

# HOME FROM



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# HOME

For a French family, it took a visit to South Africa during the 2010 FIFA World Cup for the bug to bite. **THEY WANTED AN AFRICAN ESCAPE FAR FROM PARIS'S BUSTLING BOULEVARDS.**





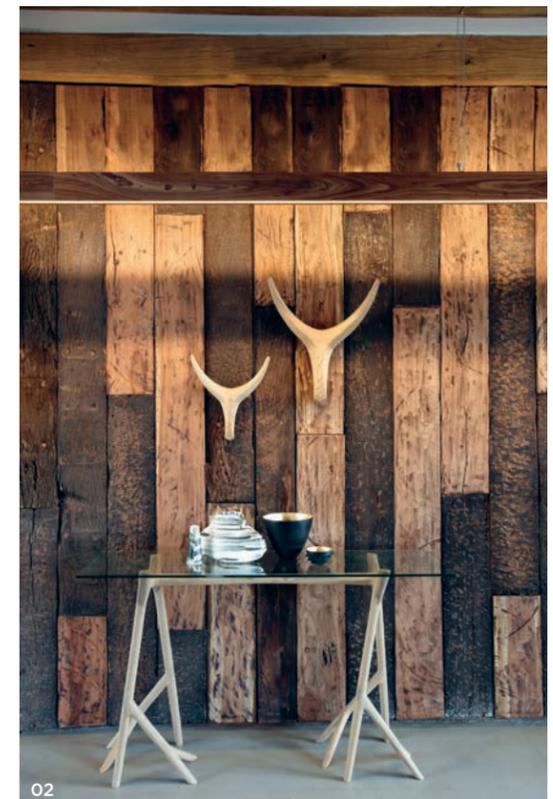
01

**PREVIOUS SPREAD**

- 01** A hill called Zwartkop rises behind the sprawling dwelling.
- 02** Nicholas Plewman Architects designed the water feature in the central courtyard.

**THIS SPREAD**

- 01** The fireplace, which is clad in hot-rolled steel and sealed with a clear sealer, is complemented by a standing floor lamp by Dokter and Misses called The Big Sweat Lamp. The Whisper leather chandelier is by High Thorn. The Panda beanbags are covered in mud cloth from Toguna African Art & Crafts, and between them is a Blessing side table from Egg Designs. To their right is an Umthi Mud Drinks cabinet by Meyer von Wielligh for GDF Design Lab. The Square Loungy sofa, Lotus coffee table and Ball stools are all from Weylandts. The Magnet lounge chairs are by Vogel and the mosaic-stitched Organic cowhide rug by Johnno du Plessis. The photograph is by David Ballam.
- 02** The reclaimed sleeper wood panels were done by Dajaza Houtwerk. The nguni heads are by Vogel, the Umthi glass server by Meyer von Wielligh for GDF Design Lab, the vases by Lisa Firer Design at Kim Sacks Gallery, and the bronze bowls from Bronze Age.



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**T**

he Waterberg region in the north of Limpopo is a geographical wonder that spans some 15 000 km<sup>2</sup>, with mountain ranges rising up to 1 400 m above sea level. It was the first region in northern South Africa to be named a biosphere reserve by Unesco. It is also home to Mabote Lodge, a Parisian family's idyllic private escape built by Nicholas Plewman Architects and decorated by Fox Browne Creative, with co-owners Chris Browne and Debra Fox at the helm.

Even before you step through the double front doors, it is clear that this is a house designed and decorated to be in harmony with its surrounds. Wood is a prominent feature, from the columns on the veranda through to the stoep. Inside, the wooden touches continue, from the beams to wall panelling to the wooden furniture and shelving. This, coupled with the extensive use of glass, gives the home a sense of continuity from interior to exterior.

"The owners' brief was simple: They wanted uncluttered and African, but in a contemporary way," says Chris. "They did not want it to be too designer and intimidating. They work in the hospitality industry, so it was important that this was a home, not a hotel!"

