



No reservations There was no other way – this Cape Town couple had to demolish their house and start over again. Now they feel as if they are living in a forest boutique hotel designed for them alone.

Photos Micky Hoyle Production Etienne Hanekom Words Michelle Coburn



ABOVE LEFT The elegant, comfortable dining-room where the owners are looking forward to hosting friends and family in the years to come. The table was custom-designed by Cécile and Boyd's Interior Design, the Omni chairs are available from the company's showroom and the Discoco pendant light is from Cobin Lighting. **ABOVE RIGHT** The dining room also features an oak server and panelled wall displaying a silk-flower staghorn fern from Cécile and Boyd's, with a forest painting by Deborah Poynton. **PREVIOUS SPREAD, LEFT** The atmospheric guest bathroom is lit by two Foscarini Chouchin pendant lights from Créma Design, with steel-coloured wall tiles from Douglas Jones. **PREVIOUS SPREAD, RIGHT** The deck outside the main bedroom offers a view over the garden and pool, and glimpses of the Atlantic Ocean beyond.

Three months after moving into their new home in Camps Bay, the novelty still hasn't worn off for this husband and wife, who clearly take delight in rediscovering and sharing the nuances of their personal space with visitors.

"Every day I have that feeling you get when you walk into a beautiful hotel for the first time. Only here I'm welcomed by my dogs and cats, I get to kick off my shoes and lie on the couch, and there's the thrill of knowing I don't have to leave," says the owner as she walks barefoot through the house, pointing out the features that continue to surprise her: views of Table Mountain, the Glen Nature Reserve and the Atlantic Ocean; walls of sleek glass tiles, cork and textured paper-grass that invite her to run her fingers along them; an intriguing painting of a woodland she can imagine stepping into; the airy studio where she paints while her husband chills out in his "man cave" nearby; and, of course, the large walk-in dressing room.

After living in Camps Bay for years, they knew the exact part they wanted to move to: a relatively wind-free area adjacent to The Glen. When the right property came along they snapped it up, knowing that although this was their dream location, the house was not right for them. "It was a poky one-storey building with steps leading down to the pool and small garden," says the owner. But she and her husband moved in and took their time deciding what they wanted to build in its place.

Main requirements were a low-maintenance contemporary home with a separate kitchen. An art studio was also at the top of the list, as were a spacious main bedroom, a sizable garden at the same level as the living area, and an easy flow between indoors and out.

After spotting a house in Tamboerskloof by architect Paolo Deliperi, they were captivated by the way his homes become part of their environment, neither dominating nor becoming lost. But when they discovered he was booked up for a year, again they were prepared to take their time. After a long wait, the old house was razed and the clients attending weekly site meetings to watch their personal "hotel" take shape.

Paolo designed a terraced three-storey home anchored by a heavy masonry base at basement level and, in contrast to this, a lightweight structure of steel, timber and glass for the third level. Combined with the staggered western facade, this minimises the visual impact of the building on the narrow plot. The design considers seasonal changes in the movement of the sun and wind direction, with an open northern facade inviting the winter sun inside, while brise-soleil are used to cut off its harsh rays in summer. In the south, the facade is solid, offering maximum protection from the infamous southeaster.

While the owners would have loved wooden floors, these wouldn't have withstood animals' claws and, as the two rottweilers and three cats have checked in permanently, the alternative had to be durable. So they chose a combination of natural stone tiles and Corcoleum – an eco-friendly, anti-bacterial product made from 80% recycled wood shavings.

When it came to the interior the couple, who are avid travellers, had experienced the work of Cécile and Boyd's Interior Design at Singita and knew that the company's home division, C&B Home, was the only choice for them.

It was a case of starting from scratch and little from their previous home made the cut. "Our look

'We ended up with a neutral canvas and bold highlights including cyclamen, yellow and green.'

was totally different and mostly consisted of the furniture we'd brought together from our separate lives before we met. As a result, nothing worked and we simply didn't feel comfortable about it, which is probably why we rarely entertained." They're making up for lost time now, which gives some idea of how well their new home suits them.

Geordi Ferguson, who heads C&B Home partnered by design director Boyd Ferguson, says the natural setting of the house became the main source of inspiration and the team chose to emulate the colours and textures of the mountain, forest, sea and sky. "We also felt the need to 'earth' our clients in this frenetic world."

"They were great at interpreting us," affirms the owner. My husband's taste is quite conservative and I like bright colours and rich patterns, so we ended up with a neutral canvas of white, grey and earthy tones, with bold highlights including cyclamen, yellow and green, as well as some striking art."

Geordi adds, "Although they may be starting afresh, it was important for the clients to have references to their life 'before' their new home, including some sentimental pieces, as well as to look at starting a collection that can be added to over time."

A massive painting by graffiti artist Kilmany-Jo Liversage has found an ideal spot on a wall in the kitchen, in complete contrast to the organic bird sculpture on the counter beneath a skylight. Ceramic parakeets perch on the server in the dining room, while a large buddha, a gift from the wife's mother, guards the entrance hall in a pose quite similar to that of the black gorilla her son-in-law has positioned on the patio.

Of course no luxury hotel is complete without a spa, and there is one here, although it wasn't initially part of the plan. "My husband has an unattractive workout machine he wasn't going to part with. Geordi wouldn't let it go just anywhere, so we decided to create a space for it. Then we got the idea of a custom-designed massage bed and now we have a soothing turquoise spa room where the walk-in shower has a view of the pool and tree ferns outside."

The owners remain incredulous that, for the first time in their lives, they still have plenty of space that's waiting to be filled – or not – as they see fit. Rails and shelves in the dressing room anticipate yet-to-be-bought clothes, while the gallery spaces provided by the architecture await new additions to their art collection. It's easy to imagine these and many other decisions being deliberated over dinners with friends and family at the 10-seater dining table. And the consensus is bound to be that, while this house was a long time in the making, it was well worth the wait.

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ABOVE The owners chose the site, which offers a view of Lion's Head, for its magnificent location. The previous house was demolished to make way for this one by architect Paolo Deliperi.
OPPOSITE LEFT The sofas in the living room were custom-made by C&B Home and upholstered in fabrics from Mavromac and St Leger & Viney **OPPOSITE RIGHT** The owners are free to decide if they want to display art upstairs on the landing wall, which is finished in Java cork from Phillip Jeffries Ltd.

PHOTO OF EXTERIOR PAOLO DELIPERI



ABOVE The Venetian glass mirror and knitted bed cover are from the Cécile and Boyd's showroom, with Nexus Westminster carpeting from Belgotex. **OPPOSITE** The living area opens completely to the deck for easy indoor-outdoor living. Malawian water pots and delicious monster scatter cushions add to the back-to-nature feeling of the space.

