



Neighbourhood

PROPERTY & LIFESTYLE

Beach hideout

This remote West Coast beach house where your only company is the sea and fynbos, is the perfect place to unwind, page 4



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A walk on the wild side



In the West Coast fishing village of Dwarskersbos, this dreamy beach house is an invitation to unplug and unwind close to the elements

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PHOTOS: HENRIQUE WILDING



The Western Cape's West Coast has steadily grown in popularity as a holiday destination, with many drawn to its unspoilt, rugged surroundings and windswept beaches that go on for miles. The Bester family's recently finished beach house Villa Karibos is a remote and luxurious escape that still remains true to its surroundings, connecting with the sea, dunes and natural vegetation.

TRADITION WITH A MODERN TWIST

The home's architect Charl Merals of CFM Architects took his cue from the white-washed West Coast style, but wanted to take the design further, adding a modern twist and interesting spatial relationships.

"These types of houses are often over-simplified. What makes them interesting, though, is how they change over the years; people add on rooms and modify them, often with no architectural background, they just follow their intuition. Sometimes, in the natural organic process, the most amazing architecture happens."

In response, the house has beautifully interconnected spaces that emulate this process. "The way the kitchen connects to the main space is an example of this," says Charl. "It feels like a space that was added on sometime in the past, and as if this add-on was always meant to be."

NOOKS AND CRANNIES

The house announces itself with its taller-than-average chimney - a quirky touch from Charl that gives the home presence, and perhaps something of a church-like quality.

"West Coast houses in my mind should be interesting, have nooks and crannies, unexpected little wells and shady spots, and rocky patches to make the inhabitant feel as if they're in an oasis with plenty of options!" says Charl.





"Yet, all of this must be pared down in a way to make you feel as if life is uncomplicated."

The expansive central entertainment room has a great wow factor, but it's the bathrooms and the simple, spacious kitchen that Charl favours. "I am a sucker for a nice kitchen and a bathroom – maybe because I like to spend a lot of time in the kitchen myself," he says. "Between these two spaces, we really perform the basic functions of life, food and sanitation, and if we feel special doing that, then life feels a bit more special. This house was no exception."

THE BIG OUTDOORS
Entertaining is a big focus for this home, with its many interesting

spaces to gather depending on the weather. A well-protected, cool and calm arrival area allows guests to transition into holiday mode and the decked courtyard is a perfect space to relax. The sea-facing side of the house, which is separated from the beach by just a border of coastal shrub, opens up to the elements with large stacking doors as well as a braai yard with a letta screen.

And even when you're not outside, the connection to nature remains with oversized windows providing sweeping views over the vegetation. "The harshness of the West Coast is part of the beauty of it," says Charl. "This house provides you with the opportunity to seek refuge from heat and dry winds that can often last for days, but at the same time you can observe it and be part of it."



Get the look

"The Bester family wanted a space that was beautifully decorated without clutter and optimised as a holiday rental," says Elsie Schonken of Schonken Interiors, who took inspiration from the fynbos, birdlife and ocean in the surrounding area for the colours and patterns used throughout Villa Kersbos. "Ronelle Bester and myself worked closely together to create a cohesive space, playing with a neutral colour palette and natural materials such as concrete, steel, rattan, grass and wood and repeating these elements throughout the house."

Each element in the house has been carefully chosen, such as the framed wallpaper from Cara Seven that catches your eye as you walk into the kitchen. Another favourite is the custom cabinetry made by the Wood Artisan, with oak-framed doors and octagonal mesh rattan webbing inserts that lets air circulate and linen breathe.

However, there's one space that is Elsie's favourite in the house. "I love the master bedroom. It's open, airy and just a sanctuary on its own," she says. "We made one focal point and that was the bed, an Oak Poster Bed draped with a botanical printed linen from Babylonstoren and hanging rattan pendants on either side of the bed."

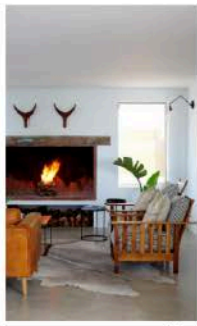
When it came to preparing the home's interiors for the wild West Coast weather and elements, Elsie had a few tricks up her sleeve. Here's her advice:

Let the sunshine in: If you want to control the amount and angle of natural light coming into your home to protect your furniture from sun damage (and allow yourself a bit of a lie-in) then shutters are the way to go.

Sitting pretty: Use furniture designed specifically for the outdoors – at Villa Kersbos they use galvanised treated, powder-coated aluminium and treated cane furniture.

Invest in fabrics: Make sure to use outdoor fabric for all exterior seating upholstery as it's stain, water and sun resistant. "We used the range from Hertex called Spring Break, which is rated for fully outdoors," she says.

Beware the sand: "Sand is always a problem with a house so close to the beach so it's a good idea to look at materials that are scratch resistant," says Elsie.



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Villa Kersbos
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