The decor is undeniably African without falling into the curio trap, and design elements are consistent throughout. The children's wing reveals considered sleeping and living spaces. Printed couches, ottomans and art bring life

and vibrancy to an otherwise restrained background. Here, too, wood is a prominent feature. Slightly more subdued is the guest bedroom. With almost strictly neutral tones, there's a touch of print and texture brought through in rugs, cushions and other accessories.

Nowhere in the house are the wooden touches more striking than in the master bedroom, where the mattress is set on a wooden platform that extends vertically up against the wall before jutting out horizontally against the wooden beams of the ceiling, turning the bed into a stage.

In order to achieve the owners' vision, Chris and his team, in collaboration with Klara van Wyngaarden, set out to create a home that

is clearly "made in South Africa". Much of the furniture can be attributed to treasured South African brands such as Egg Designs, Bronze Age, James Mudge and Meyer von Wielligh.

From showing the family the initial concept to welcoming them into the fully decorated home took Fox Browne 10 months to realise. "We have a flexible team; we don't blink when furniture has to be shunted around and we are used to working in much more remote locations in Southern and East Africa," says Chris. Looking around at the polished finished product, we don't doubt it for a moment. **V**

- [plewmanarchitects.co.za](http://plewmanarchitects.co.za)
- [foxbrowne.com](http://foxbrowne.com)



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04

- 01** In the impressive hallway is a hand-woven karakul rug from Hold Me, Captain, an Easy coat stand by Dokter and Misses, a Rookhee canvas campaign chair from Mellvill & Moon, a Breton cupboard from Pierre Cronje, an Indian Charpoy lounger from Amatuli and an Umthi hanging light by Meyer von Wielligh for GDF Design Lab.
- 02** The bar counter and shelving were made by Insitucrete and the wooden turned lights by One Good Turn. The Harper bar stools are from Weylandts. The glasses and decanters were made by Ngwenya Glass.
- 03** The open-plan dining room is warmed by a Canature wood stove and lit by copper pendant lights from Tusker Trading. The Bloukrans dining table is from Pierre Cronje and the DePadova Sundance chairs from Generation Design. The woven leather rug was made by Papiilio.
- 04** Natural textures abound in the kitchen with its leathered granite tops and cork-and-cement bar stools from Wiid Design. The overhead strip lighting is by Streamlight.

