paintings and prints are also bowls, pots and jars bought at her local potter's market and a treasure trove of sentimental pieces, such as the antique glass perfume and ink bottles she brought back with her from London. Maurel has a natural eye when it comes to grouping pieces together, her display wall of ceramics in the kitchen being a case in point. 'I'm instinctively drawn to things, rather than by how well they might go together,' she adds. 'But when you buy from your heart, you're often drawn to pieces that will resonate together.' And you get a sense that it's this exact approach of buying from the heart that's infused this home with such warmth, character and effortless style. 'I wouldn't trade it for anything,' she says. ■ marymaurelgardens.co.za; loudonperryanderson.com

this page The kitchen island is the hub of the home, where homework is done and family dinners enjoyed. The stools are by Lennard & Pederson and the pendant by Illumina. **opposite** The coffee table and chairs in the living room are from LIM, the scatters from Skinny laMinx and the light fitting by Hoy Ploi.



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The green not only surrounds, but also permeates the beautifully ordered interior spaces
”



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*When you buy from your heart,
you're often drawn to pieces
that will resonate together*
”



this page An example of how effortlessly Maurel mixes old and new: the bedspread was made by her mother, while the headboard is from LIM and lamps by Hoy Ploi. **opposite** A *Celtis sinensis* tree in the courtyard; artfully arranged paintings. A view through the bathroom; a picture window inviting the outdoors in.







this page The mezzanine level of Abigail Ahern's house is decorated with vintage furniture and a 'Lazzaro' chandelier from her eponymous shop. **opposite** In this safari-themed corner, the zebra rug is by Jonathan Adler and the concrete chair from Mint Shop, while the faux plants, the shaggy palm lamp, the mirror and artwork by Love Warriors of Sweden are from her shop.

Magical Sanctuary

Influential interior designer and tastemaker Abigail Ahern has applied her bold, glamorous, eclectic and witty signature style to her private Victorian house in London. She wants her own urban retreat to feel like falling down the rabbit hole

this page Ahern with her dog Maud in the downstairs living room. The massive two-storey windows flood the living space in daylight, while providing a fantastic view of the magical garden. Two blue vintage chairs and an orange lamp from Two Columbia Road are some of the rare colour splashes allowed in Ahern's otherwise toned colour mix.



The most surprising thing about interior designer, buyer, tastemaker and influencer Abigail Ahern's home in Dalston, East London, has to be that she once painted it all white. A white and fairly simple space is almost impossible to imagine when looking around the old Victorian house, where she's applied her magic touch, played with scales, painted with a colour palette of intoxicating, dark tones, and boldly and unconventionally mixed just about any styles and eras. It's tantalising, inviting and cosy, just as a home should be, according to a woman who hates anything too uptight. Like a stylish curiosity chamber, the house is full of surprises. Industrial meets glamour. The ambience is like a cosy gentlemen's club with a bit of Hollywood glamour and safari style, and the enchantment lives on in an overgrown fairy-tale garden.

The designer lives here with her husband, Graham Scott and dogs Mungo and Maud. When they bought the home 15 years ago, the typical Victorian house from 1860 was a mess, with tiny rooms. 'It was grotty and horrible,' says Ahern. The neighbourhood was a little on the rough side and hadn't developed into the cool, creative urban hotspot it is today. The couple had the house completely renovated, opened up rooms and spaces, and had two-storey windows installed towards the garden. These architectural changes still work, but the white walls have been covered.

'Back then, I was younger and didn't have a strong voice or recognisable style. About seven years ago, I tried to paint a tiny space – an alcove in a dark Farrow & Ball colour – and I instantly loved what it did to the room and how the accessories almost popped out. I never really planned to take it further, but it was an immediate game-changer,' says Ahern.

Since then, she's been obsessed with colours and has spent so much time coming up with the right shades that she ended up designing her own range of very dark, inky bottom-of-the-lake shades. 'People tend to be a little scared of really dark walls, but they shouldn't be. Colours have such power and it's bizarre how much they've shaped my look. Using colours has made me confident. When I design or buy new furniture and objects, I find it intoxicating.'

With black floors and dark walls in colours like Hudson black, mulberry red and Madison grey, she's created a dramatic canvas for the decor, which is constantly pushing the boundaries.

'My style has many references. You could say that it leans more towards the masculine – it definitely isn't feminine. It's bold and I play a lot with scale. The trick is to take something like a chandelier that's too big for the room. It creates grandeur and keeps the look edgy,' she says.

Although the decor looks anything but simple, Ahern's trick is actually just that. She designs her private home along the same principles she uses to run her interior shop and how she designs her collections of faux plants, paints and various interior pieces.

'I really just design or buy pieces that I love. I restrict the number of colours I use in a room. That way, it stays sophisticated and you can make any style or period work together. In my workshop, people often ask me about this because they don't understand how I mix things. It all comes from reining in the colour palette. I pick from my heart and as long as I keep to that colour palette, I know instantly if something works. I'm very black and white – never in between.'

Yes, she makes mistakes – all the time. That comes with breaking rules and playing. She often talks about the way real, cosy homes are created when we stop designing and start living. If you want to create the cosiest pad on the planet, figure out how you want your home to make you feel and drill into that emotion.

'I want to create my home as if you'd fallen down the rabbit hole and embraced a magical feeling. I'm obsessed with the interior. I spend all my time designing and buying and I change a lot. I always follow my heart and I hate trends. You should only buy furniture you love and that doesn't change all the time. I keep adding new pieces, but still keep the old ones,' she says.

Like an interior story-teller, Ahern connects all the spaces, beginning with the intriguing staircases and corridors opening up the four-storey house and continuing into laid-back, glamorous rooms with a distinct touch of British humour. She's given the practical kitchen a softer edge with a beaded chandelier, 1950s Italian barstools and a rug. Rich textures and getting the lighting right are essential. She finds the power of lighting transformative and has a fabulous collection of vintage lamps and grand chandeliers.

As a professional, she creates enchanting, snug and tantalising homes you don't want to leave. And she's done exactly the same with her own house.

