

SOUTH AFRICAN  
**GARDEN & HOME**

TAKING THE  
**INSIDE  
OUT**

**NATURAL DECOR, OUTDOOR  
EATING AND GARDENS THAT INSPIRE**

LEAN INTO  
THE **ART** OF  
**SHARING**

**FRESH HERBS**  
to **KICK-START**  
your year

*Coastal Cool with*  
**The BESTERS**



JANUARY 2023

# DECOR

**HOT TOPIC**  
**A BREATH  
OF FRESH  
AIR**

We made it to 2023 in one piece! For those who don't do a big pre-festive spruce up, this is your quick reminder to get organised for the new year.

- Create a snag list of general repairs to get them costed and booked if you're not a DIY guru.
- Create a decor shopping list to update frayed textiles, and replace broken glasses, flatware, etc.
- Organise your garage and storage areas, and make sure you've donated any clutter.
- New hobby? Create a space to spend time on your craft and organise your goodies.

PHOTO: WARREN HEATH/BUREAUX



# Sand & Sea

For the ultimate beachside take on the simple life, this young family's holiday home on the Cape West Coast combines an atmosphere of pure relaxation and fun with laid-back yet sophisticated interiors

BY ROBYN ALEXANDER

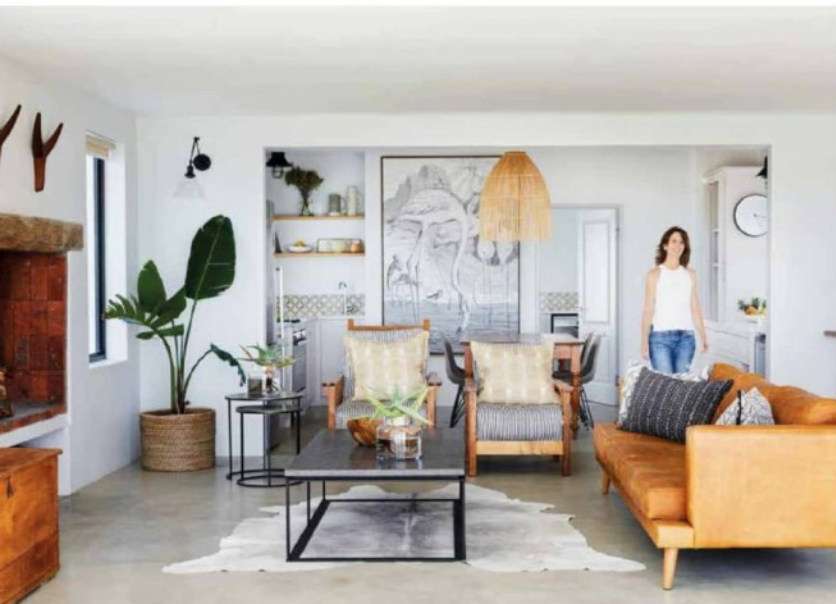


## Sipping on sunsets

The front of Villa Kersbos, the Bester family's holiday home at Dwarskersbos on the Cape West Coast, faces west – making the front stoep perfect for sundowners.



Views of the sea and fynbos vegetation surrounding the house abound from the lounge and kitchen area. The leather couch is from Kiooftique ([kiooftique.com](http://kiooftique.com)), and the scatter cushions on it are from Hertex ([hertex.co.za](http://hertex.co.za)). The coffee table is from The Mood Collectives ([instagram.com/themoodcollectives](http://instagram.com/themoodcollectives)) and the nesting side tables are by Weylandts ([weylandts.co.za](http://weylandts.co.za)).



### ← Integrated living

The living room, kitchen and dining area (which is to the right of this space) form a large open-plan area.

In the background, the **flamingo artwork** is a framed piece of wallpaper by Cara Saven ([carasaven.com](http://carasaven.com)).

'I wanted to celebrate the thousands of flamingos that are endemic to the Berg River estuary in Veldrif. The floodplains there are rich in a wide variety of birdlife,' says Ronelle.

The **pendant light** in the kitchen is from Ashanti Design, as is the **basket** containing the indoor plant ([ashantidesign.com](http://ashantidesign.com)).



### ↑ Beams of Old

In the main living area, the fireplace is topped with a beautiful old wooden finial, bought years ago by homeowner Möller Bester (with no particular purpose in mind at the time) after he spotted an online classified advertisement for 'a yellowwood beam' at a good price. 'My dad was in the forestry business and I grew up on a sawmill, so I know a little bit about wood,' says Ronelle. 'To this day I'm convinced the beam is not yellowwood, but it's a beautiful piece of wood with leftover bits of paint on it, and initials carved into it too - it has lots of character.'

And the Besters seldom visit on their own. 'We built the house to entertain family and friends, so we hardly go alone,' says Ronelle. 'We love to share our house and show the area to our friends.' Both the house and its surroundings are, she adds, all about the simple life, whether that means cycling to go and buy bread and milk at the local shop, greeting fellow locals, or simply spending quality time at the beach. Heading through to nearby Veldrif 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 house was 'dreamed of and planned for years,' says Ronelle, and finally built three years ago. 'The Besters worked with architect Charl Marais of CFM Architecture on the design to ensure that the house has maximum appeal, with sea views from every room, and a range of different spaces in the house that cater to the needs of all those using it, from kids to grown-ups. So, there is a 'pyjama lounge' upstairs where

the children can hang out together, for example, as well as a living room on the ground floor for the adults.

Spaces in which to spend time preparing meals and eating with family and friends were a priority too, of course. These include the west-facing stoep (veranda) at the front of the house, complete with a built-in braai (barbecue), as well as the internal open-plan kitchen and dining area. Asked about her best spot in the house, Ronelle says it 'must be the kitchen with the antique table where everyone gathers, chats, cooks, eats - it's just a happy space. You have uninterrupted views of the sea, so we spend hours there.'

