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COUNTRY CHIC



AT THE FOOT OF THE CONSTANTIA HILLS SITS A LIGHT-FILLED FAMILY HOME. FOLLOW US AS WE STEP THROUGH THE DOORS OF THIS CONTEMPORARY CAPE FARM

Words Erin Starr Photography David Ross



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aking your way down the driveway towards Magpie Farm is an experience in itself.

Springboks graze in the neighbouring paddock, the Tokai mountains stand proud against the blue of the sky, the afternoon is filled with birdsong, and the sweet smell of lavender scents the air. But beyond the courtyard's elaborate wrought-iron gates, the encompassing beauty seemingly pales against the expanse and luminous magic of this contemporary, farm-inspired home.

FOUND TREASURE

When Dianne De Ridder first stepped on to the one-hectare property in the early summer months of 2009, she knew this was where she and her family would live. Dianne and her husband Clive envisioned a home that seamlessly married the old and new, paying homage to the nostalgia of the historic surrounds while embracing a contemporary sense of luxury. By 2013, following a couple of years of extensive planning, collaboration, construction, compromise and creativity, Magpie Farm came to be.

The result of all the bricks and blueprints is nothing short of spectacular. The home shines with its own modern, understated glamour, all set in a traditional structure inspired by the farmhouses that once sat at the foot of the Constantia Valley. Magpie Farm's interior design makes special use of the property's expanse. The open-plan entrance hall, living rooms, voluminous bedrooms, large en-suite bathrooms and double-volume ceilings all perfectly lend themselves to an atmosphere of fluidity and spaciousness, of breath and light.

KITCHEN PARTICULAR

Dianne was particularly single-minded in her approach to the design of what she maintains is the very heart of every family

▽ LIGHT LIVING

The kitchen's floating island and open-plan design make for easy family gatherings.

▽ AL FRESCO EATS

The outdoor dining space is ideal for lazy Sunday lunches or an evening drink in the fading light.



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Details on page 65



▲ VISTA SPECTACULAR

Take in awe-inspiring views of the surrounding mountains from the pool and garden.

► GREEN GRACES

Succulents and indigenous potted plants make for interesting features on the outdoor dining table.

home: the kitchen. 'We have always had kitchen spaces that were more classic in style. I wanted something different to my previous homes; something traditional, with a unique, modern twist,' says Dianne.

The kitchen area, just off the hallway, and one of the home's lounges, open up on to the terrace and braai area, ideal for entertaining. The adjoining glass doors conveniently fold back upon themselves, inviting the light from the garden into the room. The central island, complete with warm overhead lighting and custom-made bar stools, has been crafted for intimate



DECOR



◀ **TEXTURE HAVEN**

The home's interior is filled with beautiful varied textiles and textures.

▼ **OPEN SPACES**

An Indian teak horse sculpture takes centre stage in the entrance hall, which epitomises eclectic chic.



DECOR

▶ MIRROR MIRROR

A large vintage mirror in the master bathroom is one of many wooden features in the home.

▶ SLEEP SWEET

The guest bedroom is a collection of pale hues, rich fabrics, glass and wooden accents.

▼ GLASS ACT

Clean glass fittings pair beautifully with the largely white colour palette and clean design of the master bathroom.



family living; lazy lunches, languid dinners and breakfasts paired with hot coffee and conversation. The crockery, appliances and cabinetry all fully complement Dianne's sleek, all-white kitchen aesthetic. The clean palette may have made for a cold and stark tone, but the space is imbued with a palpable abundance of character and warmth. The rich timber floors, rustic wooden accents and distinctive vintage touches all manage to come together to offer the whole room an inviting sense of comfort for those who spend time here; this is a kitchen that clearly announces it's meant to be used, lived in and loved.

WOODEN WONDERS

The most undeniably spectacular feature of Magpie Farm is the wooden accents found throughout the space. The home's doors, windows and occasional decorative elements have each been individually sourced from faraway countries. 'I wanted to do something really interesting with our fittings. I was looking for pieces that were remarkable in some way, that had character and history,' says Dianne. From the south-western slopes of India to the shores of Argentina, a glorious array of timber treasures have found their place in the De Ridders' home.

The entrance hall's Burmese teak doors and shutters were once part of a British colonial clubhouse, dating back to the early years of the 20th century. The intricately hand-carved wooden horse that stands in the entrance hall was crafted from a block of solid Indian teak. This piece comes with an interesting history of its own. It once was one half of a pair that flanked the entrance to a traditional *haveli*, or Indian mansion, in the south-west region of Karnataka. The home's front door comes from Argentina, and stands at a formidable height, towering at a little more than three metres. Each of these prized pieces seems to have retained



The bedroom and bathroom were meticulously designed to optimise the natural light

some of their unique exotic flavour, giving the otherwise contemporary design a spice of the extraordinary.

MASTER CRAFT

The master bedroom is another one of Dianne's favourite spaces in the house. She wanted a sanctuary more than just a place to sleep. The bedroom and bathroom were meticulously designed to optimise the natural light and allow for a particular stillness. Largely white interiors are filled with a variety of rich textiles, from faux-fur throws and lightweight linens to shaggy rugs. A study in contemporary design and clean lines, the en-suite bathroom boasts immaculate glass fittings and stark white concrete underfoot. These are carefully balanced by the occasional touch of wooden, vintage-inspired warmth. The space is exactly as Dianne had imagined it to be; a welcome haven of calm in an otherwise full and fervid familial life.

Magpie Farm, with all its design prowess, decorative charm and square footage, is, above all else, a well-loved family home.

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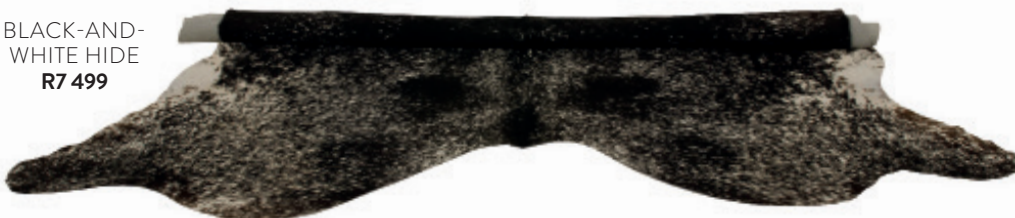


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