'As soon as I put my key in the door, I don't want to be anywhere else,' she says. ■ abigailahern.com



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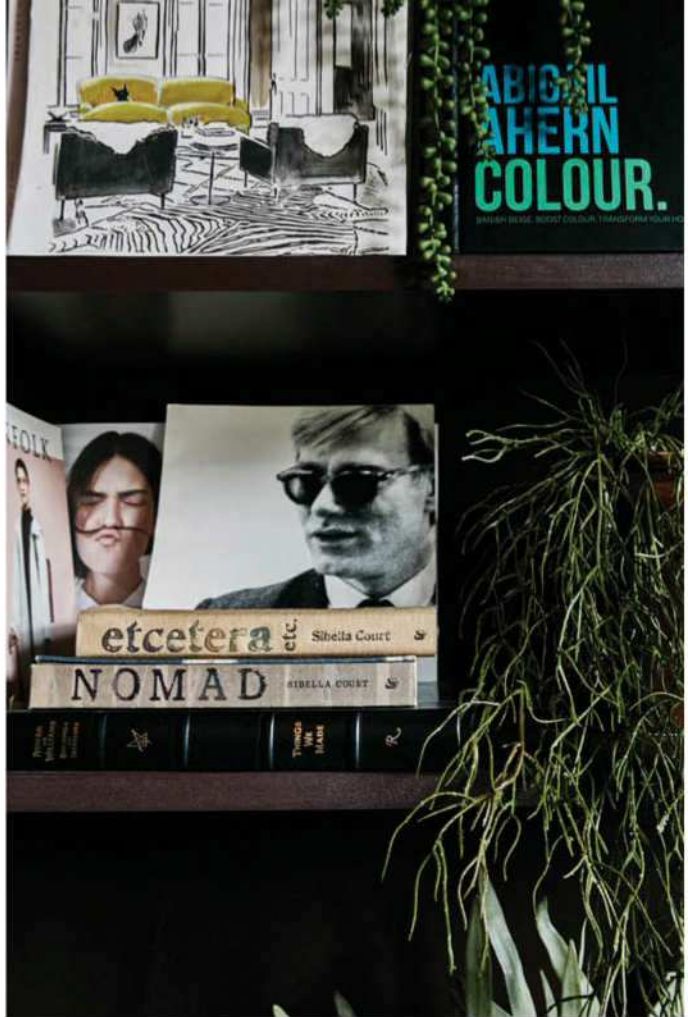
*As soon as I put my key in
the door, I don't want to be
anywhere else*

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this page Exposed brick walls, tongue-and-groove panels and smooth concrete floors provide an edgy backdrop to a bold mix of vintage table and white chairs from different eras. The 'Lazzaro' chandelier adds a touch of shine.

The tagines on the table are from a trip to Morocco. In the background is a woollen 'Wild Bill' sofa from her shop.





“

I want to create my home as if you'd fallen down the rabbit hole and embraced a magical feeling

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this page The magic continues in the garden, which Ahern wanted to resemble an overgrown forest. **opposite, clockwise** The walls of the staircase are painted a dark mulberry red; close-up of faux plants among coffee table books, including Ahern's on colour; a Carcus Ikea kitchen with bespoke doors and a rug from Maroc Tribal; vintage pieces and faux plants.



“
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scared of really dark walls,
but they shouldn't be.
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and it's bizarre how much
they've shaped my look*
”



this page An oversized neo-Baroque chandelier hangs above the lion's-feet bathtub. **opposite** Glamour meets industrial styling in the bedroom, with the timber-cladded wall behind the bed covered in linen from Merci in Paris. The 'Burlington' coffee table and the beaded chandelier are from her shop.





this page Evi and Jochem Elsner's affinity for raw wood items is evident in the entrance hall of their Yzerfontein home. An eye-catching lamp from Jambo Trading hangs above a hide. **opposite** The table on the deck is from Weylandts and the chairs are from Garden and Roses.

NATURAL SELECTION

Enriched with earthy hues and raw texture, this seaside bolthole on the West Coast is engineered to make the most of its jaw-dropping views

TEXT **JESSICA ROSS** PHOTOGRAPHS **HENRIQUE WILDING**



this page The couple stand at the entrance of their home with cat Oscar. The door, from Onsite Gallery, was one of the key design features of the home. **opposite** An 'architectural eye-catcher', the sail is a visually striking element on the façade of the home. Emma bounds up the staircase, made from concrete and featuring screed detailing seen throughout the home's flooring. The nautical theme is subtly referenced in a paddle rail detail.





HOME YZERFONTEIN

Wherever you happen to be standing inside, you have the sense of being on a ship,' says Evi Elsner, summing up the essence of the waterside idyll she shares with her husband Jochem, their two dogs, Emma and Harry, and cat Oscar. From the expansive ground-floor kitchen – the apex of the house – you're struck by Evi's nautical comparison as views of the rugged West Coast command your attention from all around, the crisp south-easter rolls in from the sea and a giant architectural sail outside bristles against the strengthening breeze.

Drawn to the small fishing village for its cool climate and warm hospitality, the Elsners left Somerset West to settle there. As founders of Home Concept, an architectural and interior design company, the two co-tailor spaces for their clients. When it came to setting a brief for their own house, the couple sought to be connected to the unspoiled beauty of their environment – featuring belts of fynbos and wildlife such as ostriches, dassies and tortoises that roam freely on the land. 'It's a beautiful coastline with lovely beaches. It's also a quaint town – people greet you when you pass them,' explains Evi.

The structure itself, built by Jochem, is all clean lines and strong angles with some arresting details, such as that huge sail. 'We really wanted an architectural eye-catcher,' says Evi, pointing out the 17m-long stretch of canvas that soars into the sky from the roof and cements her ship analogy. The 'architectural eye-catcher' also adds a sense of loftiness to the building, which is more squat than their previous projects due to a strict height restriction of 8m. 'You can't have a pitched roof and high ceilings across two storeys because of the limitation, so we went for the cubicle look,' she adds.

Conscious of their eco footprint, the couple installed photovoltaic panels to produce electricity and a solar water heating system, while two open fireplaces in the lounge heat up the geysers and warm the floors, perfect for barefoot living come the cooler months.

With its two en-suite bedrooms in a guest wing, the kitchen and a living area downstairs, the ground floor of this cubicle design was

designed for groups of people and it's here that the Elsners' friends and family gather. 'Almost every weekend we have people staying over,' explains Evi. Festive dinners tend to be enjoyed around the 4m-long dining table, originally a workman's bench from India, weathered with age and experience. Big sliding glass sheets in the living area put the outdoors on display, letting light drench the interior and air flow through the interconnected spaces, while the long, narrow window slots through the bedrooms and kitchen filter and frame the perfect vistas. 'When you sit in front of the dining table, all you see is blue sea – no houses,' notes Evi of the coastline that winds around this stretch of land, offering those inside the house a panoramic eyeful of the landscape. 'Every window's designed like a picture, so you have a framed view.' A sizeable, comfortable bay window has the most show-stopping vantage point of them all and is a favourite reading nook for Evi, who curls up here with the animals and a good read on chilly winter's mornings.