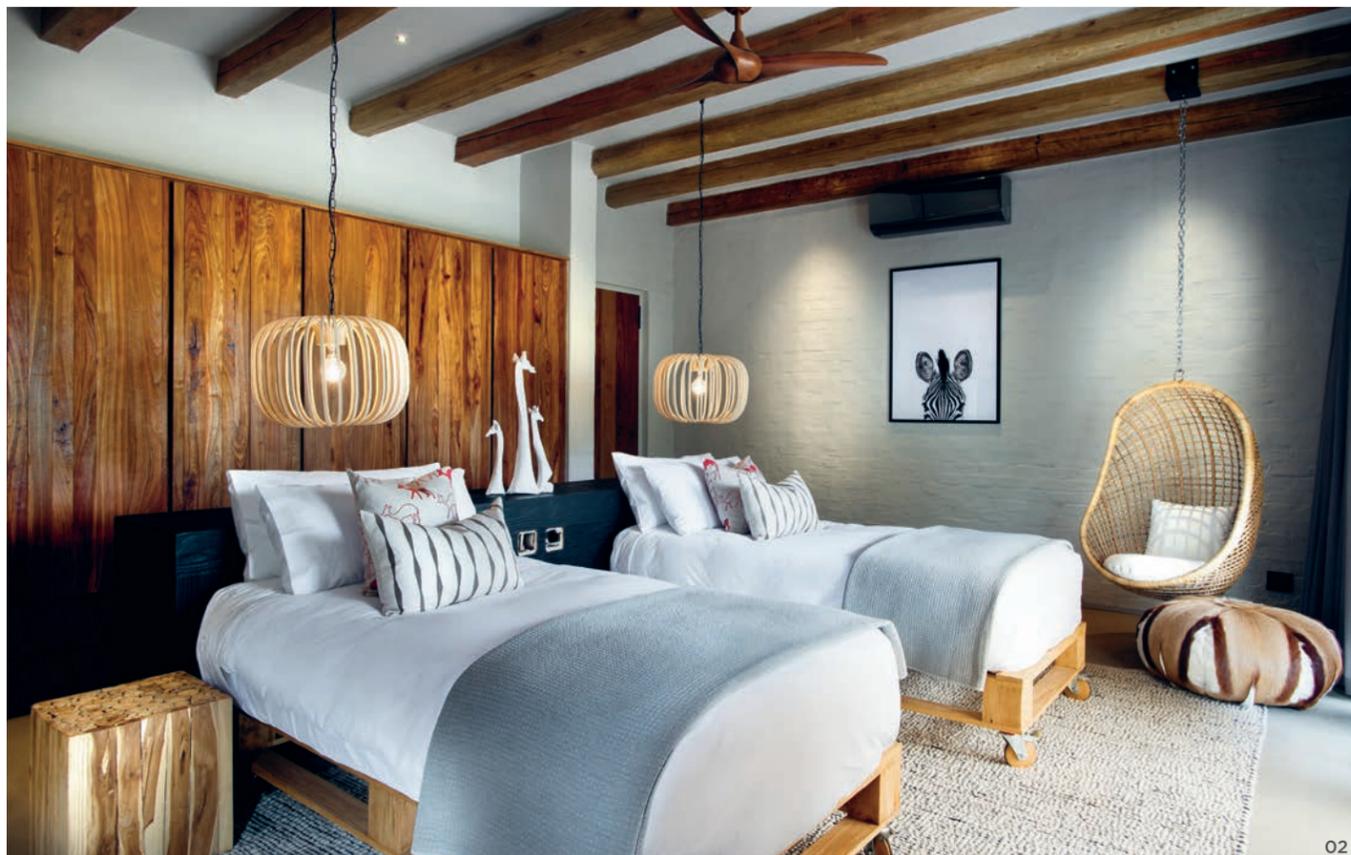
"THE OWNERS' BRIEF WAS SIMPLE: THEY WANTED **UNCLUTTERED AND AFRICAN**, BUT IN A **CONTEMPORARY WAY**."



01

- 01 The shower wall in the master suite bathroom is made of leathered granite by Mazista Tiles.
- 02 The children's bedroom features a Kai hanging pod chair from Weylandts, a springbok-skin pouffe from Ikhaya Africa Export and a Tugela wool rug from Hoffmann Rugs. The pallet beds on castors were made by One Good Turn and the Branch side table is from Weylandts. The photographic print by Creative Nature and the giraffe heads from Ashanti Contemporary African Designs add a fun touch. The bamboo pendant lights are from Streamlight.
- 03 A king-size Simmons mattress on a wooden platform, made of wire-brushed pine by One Good Turn, is the hero of the main bedroom. The Berber flatweave runner is from Fibre Designs, the bedlinen from Ginger Cat and the Cottonfield throw from Mungo. The black Family lamp is by Dokter and Misses. Wiid Design custom-made the wood-and-copper bench in the foreground, and the black springbok-skin cubes are from Ikhaya Africa Export.

IT IS A HOME THAT IS CLEARLY **"MADE IN SOUTH AFRICA"**.



02



03

THIS IS A HOUSE **DESIGNED** AND  
**DECORATED** TO BE IN HARMONY  
WITH ITS SURROUNDS.

01 The swimming pool is filled from a borehole that supplies the entire property. A step-down chill area, softly lit by striplights from Streamlight, was designed by Nicholas Plewman Architects. At its centre is a fire bowl from Amatuli. Next to the pool are iroko wood loungers by Meyer von Wielligh for GDF Design Lab.

*We love!*

