

HOUSE AND LEISURE

THE PLEASURE OF LIVING HERE NOW

**TRENDSETTING HOMES
THAT DEFINE A NEW
SOUTH AFRICAN STYLE**

**ON THE COVER
BOLD CONCEPTUAL
MEETS EASY LIVING
IN CONTEMPORARY**

**5 ROOM MAKEOVERS
TO FLIP YOUR THINKING**

#TrendsIssue

**HL'S HOT 2015 FORECAST TOAST ROBOTS TRAIN JOURNEYS
WOOD JUNGLE STYLE MINDFULNESS GRASS DENIM AND MORE...**

HOUSEANDLEISURE.CO.ZA
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2015
R35,00 (INCL. VAT) Namibia
R535,00 Other countries R30,70





southern comfort

IMAGINE A FARMHOUSE BY THE SEA... THIS IS WHAT INIMITABLE HOMEMAKER VÉRONIQUE SUSMAN AND LONG-TIME COLLABORATOR CRAIG KAPLAN HAVE CREATED IN ONE OF PLETT'S MOST COVETABLE LOCATIONS

TEXT JULIA FREEMANTLE
PRODUCTION DEAN VAN ASWEGEN
PHOTOGRAPHS GREG COX

T

he property mandate that position is all-important may be hackneyed, but it's not without major merit. Véronique Susman's Plettenberg Bay house in a landlocked suburb in another city, while definitely pretty, would not be nearly as desirable. Nor quite as romantic. The property, peering over Lookout Beach in one of Plett's older areas (which Véronique prefers), has a position that no estate agent could possibly find fault with. Tucked away, but also outward looking, it has all the privacy and views you could dream of in a holiday home.

Essentially one long barn, the house was taken back to an earlier incarnation by Véronique and designer Craig Kaplan, who restored features to the space that would



have been seen in an older house. 'We work very well together. Craig understands my need for quirkiness. There wasn't one wall we left untouched,' elaborates Véronique. Wooden floors replaced the cement, and details such as shutters and railings were brought in to give it a nostalgic, plantation-home feel. 'It had some elements of the Caribbean, so we went with it,' says Véronique. From some angles Bohemian, from others Bahamian, it is the antithesis of conformity. 'It is a total hybrid,' she says. 'A mix of a farmhouse and a beach house. It's completely mad, but I like mad.' Her signature look, if it could be called that, is a self-confessed combination of quirky and layered, an incongruent mix of

pieces and provenances that somehow end up looking harmonious together – a testament to Véronique's skill. The bulk of the decor, which hails from all over the world, came from France and Argentina, although the first thing Véronique bought for the house was a pair of old English post-office doors. Other architectural details serve as decor accents, such as a pair of grey-painted half-moon shutters. ▶

Owner Véronique Susman's love of contemporary art is evident in the variety you'll find in her home OPPOSITE PAGE 'The long room', as the family refers to this large open-plan living space, is a multipurpose area



They're mismatched and each one hangs above a contemporary artwork – a very Véronique touch.

This no-rules and all-styles-welcome approach was not without at least one requirement, however, and that was that the home had to be comfortable. With endless places to lie, sit, sleep, there can be no doubt that this house makes an art of downtime. 'It's deeply comfortable,' confirms Véronique. 'Even the barstools are upholstered.' Everything is geared towards leisure – from loose covers on sofas that allow for dogs and children to really relax, to the numerous verandahs (the children have their own to entertain their friends on). It was so important to Véronique that her children enjoyed hanging out at the house that she added a whole wing for them onto the existing ▶



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Véronique is devoted to an unfussy and laid-back way of living; even the contemporary pieces are injected with personality, here by way of mismatched graphic fabrics; a mosaic splashback in the kitchen shows Véronique's affinity for quirky decor

OPPOSITE PAGE Antiques and collectables play a major role in Véronique's aesthetic and eclecticism is key to the look



A whole section was added to the house for Véronique's teenagers and their friends. The panelling and railings were left raw in order to weather with time

OPPOSITE PAGE
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP
The sea-facing infinity pool; the house has a sweeping view of Lookout Beach; the children's verandah, with its porthole windows, blue-and-white fabrics and wicker, is one area where Véronique has acknowledged the home's beach location



'It's a TOTAL HYBRID. A mix of a farmhouse and a beach house. It's completely mad, but I LIKE MAD' Véronique Susman





Art 101

Véronique has a penchant for contemporary art. Here are four of her favourite artists

'I love Michael Taylor for his playful depiction of figures and John Murray (both Whatiftheworld/Gallery) does portraits and abstracts in such a beautiful muted palette. Sanell Aggenbach has a whimsical, dreamy and delicate style and Tom Cullberg (both Brundyn+) is amazing for the way he layers and makes your eye zoom in on detail.'



barn-shaped structure to form an L-shape that opens onto the pool area. 'I would rather have my children and their friends spend time at my house, so I interviewed all of them and asked them what their ideal space would look like,' she says. And that's what she created.

Most of the living, however, happens in the main open-plan area, which is a combined living, dining and sitting space that the family refers to as 'the long room'. The bedrooms – six of them (the house sleeps 10 altogether) – all lead off from here. 'Over time, from designing different homes, I've learnt that this is the ideal number of rooms for a holiday home,' Véronique says.

While much time is spent together, it would not be a true retreat if there weren't a few opportunities for solitude. 'You

can disappear here,' confirms Véronique. 'There are little spots all over to go to when you need some peace and quiet.' Such as the covered corner verandah or a chaise facing the sea on the upper deck.

From here a staircase, another feature that Véronique and Craig added, leads down to the pool. This is the real showstopper, from a summer-home point of view. Designed as a U-shape and set into the lawn that faces the ocean, the pool laps over the edge. 'That was all Craig. He's so good at seeing things with a bird's-eye view. I often ask him for the impossible and somehow he manages to do it,' Véronique explains. Down to the finest detail it would seem – outdoor showers complete the summer-comfort checklist in a home that really is a prime piece of holiday heaven.

■ Craig Kaplan & craigkap@gmail.com



The flowers above the antique bed were hand-pressed by English nuns in the late 1800s

OPPOSITE PAGE
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP
LEFT Véronique and Craig Kaplan designed the house with numerous spaces to lie and relax; you'll even find artwork in the bathroom; a curtain divides the bathroom from the bedroom in the master suite