Introducing colour and texture to the interiors comes naturally to Evi and this space is a masterclass in soft layering. 'You don't need that many items to feel cosy,' she says. Collected pieces in wood, felt and other wholly unexpected materials – such as the fish trap that Jochem turned into a lighting feature – contribute to the warm, homely feel and the house has an Afro-Scandi identity, thanks to Evi's bent for minimalism. The earthy palette carries through to the Elsners' private zone upstairs, comprising office, bathroom and large master bedroom.

'I always use natural tones. I find them very calming,' says Evi. 'Everything's so hectic nowadays that I want our house to be a haven of tranquillity and calm.' Early in the morning, the sound of birdsong and gently crashing waves rouses you from sleep and there's the distinct sense – as Evi noted – that you're aboard a boat, somewhere in the middle of the ocean.

'When our friends have been here for a weekend, they always say they feel as if they've had a week of proper holiday,' she smiles. 'That's what we wanted to create.' ■ home-concept.co.za



this page Lights from Weylands, altered by Jochem, hang over the long, time-weathered dining table from Onsite Gallery, a key consideration in the entire home's design. The dining chairs are from Weylands. **opposite** This bay window is the ultimate reading nook. The heated seat makes it all the more inviting on cooler evenings; on the deck, cane furniture by Coricraft and Amatuli is durable and cosy; one of Evi's favourite zones is her kitchen.





this page In the light and breezy living room, the side table is from Weylands and the floor cushions from Decofurn. **opposite** An old fishtrap found in Kalk Bay was turned into a light by Jochem. The baskets in the main bathroom are from Jambo Trading and the framed piece is from Weylands; 'You don't need that many items to feel cosy,' says Evi of her bedroom's minimalist aesthetic.



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that I want our house to be a
haven of tranquillity and calm*

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*I always use natural tones.
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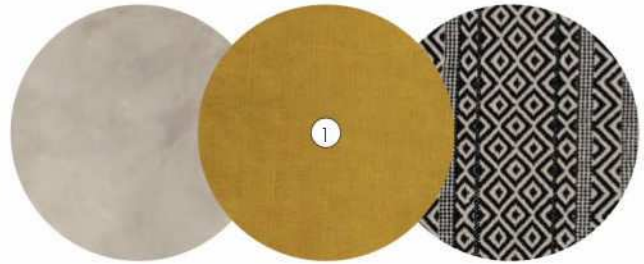


this page A narrow window in the ground floor bathroom provides a view of the belts of fynbos from the open shower. **opposite** The guest bedroom features earthy colour contrasts in grey walls that are juxtaposed against the white bedframe from Weylands. The throw is from Krafthaus.





shop the look.



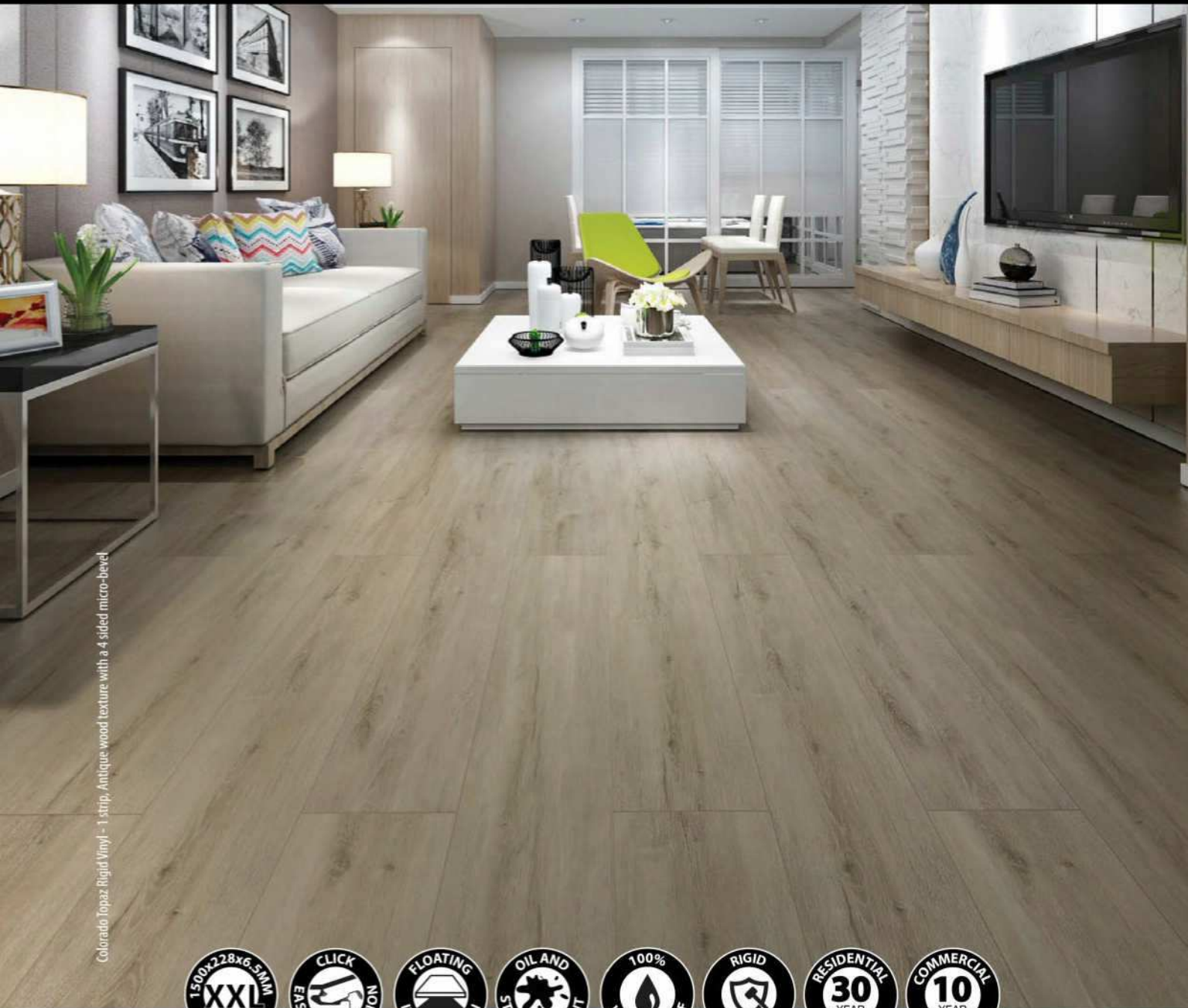
Imbue raw concrete and stone with warmth by pairing them with richly textured, handcrafted items



