



## RAW EXPOSURE

Bold design, simple materials and its striking Highveld surrounds are incorporated into this future classic

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Opposite A koi pond extends as a visual slice separating sleeping and living areas. This page Inside and outside living merge in a furnished pavilion with blinds for enclosure.



This page Artwork provides the backdrop in this open-plan space, which is accentuated by an exposed roof structure. Opposite, top left Viewed across the pool, Highveld colours highlight a building whose volumes reflect a contemporary lifestyle. Top right Living spaces provide a gallery for the owner's collection of art. Bottom left Earthy tones and textures are typical of this home. Bottom right The huge glass door disappears to invite the garden into the living areas. The seamless flow of space is defined by colour and texture.

Left The architects designed a space especially for this cabinet, providing a focus for the seating area.  
 Below left A subtle choice of finishes is reflected in this bathroom.  
 Opposite Cooking is taken quite seriously, with the island taking pride of place in the kitchen.  
 Movement through the space culminates with views to the outside.

**When the owners** of this refreshingly simple and confident Kyalami house on a beautiful Highveld site briefed Philip Watermeyer + Mason architects, they knew exactly what kind of home they wanted. The design is a brave interpretation of contemporary South African architecture: industrial materials have been combined with an awareness of an African sensibility and there are no facile gestures to "bush Africa".

The owner wanted his home to reflect a sense of passing time, so rooms on all three levels of the house maximise the movement of the sun during the day. And when darkness falls, the passage-of-time motif is reflected in the carefully positioned lighting – the work of Paul Pamboukian – which also accentuates the limited palette of materials including bricks (used on the floor), timber, tile, stone and concrete. Feng shui consultant Janet Young interpreted the flow of the space according to ancient Chinese principles.

Family and friends dine, lounge and chat until the early hours in the main open-plan living space, which incorporates the kitchen where everyone gets involved in preparing lunch. Huge floor-to-ceiling sliding doors lead onto an outside pavilion, linking the laid-back living area to the pool and surrounding hills.

All fittings and finishes have been designed by the architects instead of being farmed out to individual specialists, weaving a consistent yet fresh handwriting through the house. Colours are muted and detailing is understated but effective. The choice of materials is linked by this common thread, although the materials themselves change. Brick is used on the floor in some rooms and reinterpreted in others. Warmer timber is used in the bedrooms, and the tiles in the bathrooms are of earthy colours. Even the furniture expresses the essence of Africa without being clichéd and overdone.

With a view of the city, the home is surrounded by bush. Indigenous plantings of oaks, eucalyps and karees were retained, allowing the house to blend in with its surrounding landscape. The simple garden lies close to the house, with a small area of cultivated lawn separated from the rest of the greenery by the clever use of height – very much along the lines of a *ha-ha* (a landscaping device). 'The house sits in the bush, but is not part of it,' observes the owner.

The architecture is refreshing in its simplicity, minimalist detailing and clarity of planning. The result is a bold, comfortable home sympathetic to its environment and the modern lifestyle of its owners. □

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