The windproof courtyard at the rear of the house is another favourite space, and no wonder, when it features a wood-fired hot tub (by KolKol

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Every room needs a touch of black, just as it needs one antique piece

JAN SHOWERS

“

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,' remembers homeowner Ronelle Bester. '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 (12) and Josua (10). The family lives on a farm in Moorreesburg, which is just an hour away by car from this, their resulting holiday home in Dwarskroon on the Cape's increasingly popular West Coast.

This second home is so close by, in fact, that the family frequently decides 'on a whim to pack and go for the weekend,' says Ronelle. She adds that the house is wonderful through all the seasons - noting that the area is less windy during its relatively mild winters, which makes this a great time to visit.



### Best seats in the house

The slightly larger **Morris chair** is Ronelle's grandmother's, which she inherited, and the other one was a gift from a neighbour on the farm. The **leather couch** is from Kloofique ([kloofique.com](http://kloofique.com)), and the **scatter cushions** on it are from Hertext ([hertext.co.za](http://hertext.co.za)).

### Surf Stoep

The built-in seating has cushions upholstered in **Spring Break Pano After Dark fabric** by Hertext ([hertext.co.za](http://hertext.co.za)). The **outdoor table** is by Weylandts ([weylandts.co.za](http://weylandts.co.za)), and the **chairs** are from Chair Crazy ([chaircrazy.co.za](http://chaircrazy.co.za)). The **scatter cushions** are from Bespoke Home ([bespokehome.co.za](http://bespokehome.co.za)).





**Summer Tuck Shop**

The large stacking window in the kitchen opens up onto a bar counter on the outside, within the interior courtyard space. 'It's ideal for serving the kids food and drinks so that they don't run dripping wet through the house,' says Ronelle. The **kitchen clock** is by Country Road ([countryroad.com.au](http://countryroad.com.au)), and all the **kitchen joinery** was custom-designed by Woodlove Kitchens & Furniture ([woodlove.co.za](http://woodlove.co.za)).



**A Table for Four**

The **screeded concrete floors** throughout the house are by Cemcrete ([cemcrete.co.za](http://cemcrete.co.za)) in their Vanilla Bean colourway, and the **kitchen splashback** is made of patterned tiles from Moroccan Warehouse ([moroccanwarehouse.com](http://moroccanwarehouse.com)). The **cooker** is by Bosch ([bosch.com](http://bosch.com)). The **wooden kitchen table** was discovered years ago in a hidden warehouse of antiques by Ronelle's sister, while the family was on holiday in Kaurboomstrand, and the **replica Eames Eiffel chairs** are from Chair Crazy ([chaircrazy.co.za](http://chaircrazy.co.za)).

*kolkol.co.za*) as well as additional outdoor seating. 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, and despite no one believing that it would survive the journey, it is now 'my 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 are also currently learning to surf: 'The sea in front of the house is very safe,' says Ronelle, 'and the waves are ideal for learning.'

Plenty of activity is an essential element of a holiday here, but when anyone wants a bit of quiet time, the house allows for this too. Each of the bedrooms is marvellously spacious, and they all have en-suite bathrooms and private outdoor access. Plus, the design of all the spaces reflects the spirit of ease that Ronelle, working in collaboration with interior designer Elsjé Schonken, has created throughout the house.



### R&R

The main bedroom on the ground floor opens right up to the views of indigenous fynbos vegetation and the Atlantic Ocean beyond, and includes an en-suite bathroom and a freestanding bath in one corner of the room, from which the views can be enjoyed. Ronelle says the ocean is usually dotted with cargo ships, which can be spotted moving past day and night. The **four-poster bed** is from Weylandts (*weylants.co.za*), with a **botanical print fabric** hanging from Babylonstoren (*babylonstoren.com*). The **rug and textured bedspread** are by Hertex Haus (*hertexhaus.co.za*), and the **bedside tables** were made using old gum-tree stumps from the Besters' farm. The **woven light fittings, woven lounge chair and deep green cushions** are all also from Weylandts



### Soaking up the sea

An occupant of the bath in the main bedroom has a full view of the beach and the Atlantic Ocean stretching to the horizon while enjoying a soak. The **pill-shaped mirror** is by Arkivio (*arkivio.co.za*), and the **Newform** (*newform.it*) **taps** were sourced from Exquisite Bathrooms (*exb.co.za*).

### Boogie boys →

The boys need only walk a few steps down the wooden boardwalk to enjoy a session of boogie boarding at the beach.



### A place to rest →

This large bedroom on the first floor opens up onto a spacious balcony. The **coir rug** is from Hertex Haus (*hertexhaus.co.za*), the **wooden chest of drawers** is from Block & Chisel (*blockandchisel.co.za*), the **wire table lamp** is from Loads of Living (*truworths.co.za*), and the **wood and leather rocking chairs** are by Incandia (*incandia.co.za*). The **round occasional table** is from @home (*home.co.za*).

Their judicious selection of natural textures includes lots of wooden pieces, many of them family heirlooms or items tracked down at various vintage stores. These are beautifully complemented by a palette of neutral tones – enlivened with subtle splashes of green – and it all combines to create a tranquil yet warm, layered feel. As Ronelle puts it, she and all the other visitors to Villa Kersbos 'love to throw open all the doors and live free', and this atmosphere of simple, effortless liberty is what time spent at this house is all about. [cfmarch.com](http://cfmarch.com), [schonkeninterior.com](http://schonkeninterior.com)



PRODUCT ON: SVEN ALBERDING; PHOTOS: WARREN HEATH/BUREAUX