1. (from left) Colour hardener Vanilla Bean POA, Cemcrete; Emerald fabric in 400 R768/m², Halogen; Puzzle bathmat in Pumice R325, Haus
2. Pei in Rose pillow R895, Haus 3. Striped raffia summer ankle-strap shoes R999, The Storer 4. Caprivi throw in Caviar R495, Haus 5. Flying Glass occasional table R25 750, Roche Bobois 6. Lacrimosa scatter cushion R1 095, Weylandts 7. Sahara hat R1 100, Crystal Birch 8. Moody ceramic vessels from R150, Blok Konnect 9. Tender Grey cement round pot from R295, La Grange Interiors 10. Twister ceramic small border pot R830, La Grange Interiors 11. Mysa armchair R29 400, Casarredo 12. Walnut stained oak bedside table R5 990, LIM 13. Gouw flat woven kelim R16 200, Mae Rugs

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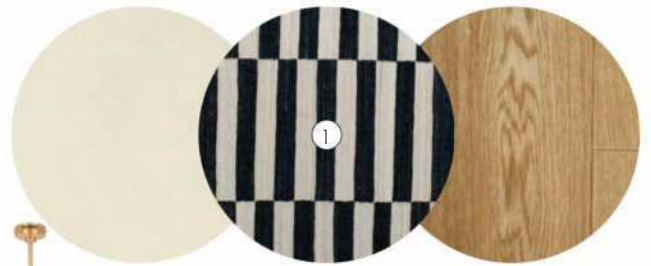
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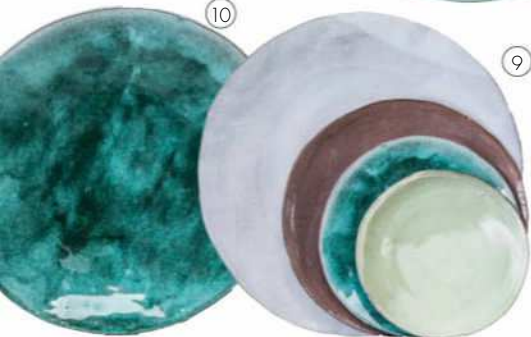
Slick Scandi-style furnishings provide a harmonious counterpoint to a verdant collection of art and objets



12



11



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- 1. (from left) CreteCote White POA**, Cemcrete; **Contemporary kelim rug** R2 800m², Gonsenhauers; **LIVING Natural wooden flooring** R572m², Oggie Flooring **2. Module 8 brass chandelier** R12 750, Design Store **3. Palm leaf baskets** from R350 each, Garden Shop **4. Itawuli towel** R225, Mungo **5. Wabi-sabi medium mug** R330, Clementina **6. Ovals pillow** from R485, Skinny laMinx **7. Sealed solid oak frame with fabric upholstered loose cushions** R12 890, LIM **8. Kirsten Sims** courtesy of Salon Ninety One **9. Wabi-sabi plates** from R300, Clementina **10. Wabi-sabi hors d'oeuvres plate** R390, Clementina **11. Cool Mint cappuccino cup and saucer** R615 for a set of two, Le Creuset **12. Carver bench** R4 150, Houtlander

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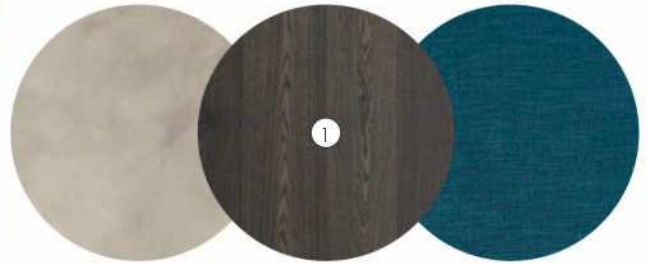
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1. (from left) Colour hardener Vanilla Bean POA, Cemcrete; **Dark grey European oak flooring** R705/m², Finfloor; **Fable fabric in Dragonfly** R426/m², Hertex **2. Ava armchair** R22 500, Casarredo **3. Funky Zebra rug** by Diane von Furstenberg from R26 412, The Rug Company **4. Jute woollen Berber rug in Trellis design** R3 800/m², Gonsenhauers **5. Turned wooden decorative urn** R400, Liam Mooney Studio **6. Aqua cocktail table** R80 810, Roche Bobois **7. Moody ceramic vessels** from R150, Blok Konnect **8. Vintage Sixties Italian urn** R1 400, Liam Mooney Studio **9. 70cm round mirror** R2 950, Red Man Mirror Studio **10. Brown cotton polyester velvet cushion** by NewWorks R1 783 for two, Establishment **11. Tilt Green cushion** R2 770, The Rug Company **12. ARCH table lamp** R7 600, Bofred

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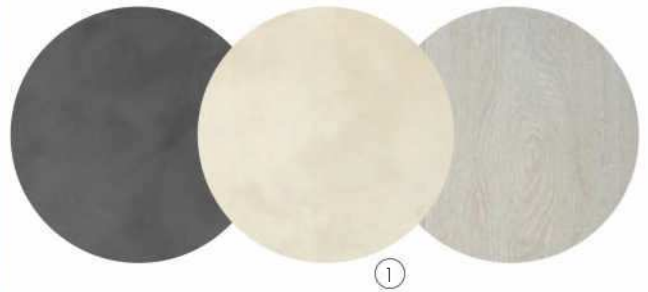
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①

Soft neutral hues and natural materials imbue a minimalist interior with a homely character

②



- 1. (from left) Colour hardener house blend POA, Cemcrete; CreteCote in Sand Dollar POA, Cemcrete; Lengo Range LIVING Extra-White from R671/m², Oggie Flooring 2. Transparency throw from R6 200, Kraffthaus 3. Spati four-poster bed in ebony from R9 495, Weylandts 4. Coral R1 250, SHF 5. Gemakstoel R5 630, David Krynauw 6. Chenille zig-zag throw R1 290, Mungo 7. Stool R2 795, Bloc Outdoor Furniture 8. Mambethu clay pot R1 495, Weylandts 9. Raffia ottomans from R2 800, Ashanti 10. Iron side table in antique brass R2 795, Weylandts 11. Lona side table (small) R1 190, @home 12. Canvas rug R10 818, Voke Rugs



INTRODUCING THE CALA

Low backrest dining chairs are still very much in demand in 2018 and Woodbender is proud to launch the Cala, which follows this and other hot trends for the year.

