

# W 11 • ALBUM Wedding

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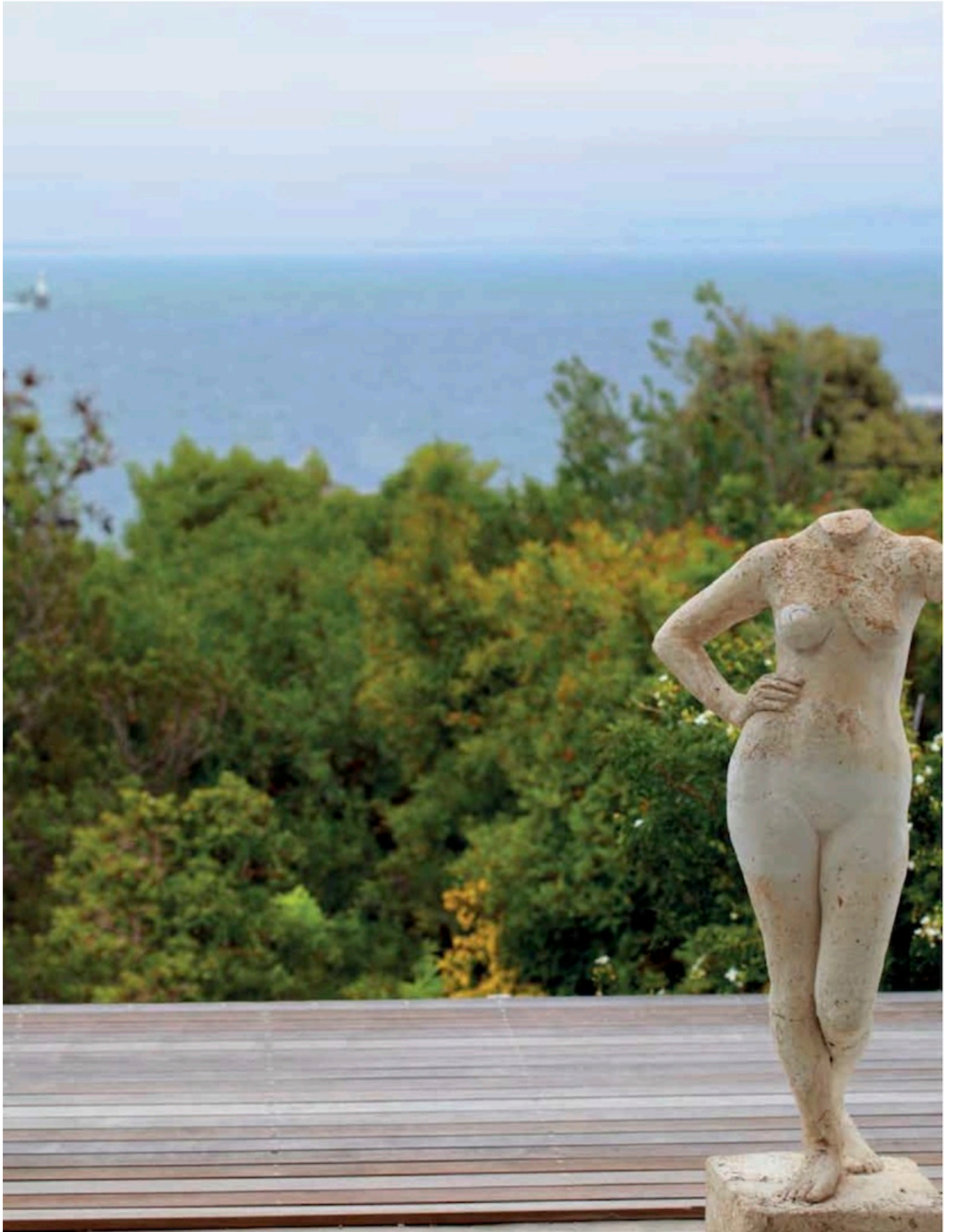
SIMON'S TOWN

# Our House

FORGET THE SUITE, A HOME WITH FRILLS IS ON OFFER

Words Emma Wright









*Home, like love, is a small word for a world of meaning. There's a mysterious internal signal for both in all of us. Hotels are very good for loving but they rarely (unless you're Eloise) bring us home. Perhaps that's why the idea of a love nest is a thing apart, a place that feels like home made extra special. Whalesong, a beautiful cottage in Simon's Town, is such a place.*

All those good 'hotel spoil' things – a master suite with lovely garden and sea views (and double basins), special details like the vintage Champagne glasses and docking station, beautifully resolved spaces with not a bit of tired clutter about – are all held in the stuff of home. History, herbs in the garden, a great kitchen, old books, more than one room to mess about in, the sight of happy locals in their bathrobes walking down to the beach for an afternoon swim ... and no other guests. It's a funny thing but the nest feeling here may also have something to do with fabrics and cushion inners – each one in this house feels like an embrace, which for tactile creatures is deeply relaxing and very welcoming.

The home was once the studio of the local artist Gerhard Hulme, which accounts for the superb library (including the delightfully illustrated *The Lover's Weekend Book* and a selection of erotica), the fine art, indigenous garden and a mood that is part contemplative and part celebratory. The home's sensitive revamp somehow maintains the echo of Bohemian parties, playful banter and hours in front of the easel, but feels entirely fresh, even a little glamorous.

