

HIGH IMPACT

ABOVE CAPE TOWN'S BANTRY BAY IS A HOME WHERE DRAMATIC ARCHITECTURE MAKES FOR A CONTEMPORARY RETREAT WITH ENTERTAINING IN MIND

PHOTOGRAPHS ADAM LETCH

The design of the house capitalises on ocean views and inviting indoor-outdoor living areas. Terrace furniture by Gandia Blasco from B&B Italia

despite the obvious architectural obstacles they were going to have to face, the owners – a Johannesburg-based business couple – fell in love with the site on a vertiginous slope in Cape Town’s Bantry Bay. The brief called for a comfortable but contemporary base to suit the owners’ busy lifestyles – one that would include an impressive master suite, several rooms for guests and free-flowing entertainment spaces.

According to Stefan Antoni, architect and director of SAOTA – Stefan Antoni Olmesdahl Truen Architects, ‘the first objective was to create a living area as ample as possible with strong connections to the outside living spaces, which is a challenge on a steep, narrow slope.’ The result is a space that is nestled in the mountain on one side and projected towards the coast on the other, with views to an infinite horizon.

The theatricality of the house is evident from the moment you come in through the front door, where you have exceptional views of the sea through a double-volume space,’ comments Mark Bullivant, senior associate at SAOTA. The dining room, living room, the kitchen and breakfast area all occupy the same open-plan space that connects seamlessly with the terraces, garden and pool, while the bedrooms

on the lower levels command ocean and mountain views

To create privacy from neighbouring houses on both sides while framing valuable views, the exterior façades were designed as a series of void and solid planes using concrete, glass and perforated metal screens. ‘The contrast of lucid glazing and immense fair-faced concrete planes creates an interesting tension,’ says SAOTA director Philip Olmesdahl. As such, the language of the building – though undeniably bold and muscular – is a pleasing play of solid mass and expanses of transparency that creates balance and allows the artworks, and the landscape outside, to stand out. ▶

LIVING WITH DESIGN

‘The architectural shell was a wonderful off-shutter and grey canvas on which to work,’ explains interior designer Craig Kaplan. ‘Not much furniture was required, and it’s not a house that needs or wants any type of fussy clutter so the emphasis was on simple and timeless iconic design pieces. We used the owners’ sculptural dining table, imported from Italy, as a starting point and followed with classic leather chairs and a Flos chandelier. The same concept of simple lines, natural fibres and discreet furniture was taken through to the rest of the house to create a livable space with high-design elements.’

OPPOSITE PAGE FROM TOP Facing the view, the living area features Knoll modular sofas and an Ingo Maurer standing lamp; the kitchen was masterfully crafted by Armani/Dada, Italy



TEXT: KARINE MONIÉ; TRANSLATION: CLARA TILVE; ADDITIONAL TEXT: KELLY ADAMI



The double-volume dining room with 'Nebula' pendant light from Flos, dining table by Albanian artist Helidon Xhixha and 'CAB' chairs by Mario Bellini



THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE DINING, LIVING AND KITCHEN AREAS OFFERS EFFORTLESS CONNECTION TO THE TERRACES, GARDEN AND POOL



It is this idea that provided direction for Craig Kaplan's interior design. Sourced from the Christopher Møller Art and Whatiftheworld galleries, the artwork plays a significant role in adding colour and verve, breaking up the general palette of neutrals by creating pause points in the large living spaces. For example, a colourful artwork by Jaco Roux injects energy into the dining room area.

Completing the project, Landscape Designer Francesca Watson's treatment of the garden contributes significantly to an overall look of completeness. The robust shapes of the plants echo those of the architecture, and the varied scales used help to formalise the outer limits of the house, while also providing a softness, especially at the entrance and on the terrace.

▪ SAOTA – Stefan Antoni Olmesdahl
 Truen Architects 📧 saota.com;
 Craig Kaplan 📧 craigkap@gmail.com;
 Francesca Watson
 📧 franchescawatson.com



FROM TOP RIGHT The artwork – part of a triptych by Renée Holleman; the generous master suite is an open-plan space with bi-directional views of the ocean and Lion's Head OPPOSITE PAGE The bold structure of the home features graphic façade layouts with glazed voids and planar walls that open up



‘NARROW, STEEP SITES ARE OFTEN COMPROMISED, BUT WITH A SEAMLESS CONNECTION OF INDOORS AND OUT, THE HEART OF THE HOUSE WAS EXTENDED FROM BOUNDARY TO BOUNDARY’