The low, open backrest of the Cala embodies a minimalist design; an aesthetic that isn't going away any time fast. The seeming transparency of the chair opens up the space it is in, creating a flow in the room that would otherwise be interrupted by a wooden or upholstered back.

The simplicity of the Cala's design showcases the timber, especially when in the Natural Ash timber finish as pictured. The Ash timber used for all Woodbender products is a blonde wood that has a variety of different tones and details in it which makes each piece of furniture unique. Natural timber finishes be it in a light or more recently, dark tone is another hot trend to watch. The strength and durability of the Cala, despite the pared back design, is of the same standard of all Woodbender furniture. The bracing ring below the seat and bentwood component parts ensures a product that will stand the test of time.



Although it's a versatile chair in every sense of the word, it's hard not to picture the Cala in a contemporary, open-plan dining space where clean lines and simplistic silhouettes form part of the design aesthetic.

Whether this be in a private home or in a hospitality setting, this comfortable chair is easy to move about and will be a welcome addition to any table it finds itself at.

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Discover all that sunny Melbourne has to offer (p120) and the hottest re-imagined hotels around the globe (p124). Enjoy unfussy, yet delicious, fare at this new Winelands restaurant in the heart of Paarl (128); create a lush hanging garden at home (p132) and take a closer look at William Kentridge's body of ambitious - and iconic - work (p134).

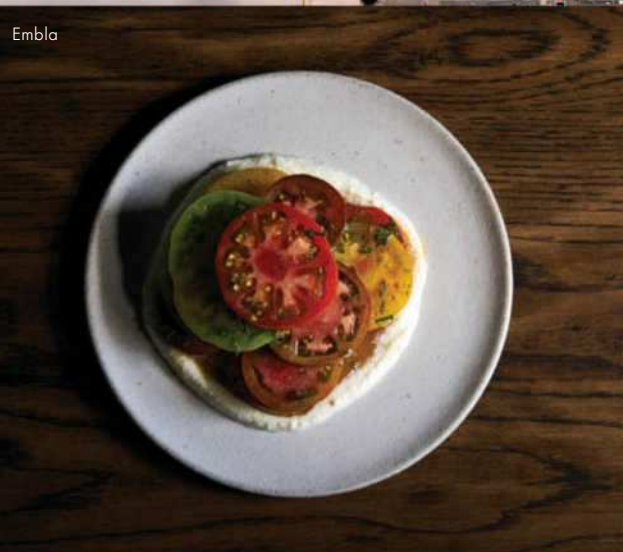
BAY CITY ROLLING

Melbourne is a tried-and-tested tourist destination, but if you seek out the surprising and return to established haunts, you'll find a whole lot more to this bayside city

TEXT JESSICA SPIRO



No other country has embraced isolation quite as well as Australia. Being so far removed from the rest of the world has only inspired the nation to do their own thing and, boy, they do it well!. While Sydney remains the tourist hotspot, with its iconic harbour and skyline, Melbourne is increasingly stealing Sydney's limelight. The food alone has everyone's attention, with internationally renowned chefs migrating Down Under for last year's World's 50 Best Restaurant Awards. For a nation previously known for Vegemite sandwiches, nondescript meat pies and lamingtons, Australian food has seriously come a long way. As has the coffee culture. And the wine, too. There's a certain something about the food in Australia, but nowhere is it more palpable than in Melbourne.



EAT

There are all sorts of good things to eat in Melbourne and you'll be hard pressed to try everything if you're just visiting. Grab a gourmet croissant from Lune and a coffee from Patricia Coffee (Patricia's has mastered the 'grab your coffee and go' ethos in its standing-only space) and head out for a day of eating.

Bar Liberty

A natural wine bar that just happens to serve the best food in the city, with a menu featuring minimal, locally-sourced ingredients.

📍 @bar.liberty/ barliberty.com

Supernormal

This slick spot on Flinders Lane takes its inspiration from Japanese, Thai, Hong Kong and Korean cuisines. It's hard to pick a go-to dish because the menu changes often, but the fried rice balls – in all their sweet, spicy and sticky glory – deserve a special mention. 📍 @supernormal_180 / supernormal.net.au

Embla

A cosy and intimate wine bar, highlighting Aussie wines. Very much 'come for the wine, stay for the food', with an ever-changing menu of small plates. Whatever you do, order the house-made sourdough with crème fraîche, to snack on.

📍 @embla_melbourne / embla.com.au

Market Lane

Market Lane is a well-loved boutique roastery and while it has a couple of locations across the city, the Collins St branch allows you to sip your perfect pour-over in an elegantly kitted-out heritage building.

📍 @marketlane / marketlane.com.au



Four Pillars Distillery

SHOP

Small, independent boutiques line the walkways in Fitzroy, a quick walk north of the city centre. For the best shopping, head to Gertrude and Brunswick Sts. Meanwhile, Zomp, Et Al, Craft and Aesop are just some of the niche Aussie brands you'll find on Flinders Lane in the city centre.

Great Dane

Great Dane marries Scandi-cool with Aussie *laissez-faire* through its expert curation and sourcing of handcrafted furniture. Nothing will fit in your hand luggage, though, and it will break your heart. 📷 @greatdanefurniture / greatdanefurniture.com

Four Pillars

Spiced Negroni and Navy Strength gin are just some of the spirits on offer at Four Pillars distillery in the Yarra Valley region. 📷 @fourpillarsgin / fourpillarsgin.com.au

MeatSmith (Fitzroy)

This little butchery sources all its meat ethically and sustainably. A visit to its store is a visual treat, too.

📷 @meatSmith_melb / meatSmith.com.au



Supernormal



Supernormal



MeatSmith



Great Dane



Great Dane

STAY

To keep up with discerning travellers and locals alike, hotels in Melbourne are edgy and design-forward, yet still tongue in cheek. From glamping to sleeping in the highest thread-count linens surrounded by works from local artists, hotels in Melbourne offer it all.

