

# INSIDES

*cool*

INSPIRING HOMES WITH HEART

## *calm holidays*

How to host Christmas  
the Three Birds way



### LIVING BY THE SEA

BYRON BAY  
GERRINGONG  
MORNINGTON  
PENINSULA  
TAMARAMA  
CAPE COAST



### ON LOCATION

ESSENTIAL  
COASTAL  
MATERIALS  
FOR SEASIDE  
PROJECTS

WHAT I  
REALLY,  
REALLY  
WANT...  
THE STYLE  
EDITORS' GIFT  
WISHLIST

### SUMMER BAR 2022

Secret ingredients for  
great parties at home

ALL FIRED UP TASTY IDEAS FOR BACKYARD GRILLING ON FIRE PITS & BBQS

# surf

# and

# turf

For the ultimate experience of the simple life in a stunning natural setting, this South African villa is top of the heap



## CHEAT SHEET

**Who stays here** Ronelle and Moller Bester and their two sons: Julian, aged 12, and Josua, 10.

**Style of home** A new house by the sea in Dwarshersbos, South Africa.



BURDEAUX

**EXTERIOR** (both pages) This is the front of the Besters' holiday home, which they've called Villa Kersbos. It faces west, making the front stoep (veranda) perfect for sundowners. The built-in seating features cushions made in Hertext fabric. Table, Weylands; Chairs, Chair Crazy; Scatter cushions, Bespoke Home.



**W**e drove past this long, pristine beach – there was nothing here at the time except a small caravan with a sales guy on duty – and I immediately fell in love,” recalls South African Ronelle Bester of first sighting this block in Dwarskersbos on the Cape’s increasingly popular West Coast. “We decided on the spot to buy a plot for a weekend getaway.” The location could not have been a better choice for Ronelle, her husband Möller and their two young sons, Julian and Josua, because the family actually lives on a farm in Moorreesburg, which is only about an hour away by car.

This new second home is so close by, in fact, that the family frequently decides on a whim to pack and visit for the weekend. The house is wonderful through all the seasons – though the area is less windy during the relatively mild winters, which makes colder months a great time to visit. And the Besters seldom stay on their own. “We built the house to entertain family and friends, so we’re hardly ever there alone,” says Ronelle. “We love to share our house and show the area to our friends.”

Both the house, which they call Villa Kersbos, and its surroundings are all about the simple life, she adds, whether that means cycling to buy bread and milk at the local shop, greeting fellow locals, or simply spending time at the beach. Heading through to nearby Velddrif to buy fresh seafood would constitute a veritable expedition, so the Besters usually pick up some fish there on their way to the house at the start of the weekend.

The home was actually dreamed of and planned for years, says Ronelle, and finally built three years ago. The Besters worked on the design with architect Charl Marais of CFM Architecture to ensure that it had maximum appeal. There are sea views from every room of the house, and a range of different spaces that cater to the needs of all those using it. So, there is a ‘pyjama lounge’ upstairs where the children can hang out together, for example, as well as a generous living room on the ground floor that’s really just for the adults.

Spaces in which to spend time preparing meals and enjoying them were a priority too, of course. These include the west-facing *stoep* (verandah) at the front of the house, complete with its built-in *braai* (barbecue), as well as the internal open-plan kitchen and dining area. Asked about her favourite spot in the house, Ronelle nominates the kitchen with its antique table



**KITCHEN/DINING/ALFRESCO AREA** (both pages) All these open spaces are linked. The large stacking window in the kitchen opens up to a bar counter on the outside (where Julian sits on a metal stool) within the interior courtyard space. “It’s ideal for serving the kids food and drinks so they don’t run dripping wet through the house,” says Ronelle, who chose a company called Woodlove Kitchens & Furniture to install the cabinetry. It’s complemented by the screeded concrete floors in a vanilla colourway, Splashback tiles, Moroccan Warehouse. Kitchen table, a vintage buy. To the right of it is a framed piece of flamingo-themed wallpaper by Cara Saven. “I wanted to celebrate the thousands of flamingos that are endemic to the Berg River estuary in Velddrif,” Ronelle explains. “The floodplains there are rich in a wide variety of birdlife.” Woven pendant light, Ashanti Design. Kitchen wall clock, Country Road.

where everyone gathers to chat, cook and eat. "It's just a happy space with uninterrupted sea views, so we spend hours there."

The windproof courtyard at the rear is another much-loved space, and not simply because it has a wood-fired hot tub by KolKol. This secluded spot also includes a fully grown olive tree that Ronelle moved here from the farm. "I didn't want to wait years for a new one to grow," she says. In spite of no one believing that it would survive the journey, it is now her "miracle tree – happy and thriving".

