

Led by nature



Text: LEAH SHONE | Photographs: CHRIS ALLAN PHOTO

Sometimes the true beauty of a home lies in its simplicity ... and its ability to seamlessly blend with the natural environment surrounding it. Careful planning and space usage, along with practical, functional architectural principles, make this a wonderful, nature-inspired North Coast family home.

When you build a home in one of the most beautiful parts of our country, surrounded by wetlands, forest and indigenous landscape - and the ocean just a stone's throw away - it's hard not to allow your surroundings to influence the look and feel of your home. And why wouldn't you?

Designed by Phillip Thornhill and Tyren Els of TCRPV Architects, this practical, stylish home is situated within the Zululami Luxury Coastal Estate. Together with landscape architect Bernice Rumble and interior designer Samantha Clayton, the design team have managed to create an easy-living home that would suit almost any North Coast family. And it truly is a case of the landscape leading - and the architecture and décor following.

Blending with nature outside

When you live in a climate like ours, planning your outside area (or areas) is almost as important, if not more so, than the inside of the home. North Coast families spend hours in their pools and gardens and, as is the case here, the interior and exterior often blend into one usable space.

Landscape architect and director of Land Art Studios Bernice Rumble headed up the landscape planning of this home. Having spent the last few years working with the Zululami team to rehabilitate and transform the estate, Bernice has a solid understanding of the natural environment here.

For this particular site, Bernice says the goal was to maximise the use of different

outside areas, depending on the homeowner's needs. A popular way of achieving this is the use of courtyard spaces. Not only do they allow for lots of natural light and air movement in the home, but courtyards also give you another option when spending time outdoors.

"Courtyards are a popular trend, especially for families who want to close off and use different areas at different times. It allows them to take advantage of the views while still having protection from the wind and is a great option for families with smaller children, who may want to allow them to play outside away from the swimming pool area."

In keeping with the theme of blending in with the environment, Bernice used screen planting with natural, lush vegetation to offer privacy and separate the garden from the neighbours. "The goal was to keep the outside as simple and practical as possible while building within the natural lay of the land and maintaining the environmentally friendly ideology of the estate."



The beautiful high ceilings make this home feel bigger than what it is and the courtyard gives you an additional outdoor area that is protected from the wind



Exquisite views of the estate from the main bedroom



Landscape architect
Bernice Rumble



Phillip Thornhill
and Tyren Els of
TCRVP Architects

African interior influences

Interior designer Samantha Clayton of Cotton Properties was tasked with furnishing this beautiful, three-bedroom family home. Her focus, she says, was to furnish it in a way that inspires the homeowners to live well.

"As an interior designer and decorator, I often draw inspiration from the exterior of the space I'm working in. Flow is one of the most important functions of any interior. The estate set the tone for a natural interior so the use of raw wood, bamboo wallpaper, bold colours and lots of natural light were a must!"

Choosing to celebrate rather than shy away from an African-inspired look and feel, Samantha managed to bring in texture using feather art pieces and carved wooden headboards, alongside an earthy colour palette. "I wanted to create a homey, soulful and on-trend African-influenced home. As Africans, we often tend to shy away from animal prints, tribal art pieces, local crafts and authentic textures of Mother Nature, but it is possible to find a good balance between these raw elements and elegant luxury. The result is a timeless, unique interior style that's proudly our own."

Samantha used bold, statement furniture pieces such as the 4m soiled oak, live edge table - the perfect addition to this family home. "In a world filled with uncertainty why not choose to live your best life in an inspiring interior surrounded by nature..."

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