St Jerome's The Hotel

Forget glamping in the woods – St Jerome's in the inner city brings chic camping tents to the rooftops of Melbourne. The mini bar takes the form of an esky (Aussie slang for a cooler box). The tents are kitted out with lush linens and tea and treats on arrival.

stjeromesthehotel.com.au

The Adelphi

The Adelphi is the aesthete's dream hotel, with modern pieces decking the walls and hotel room furnishings. With rooms starting at roughly R3 000 a night, it's certainly a treat. adelphi.com.au

Notel

Notel offers its guests the novel experience of staying in a luxurious airstream trailer. The interiors are unique to each trailer, with a comfortable and spacious layout complete with large en-suite showers.

notelmelbourne.com.au



Notel



St Jerome's



St Jerome's



The Adelphi

National Gallery



TRAVEL



Immigration museum

SEE

Melbourne's culture is founded on visual design and even the streets reflect that. The endless laneways with truly beautiful street art, in particular, have helped establish the city's design identity. Some of the most moving artworks you'll see there might not even be in a gallery.

The Botanical Gardens

A walk in the botanical gardens is the perfect antidote to all that eating and gives you a real sense of Australia's uniquely isolated ecosystem, including its world-acclaimed camellia collection and native family of eucalypts. rbg.vic.gov.au

The National Gallery of Victoria (NGV)

A stalwart in Melbourne's cultural identity, the NGV requires a full day's attention. Its permanent displays feature a mix of Australian works, including Aboriginal representation, as well as classic European pieces. Its recent Triennial festival was a ground-breaking visual portrayal of art and design from around the world.

ngv.vic.gov.au

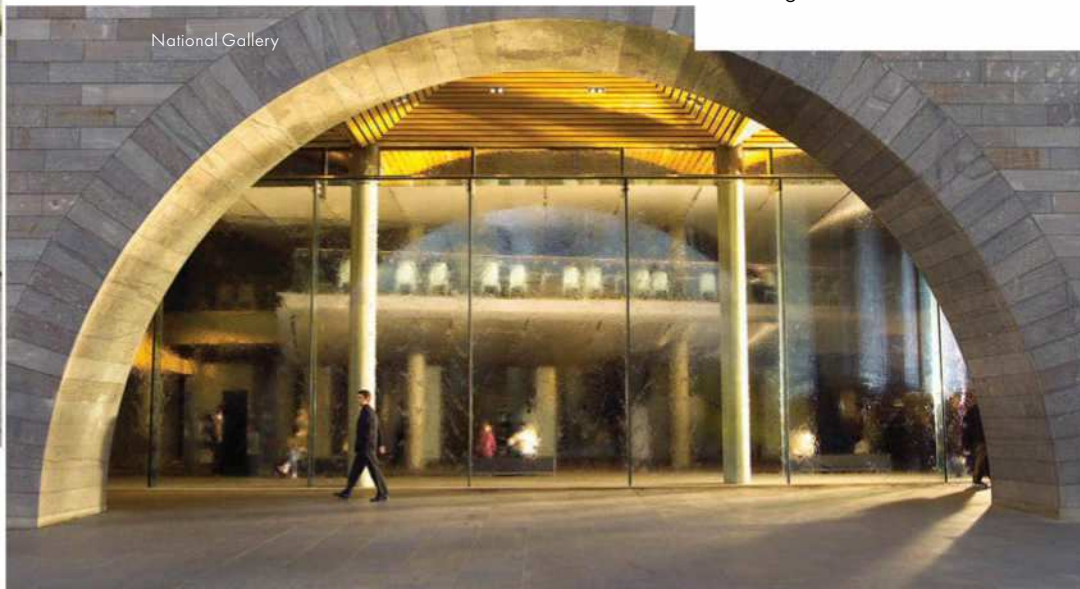
The Immigration Museum

As a country built on immigration, Australia has a rich, multicultural history that has, at times, been rather chequered. The Immigration Museum handles this sensitive subject with compassion and succeeds in promoting wider awareness and tolerance of immigrants. museums victoria.com.au



National Gallery

National Gallery





THE SIREN HOTEL

The Siren Hotel is a feat of (re)imagination, mirroring the revitalisation of Detroit. Housed in the iconic Wurlitzer Building, it has 106 rooms, seven food and beverage spaces, two retail boutiques and a rooftop with panoramic views of the city. The interiors are slick and the design contemporary, with a nod to the old-world hotels traditionally found in Detroit – a mix of vintage and custom furniture and lighting pairs well with colourful terrazzo tiles. With an eight-seat tasting counter by James Beard Award nominee Garrett Lipar, the 'Candy Bar' cocktail area in the lobby with an extensive mixology programme, a café by Populace Coffee, a barber shop established by Sebastian Jackson of The Social Grooming Company and a florist by Pot & Box, this alluring establishment is a masterpiece of urban renewal, calling visitors back to Motor City.

thesirenhotel.com



SIREN HOTEL PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF CHRISTIAN HARDER; LIMALIMO COURTESY OF LIMALIMO LODGE



FROM DOWNTOWN TO UP HIGH

A reimagined hotel in Detroit and an eco-lodge in Ethiopia's Simien Mountains National Park adopt two exciting approaches to renewal



LIMALIMO LODGE

Perched on an escarpment overlooking the high plateaux and deep gullies of Ethiopia's newly-opened Simien Mountains National Park, Limalimo Lodge offers a boutique, eco-conscious experience in a spectacular trekking destination and the chance to see some wildlife species found nowhere else on earth. The lodge aims to have a minimal impact on the environment and was constructed using local materials and building techniques. The beautifully simple interiors include modern Ethiopian textiles, handcrafted fixtures and locally produced art. Take in the spectacular view from the bar and restaurant or relax in one of the 12 rooms around the site, each surrounded by indigenous highland trees. Trips to Limalimo Lodge and the Simien Mountains can easily be combined with visits to other exciting destinations, such as Lalibela's rock-hewn churches, Axum's obelisk fields and the monasteries at Lake Tana.

limalimolodge.com



GETAWAY



@Kwenasays



THE TRAVELLER

Q&A: Kwena Baloyi

Whether rocking creations by local designers on the streets of Florence, Italy or collaborating with like-minded creatives in Nairobi, Kenya, stylist and culture curator Kwena's Instagrams are enough to fuel your wanderlust.

Where was your last getaway? Casablanca and Marrakech in Morocco. The feel and art of Marrakech were very memorable.

