

GARDEN & HOME

LE GRAND JARDIN

The Winelands gem you need to experience

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Enchantment & WONDER

The old-world charm of this countryside villa captivated our wonderland hearts

BY YASHNA BALWANTH



'Le Grand Jardin' which is a mix of the French and English language, meaning 'the grand garden', can only begin to describe the feast our eyes rest upon that this classic manor encapsulates. From the natural surroundings to the rich history of its development, Le Grand Jardin can be seen as the villa of wonder, fun and pure opulence.



Beautiful Historic Beginnings

When history is involved, a place and home become that much more magical, very enchanting and oh-so-wonderful. That was most certainly the case for Le Grand Jardin which originally came about in 1934 by a student of Sir Herbert Baker. Sir Baker was a well-known architect around the world, whose presence was firmly noted in and around South Africa, with his iconic buildings such as the Union Building in Pretoria, Groote Schuur in Cape Town and other universities, prime minister residences and more. Sir Baker designs include the most classic Cape Dutch style with the influence of Neo-classic, lending itself to the period it was built in during the early 1900s.

While Sue and Bernard Fontannaz only attained this home 20-something years ago and originally as their own family home, they have done everything in their power to preserve the history of this classic wonder, keeping the original H-shape design, restoring the Burmese teak staircase and grand double door entrance hall among other small touches here and there. Architect Gerrit van der Wolf gladly accepted the opportunity to be able to work with the couple in restoring the home to its former glory and transforming the space from a family home to a home now being shared with the world containing infinite historic memory.

← **The Bar**

Be sure to grab a classic gin and tonic at the decked out leather bar.

↙ **Teak Double Doors**

Beautifully crafted French double doors lead to the dining hall.

↘ **Art Everywhere**

The home is filled with artwork around every corner. Some pieces, much older than others.

Informal Lounging ↓

A relaxing lounge to put up your feet and curl up with a good book. The striking red couch pairs well with the natural wooden balustrades and flooring.



“
There is a place like no place on earth, a land full of wonder

LEWIS CARROLL

Not all who Wander are Lost

While Gerrit was the architect on board for this restoration task at hand, the interior design was described as an organic process by Sue and her mum. ‘We collected antiques from all over including a trip to Argentina. My mum collected antiques so I guess I have always had a love for the history and stories of pieces. We’ve tried to include a collection of South African craft to celebrate the heart of the community, including African Sketchbook bespoke wallpaper in the main bedroom suite.’

With the classic mix of old and new alongside history and fantasy, the home is able to balance

↑ **Being Bold**

The stark contrast of colour in this room, from the light blue walls, to the olive green, yellow and pink seating work well to provide balance, bringing just enough colour to not take the room overboard.





TOP TIP
Themes can easily turn into a kitsch scene real quick if you aren't careful. Rather draw inspiration from them than copying a look exactly as is. With Alice In Wonderland, small nuances lend themselves to the theme without creating replicas of the movie.

Top Left
A great dane sculpture is found in one of the bedrooms.

Top Right
The standalone copper bathtub exudes luxury with its perfect view onto the back garden.

Bottom
The bedrooms are all individually styled with their own unique wallpaper and fittings.



this out perfectly. The entrance hall walls are covered in De Gurney wallpaper and invite you in with its colour and design. The entrance offers but a mere snippet of what awaits within the rooms and common areas of the house. The use of local wallpaper designers, from Cara Saven Wall Design to Thibaut and African Sketchbook is a true ode to capturing the South African essence. When asked about the colours and what makes this home so different and unique, Sue mentions, 'Colour lifts the soul and we didn't want yet another beige elegant guest house.'

The inspiration was to create a sense of wonder in each room so that there is always something to make you smile. From the whimsical music boxes, we found in the local gallery to the vervet monkeys on the wallpaper. We also see a lot of The Alice in Wonderland inspiration, with little quotes imprinted on the bar stools, the intricate beaded Cheshire Cat found in the garden and an original vintage carousel to make your heart skip a beat. It's these little sentiments that add to the home, making adults feel like kids, and kids roam free.

Through the Looking Glass
An idyllic wedding venue, the glasshouse is a showstopper of note. Also designed by Gerrit van Der Wolf, the looking glasshouse was added so the family could spend the autumn days still enjoying the best of the African evenings with the crickets chirping as the sunsets. While this was its initial use, the glasshouse is a perfect venue to celebrate small occasions and bring the art of nature inside. The old oak tree grows through the glasshouse and connects the outdoors within in an alluring way.

In Full Bloom
Truly a magical place of wonder, the garden was the inspiration for the Manor interiors. The property itself is surrounded by old magnolia trees and hundred year old oaks planted back in the 1930s with their resident squirrels to the walkway all the way to the secret dam at the bottom of the garden where you can swim wild in the eco-pool in the summer evenings. Around the dam, the cape willow trees add another sense of calmness and retreat. This property really is all about the outdoors,



← **Showman's Caravan**
Get lost in the world of wonder with a magic caravan just waiting to be explored.

← **A Carousel**
This authentic 1930s Parisian carousel was restored to its former glory and setup in the back garden of the villa.

The Glass House ↓
An ideal location for small celebrations and intimate weddings, the glasshouse is a big focal point at the villa.





as the flowers and greenery run wild and free. Sue mentions big magnolias that have giant blooms spilling about on the property, 500 or so rose bushes all along the fence and fruit trees that bear figs, plums and more.

Although it isn't just about the nature that surrounds this home. The feelings of family warmth, seclusion and escape from reality are feelings we all desire when the world becomes a bit too much to handle. The garden is a lavish and full outdoor experience that could bring a smile to anyone's face.

Spreading some Floral Love

While the property in itself is beautiful and lush, there is always talks and projects to expand the facilities at the manor. Sue mentions a floral chapel planned for this year ahead next to the dam to celebrate their 25 years of marriage. They want other couples to enjoy this intimate space and capture all the memories. 'We've already found the beautiful stained glass window and brass bell. The rest of the structure will reflect the glasshouse in design and be covered with Jasmine and wisteria so that brides don't have to pay a fortune for flowers that just get thrown away.'

www.perfecthideaways/accommodation/le-jardin/

↑ **Manicured Gardens**

The green backyard and expansive gardens are meticulously maintained at all times, looking lush and fresh all year long.

← **Happy Hydrangeas**

Gorgeous hydrangeas surround the pool pavilion, providing ample colour in the spring time season.