An average day at Villa Kersbos begins with a breakfast of bacon and eggs cooked by Möller, after which the morning is spent on the beach – swimming, stand-up paddle boarding and bodyboarding. Julian and Josua have also started learning to surf. "The sea in front of the house is very safe," Ronelle assures.

Plenty of activity is clearly a big part of holidaying here, but when anyone wants a bit of quiet time, the house allows for that, too. Each of the bedrooms is spacious, and they all have ensuite bathrooms and private outdoor access. Plus, the design of all the spaces reflects the spirit of ease that Ronelle, who worked in collaboration with interior designer Elsjé Schonken, has created throughout the house.

Their judicious selection of natural textures includes lots of wooden pieces, many of them family heirlooms or items tracked down at vintage stores. They are cleverly complemented by a palette of neutral tones enlivened with subtle splashes of green, resulting in a tranquil yet warm, layered feel. As Ronelle puts it, all who visit Villa Kersbos "love to throw open the doors and live free", and this atmosphere of effortless liberty is what time spent at the house is all about. **LD**

See [gfmarch.com](http://gfmarch.com) and [schonkeninterior.com](http://schonkeninterior.com)

**LIVING AREA** Views of the sea and fynbos vegetation surrounding the house abound from the lounge and kitchen areas. The leather sofa is from Klooftique and the scatter cushions are made from Hertex fabric. One of the chairs was a gift from a neighbour on the farm and the other, slightly larger, one is a Morris chair that belonged to Ronelle's grandmother. Coffee table, The Mood Collectives. Nesting tables, Weylandts. Wooden horns (above the fireplace), Vogel Design.





**FAMILY ROOM** (top left) With day-bed style seating, this space is also used for the boys' friends to sleep over. The wooden coffee table is from Weylandts and the leather ottoman is from Klooftique. Wall hanging, Moroccan Warehouse. Coir rug, Rowley & Hughes. **BEDROOM** (opposite top) In the boys' room on the ground floor, the work table is by Incanda and the knitted stool from Mr Price Home. The eye-catching wire lamp is from Loads Of Living. Bamboo hanging pegs on the wall, Weylandts. Woven pendant light, Ashanti Design. **BEDROOM** (opposite right) This large room on the first floor has its own balcony. Coir rug, Hertex Haus. Chest of drawers, Block & Chisel. Wire table lamp, Loads Of Living. Rocking chairs, Incanda. Round table, @Home Online.



GREAT FINDS

**CLOCKWISE** (from top right) Camdyn **mirror**, \$169, Temple & Webster. Salt & Pepper 'Landori' **clock**, \$69, Dornayne. Scribble wool **rug**, POA, Designer Rugs. Axel leather **sofa**, from \$3199, West Elm. Christophe **cushion** in Butter, \$95, Papaya. Carved wood **side table**, \$399, West Elm. Wine Culture **glass**, \$98 for two, and Bar Iceland **jug**, \$109, Amara. Cast-iron shallow **casserole dish**, from \$369, Le Creuset. Tabouret **stool**, POA, Thonet. Byron old-wood **dining table**, \$1699, Abide Interiors. Tree root serving **bowls**, from \$59 each, Magnolia Lane. Yoshi organic serving **bowl**, \$49.95, Papaya. Woven rattan **vase**, \$149, Pottery Barn. Gubi '3D' upholstered **chair**, \$810, Cult Design. Kariba cone **pendant**, \$699, The Dharma Door. Exotic flamingo **art print**, from \$12.99, Society6.

ADDITIONAL PRODUCT SOURCING: KATE LINCOLN



**MAIN BEDROOM** (this page and opposite right) A canopy bed from Weylands is perfect for this open space complete with a tub in one corner. Bathers enjoy full views of the beach and Atlantic Ocean stretching to the horizon. Newform taps, Exquisite Bathrooms. Mirror, Arkivio. Pendant lights and bath table, Weylands. Bedspread and rug, Hertex Haus. Side tables, stumps from the farm. Botanical fabric print, Babylonstoren. **MAIN ENSUITE** (opposite bottom) The vanity unit is by Woodlove Kitchens & Furniture. Starburst bamboo mirror, Mr Price Home. **BOYS' ROOM** (opposite left) This sits alongside the main bedroom on the ground level and has an ensuite as well as direct access to the beach. The bedspreads are from Hertex Haus. Patterned cushion, La Grange Interiors. Chair, Weylands.