What's your favourite hotel? La Mamounia Marrakech is luxurious, yet still feels like home, where the staff are always warm and welcoming. There's nothing like learning about the the history of the hotel while walking through a garden filled with orange trees. From the fine interiors to the art and even the beautiful cutlery, there's a lot to take in.

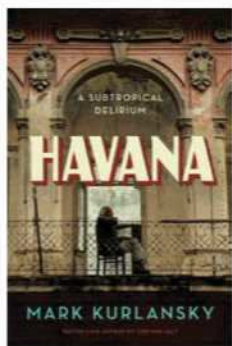
Luxe resort or off-the-beaten-track?
Luxe resort.

What do you never travel without? Extra clothing. I'm an incurable over-packer!

KWENA AT THE LA MAMOUNIA PALACE HOTEL IN MARRAKESH PHOTOGRAPH
DIANA NGAKO AND SCHEENA DONIA

GREAT ESCAPES

With a few long weekends on the horizon, this is a good time for that-much needed getaway



HOLIDAY READING SORTED... *Havana: A Subtropical Delirium* is journalist and writer Mark Kurlansky's colourful account of Cuba's capital city. Beginning in 1976, the travelogue offers an intimate look at Havana's past and present, spanning everything from a history of Afro-Cuban culture to mouth-watering recipes, photographs and some of Kurlansky's own notes from his travels. [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



BEAUTY ON THE MOVE

Keep up appearances while travelling with Aesop's London Kit. Filled with eight unisex travel-sized products, including shampoo and mouthwash, the sensory-delighting products are made using plant-based ingredients sourced from reputable suppliers and contain no environmentally unfriendly microbeads or parabens. loadingbay.co.za

BEST FOR... AN INNER-CITY STAY-CATION

Pablo House

WHERE? 3 4th Ave, Melville, Johannesburg

WHAT? Enjoy sunsets over the city at this newly renovated hip guesthouse. Resting on the highest point in Melville with 360° views of Jo'burg's breathtaking skyline, Pablo is a stone's throw from some of the best restaurants in town, including popular all-day breakfast spot Pablo-Eggs-Go-Bar.

pablohousemelville@gmail.com



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BACK TO BASICS

Simple, earthy goodness and authenticity go hand-in-hand with cool, rustic style in both the interiors and the dishes served at Charles Back's new eatery

PHOTOGRAPHS **ADEL FERREIRA** LOCATION **BACK'S**



Bringing the farm-to-table dining concept to the charming old main street of Paarl in the Western Cape, the recently-launched Back's restaurant and deli offers a delicious taste of produce from wine-and-cheese farm Fairview and a beautifully transformed heritage space in which to savour it. Named after the farm's founder and indefatigable proprietor Charles Back, the restaurant and deli serves as an extension of the ethos of the family business. 'The inspiration for Back's came from my long lineage of farming history, with the basis of everything I do being integrity and quality,' he says.

The venue, a careful update of a historical site, comprises the restaurant as well as an organic market and was overseen by the architecture and design team, Xpericemakers, with whom Back has worked on previous projects on both Fairview and Spice Route farms. Elements of Cape Dutch architecture and rustic farm detailing meet in a space that's elegantly classic, replete with a liberal use of natural materials.

Chef Melissa Bird creates simple, undeniably tasty dishes with an emphasis on ethical provenance, seasonality and wholesomeness. Eggs are from the farm's free-range chickens, for example, with naturally and organically produced meat and other produce forming the foundation of all the fare that's served, from breakfast to lunch. It's a case of going back to the basics, in the very best sense.

Back's, 191 Main Rd, Paarl, 021 872 0697
backs.co.za @_backs_

FRENCH TOAST

**3 slices ciabatta · 1 egg · 100ml milk · pinch salt
· Goat's cheese · 100g frozen berries · 100g sugar**

Mix the egg and milk together. Lay the slices of ciabatta in the mixture and coat both sides.

In a pot, cook the berries and sugar until reduced. Place the soaked ciabatta in a hot pan and toast on both sides.

Once cooked, place the French toast on a plate. Cover with berry compôte and crumble goat's cheese over it.

FRESH WEST COAST MUSSELS

500g mussels · 1 leek, chopped · 1 celery stick, chopped · 2 cloves garlic, chopped · 300ml beer · Salt and pepper

Heat a heavy-based pan until smoking hot. Add oil and place mussels in pan. Shake pan a little to heat the mussels up. Then pour beer over them.

Place the leeks, celery and garlic in the pan with the mussels and cover with a lid. Cook for about 5 minutes, or until all the mussels have opened.

Discard any unopened mussels. Add seasoning and serve.



WOK 'N ROLL

Put your karaoke skills to the test while indulging in delicious South-East Asian street food at one of Jo'burg's most Instagrammed new dining spots, Saigon Suzy. With plush velvet sofas and exotically papered walls, the Secret Motel Rooms on the upper level are hireable by the hour for private karaoke sessions pre- or post-dinner, which can involve a tasty selection of dumplings, baos and more under the 'small plates' section, or more substantial fare. Sip Singapore Slings and Ginger Ninja Mojitos while enjoying Korean-style BBQ dishes, the glorious Katsu chicken curry or ramen with pork belly and agedashi tofu. Tables are on a first-come-first-served basis, as no reservations are taken.

144 Jan Smuts Ave, Parkwood,
[facebook.com/SaigonSuzyJHB](https://www.facebook.com/SaigonSuzyJHB)



HOKAY POKAY

Poke has caught on locally – good news for those who can't get enough of the Hawaiian foodie phenomenon. Expect a wide range of bowls, from the house selection to build-your-own varieties with black rice, sriracha prawns or yuzu tuna. Breakfast options like the chia seed pudding bowl are irresistible.

Illovo Junction, cnr Oxford Rd & Corlett Drive,
Illovo, Johannesburg, onoeatery.co.za



APRÈS BEACH

Beachside dining takes on a glamorous sheen at Bilboa, overlooking the buzzy Camps Bay strip. Dishes veer towards contemporary Balearic, featuring tasty tapas-type plates like asparagus hummus and spiced white bait that are great for sharing. Mains focus on seafood and can be paired with a wide range of appealing sides.

The Promenade, Victoria Rd, Camps Bay, bilboa.co.za



THE HANGING CONTAINER

Add depth, movement and a burst of verdant life to your interior with an arrangement of suspended plants, the more the better

TEXT **MARY MAUREL**

U-planter from R325; **suspension cables** R300, both from Vorster & Braye

Hanging containers have recently made a big comeback in interiors, whether it's the macramé creations by House of Grace or the beautifully crafted ceramics by Vorster & Braye, poised on a tension cable. Plants are suspended in the air, silhouetted, almost musical in arrangement, like a mobile. Some are high, while others are low, catching the breeze.

