

BL

BEST LIVING

MAGAZINE FOR LIFESTYLE AND REAL ESTATE
Issue Spring/Summer 2025

VP VON POLL
REAL ESTATE

**REAL ESTATE
OFFERS**

FROM PAGE 79

Aerin
LAUDER

and her stylish retreat in Palm Beach

THE HEEREN HUIJS IN HERMANUS

BETWEEN THE SEA AND THE SKY

Spectacular coastlines, rugged rocks and the deep blue sea: the South African coastal town of Hermanus is known for its stunning nature and one of the world's top land-based whale watching spots. Amidst this spectacular backdrop, in a sheltered bay overlooking the ocean, lies the "Heeren Huijs" – a sanctuary whose design is entirely dedicated to the beauty of its surroundings.



There are places that inspire respect – not because of their spectacular architecture, but because of their unadulterated charm. The Heeren Huijs (from “Heerenhuis”, Dutch for manor house or villa), a hidden gem in Hermanus on the South African coast, is just such a place. Nestled in a sheltered bay, where cormorants glide through the salty breeze and Southern Right whales pass by from June to November, nature and architecture merge here in a striking way.

A box seat with a panoramic view over the endless expanse of the sea – a backdrop that's hard to beat.

Inspired by the past, built for the future

Architect Karen Newman had a clear vision: to create a home that harmonises with nature and doesn't compete with it. “I hesitated to build here at first, as it was one of the last undeveloped sites in the area.” But the challenge of designing a house that respects its surroundings – one that blends harmoniously into the landscape rather than dominating it – appealed to her more than anything else.

“It had to be a home that felt like it had always been here.” She was inspired by the



The architecture of the building blends harmoniously into its surroundings.

simple, whitewashed fishermen's houses dotted along the Cape coast. The result is an ensemble of interconnected, flat-roofed cottages built from local granite, weathered wood and light-coloured lime plaster. Gently curved walls and roof lines lend the ensemble an organic, almost sculptural effect.

A home with a soul

The Heeren Huijs is the personal sanctuary of a young family looking for a place where they could escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life and be inspired by the rugged beauty of the Overberg region. “We weren't looking for a modern beach house, but a home with history and character,” its owner says. ▶

The coastline at Hermanus is unspoilt nature at its best.



“We weren’t looking for a modern beach house, but a home with history and character.”

View over the pool to the rear of the house, which is sheltered from the wind and designed to make the most of the northern sun.



The interior is rustic-modern with a great deal of attention to detail.



In the master bedroom, the bed, headboard, bedside tables, stool and armchairs were all custom-made by Newman Interiors. All the fabrics are from Romo, the bedside lamps from Flos.

From the start, she felt that involving local craftsmen, artists and master builders in the project was crucial. Many items of furniture were made especially for the house, and materials such as poplar wood and aged floorboards lend the rooms a warm, lively atmosphere. Historical elements, such as the old foundations of a former lighthouse, have also been incorporated into the design and tell the story of this special place.

Space, light and nature in perfect harmony

With six bedrooms – four on the ground floor and two under the roof – the Heeren Huijs offers plenty of space for family and guests. The open-plan living concept

allows the indoor and outdoor areas to merge seamlessly into one another: the large sliding glass doors of the living areas disappear completely into the walls, transforming the space into an airy veranda with clear views of the sea.

The interior design follows a well thought-out concept: the house opens up almost completely to the lake side to bring the spectacular natural surroundings inside. On the north side, a landscaped terrace protects against the wind, creating a quiet, sun-drenched oasis of calm.

Timeless elegance with a local touch

When it came to the interior, Karen Newman and her partner Tamsyn Bowren went for a mixture of modern understatement and local craftsmanship. Antique pieces from the region – from Cape copperware to rustic country furniture – were paired with customised designs. Hand-woven textiles, bleached woods, textured surfaces and light natural tones all combine to create an atmosphere that is both elegant and cosy. ➤

Thanks to floor-to-ceiling glass fronts, the sea feels like part of the living room.

“We only used a few high-quality materials to focus on the essentials: nature on the outside and the feeling of cosiness inside,” says Karen. Haptics play a pivotal role here: from rustic poplar ceiling beams and weathered wood for door frames to deliberately imperfect, hand-crafted floors, every surface tells its own story.

A place to come home to – and stay

The Heeren Huijs is not just a house, but more a way of life. It’s a place that invites you to relax to the rhythm of the seasons and grows with its inhabitants. Once you’ve been here, you not only take the salty breeze and the soft light of the sea with you, but also the feeling of having finally returned home. ■

“We used only a few, but high-quality materials.”



The desk in the corner overlooking the sea is part of the lobby to the master bedroom.



Elegant minimalism reigns in the bright main bathroom, with a metal bathtub from Victorian Bathrooms. Stool by Cecile & Boyd Interiors; marble table by Infinity Stone.



*Relax to the
rhythm of the
seasons*