I recently visited the Guggenheim Museum in New York, where I was particularly enthralled by the mobile pieces of Alexander Calder. I love the way these suspended artworks mark the passage of time with their play of shadows.

Modern life is hurried and seems to get even faster every day, in a world where almost anything can be bought, downloaded or photographed and sent around the world in a few seconds. For me, the appeal of growing plants is that they defy this immediacy, since they're oblivious to our expectations.

Nature has its own pace of doing things. It can't be rushed and deep down, I believe we connect with that authenticity. By bringing plants into our homes, we're reconnecting with the rhythms of nature and the lessons she brings, particularly having patience and being fully in the moment.

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DECO ICON:

William Kentridge

William Kentridge is one of South Africa's most successful artists. His idiosyncratic style and magnificently ambitious, large-scale installations have become iconic, while his unwavering dedication to Johannesburg as both a home city and artistic concept has provided support for fellow artists, technicians and workshops

TEXT: JACO VAN SCHALKWYK

Historically, the careers of South African artists who remain in this country don't improve over time. One of the few exceptions is William Kentridge, who – over the past 30 years – has emerged internationally as a multi-media master, while remaining famously committed to Johannesburg. Kentridge's studio produces visual art, film and performance work and has more recently incorporated a significant slice of Johannesburg's cultural sector. 'There are about seven or eight people full-time on the staff, from administrative employees to engineers, technicians and makers in the sculpture sections,' he explains. 'Then I also work with a large number of independent studios.'

In choosing to work with local studios, Kentridge's continued presence in Johannesburg is providing artists, technicians and workshops with business at a time when the cultural sector's struggling. 'There are a lot of connections outwards,' he says. 'Sometimes a project will start with me saying: "I want to support this print studio." Requests for assistance are very often opportunities for new work and new thoughts to emerge.'

Kentridge's sentiments could sum up a core working principle of a number of South African artists, except that on the scale of his studio practice, it becomes a dictum for cultural and social upliftment, as well as part of his purpose. 'In a way, that's the only thing I have to teach: the lesson of being in the studio – of one's debts to one's métier; of hours in the studio and service in the way of the work that comes out,' he says.

In 2017, he launched his Centre for the Less Good Idea, an incubator space for the funding and development of short-form experimental, collaborative, cross-disciplinary art projects on a seasonal basis. 'The centre and other initiatives of mine can't take the place of a flourishing city art museum and other museums. But they acknowledge that in the absence of a larger public initiative, one has to work with a number of different, smaller initiatives,' he explains. 'You know, when the "good idea", the big idea or the "big museum" doesn't work, one has to find the "lesser idea" – something on the periphery.'





It's easy to forget that Kentridge, for all his success, remains an artist from precisely such a periphery of the global market. Thirty years ago, during the cultural boycott, with New York feasting on the biggest oil-on-canvas price bonanza in history, he combed Manhattan with his now iconic charcoal drawings. 'The first time I went around New York and knocked on gallery doors, most of the people just waved their arms, saying: "Don't come in, don't come in!"' And while one might chuckle at the stupendous prices his works now fetch, the bigger gag is that, compared with the \$55 million for which Jeff Koons sells his balloon dogs,

Kentridge – an artist at the vanguard of contemporary art from Africa – remains undervalued.

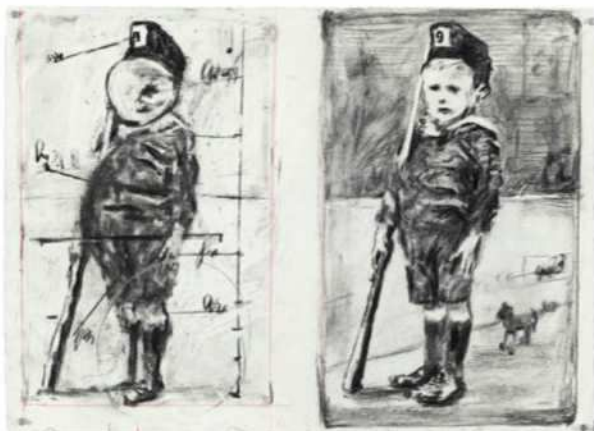
It could be said that these are dark times for SA's public cultural institutions, given that for the latter half of the 20th century, works by Kentridge contemporaries David Koloane and Wopko Jensma were going for the price of a King Steer burger. 'It seems to me that this is a period in both SA and Johannesburg when public institutions are in a state of extreme crisis, in terms of morale,' says Kentridge. 'And through that, there's a lack of morale in people to attend a lot of these museums and institutions. Would that our big museums were all flourishing, had large amounts of people going to see them and were seen as central places for the development of visual and other arts in the city. However, at the moment, they're in a dire state.'

Surely, given this state of affairs and the popularity of his work, Kentridge could simply move to Paris, New York or Vienna, where his operas are performed to critical acclaim. Or perhaps to Rome, where he was invited to create *Triumphs and Laments* – a 10m-high, 550m-long mural. Yet he remains committed to Johannesburg, choosing to distribute some of his 'good fortune in the contemporary art world' to the benefit of his home city.

'I think there's an anarchic kernel in the decision not to move,' he says. 'Obviously there's something that's held me here; there are many things in SA that are happening at a much less visible and slower pace than the rest of the world. The importance of the informal economy, the provisionality of all truths and understanding, the city as a piece of animation in concrete and bricks – I think this has been important and, if I look back, it's certainly been very present in the work.'



this page, from top left *Lulu*, *Bunch of Flowers in a Vase*, *That Which We Do Not Remember*, *Untitled* (Drawing from *Wozzeck* 30), *Untitled* (Drawing from *Wozzeck* 35), *Untitled* (*Lulu*) opposite, top William Kentridge, *Triumph of Bacchus*



NOTES



59



1



50

47



43



39



5



55



82



72



80



22

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LAST LOOK

LUCKY SCARS

Bhaca by Andile Dyalvane for Indigenus

Andile Dyalvane's concrete planters for Indigenus manifest a metaphoric scarification; hence 'Bhaca', the isiXhosa word for 'cutting' or 'marking skin'. The collection also celebrates the artist's mastery of his material of choice – clay – and continues Indigenus's exploration of planters scaled for architecture and landscapes.

indigenus.co.za



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