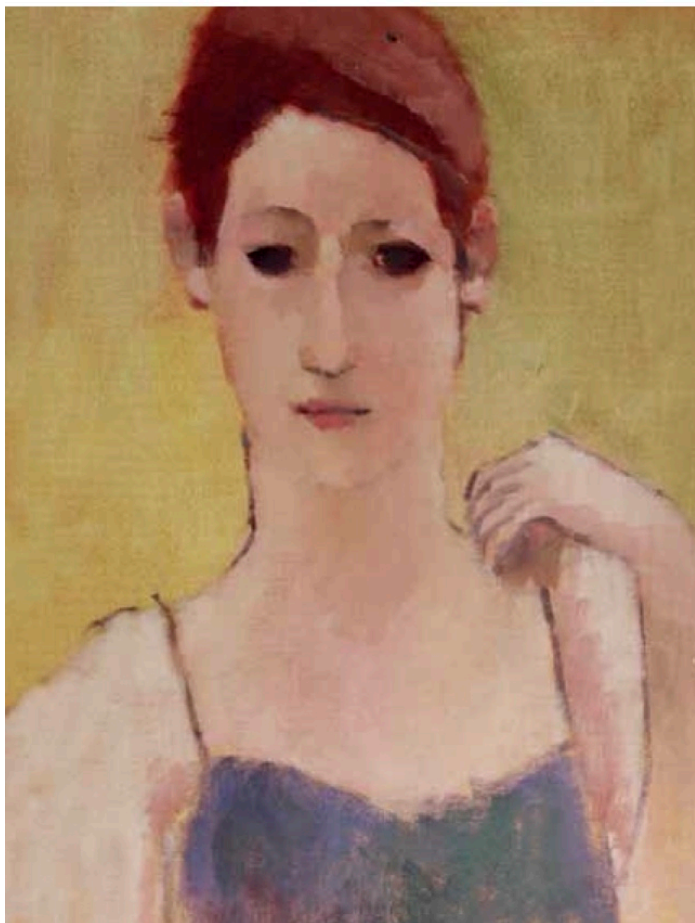
*History, herbs in the garden, a great kitchen, old books and more than one room to mess about in*

Then, of course, there's the bay. There are beautiful views out over the ocean, which along with the mountains at its edge, will form a soothing backdrop to your days. Simply lingering on the veranda, watching the sea until the stars appear and a cuddle is called for, is one of the best things about being here.

There's a private beach just 200m from the garden gate and the water is warm and calm enough for laps and is often deserted too (apart from the schools of silvery fish that dart around just beneath the surface). The famous and penguin-populated Boulders Beach is a short walk away and is relatively quiet during the week. The garden is also a joy – a pretty slice of the floral kingdom beyond that adds a soft layer to the view and attracts butterflies and sunbirds as well as a little penguin that honks at dawn and appears at intervals throughout the day.

Being ensconced here is so satisfying that the quaint town may not lure you, but should you wish to wander down to it, there are plenty of museums, some cute coffee shops and good seafood joints on offer down at the harbour. There are many lovely Victorian buildings, making the town's winding lanes good for a picturesque stroll. Despite Simon's Town's proximity to Cape Town, it feels remote. There's a mood of consistency gained through well-loved habits, old-world grace and the pace to go with it. You are bound to spot a naval officer or two (the South African navy is stationed here), a reminder of the town's fascinating seafaring heritage and as romantic a sight as ever.

This means that whatever forays you make, you will not be forced out of the intimate mood back home. But you are bound to feel it pulling you back into its heady, homely heart – a very good place to be. ♥





## Romantic things to do

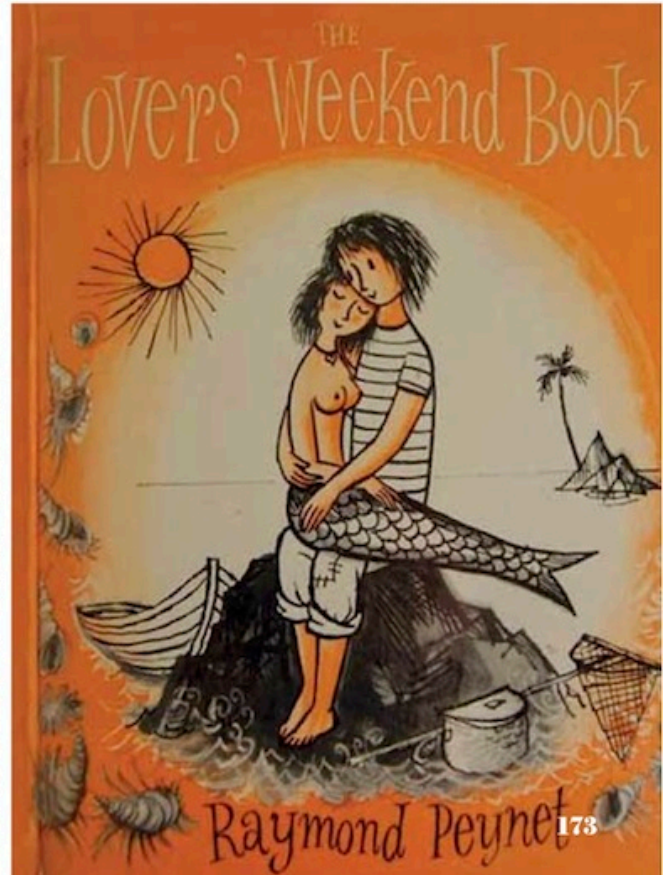
- ♥ Take an early morning dip and run home for a rinse in the outdoor shower or try the glass-walled shower overlooking the garden in the main bedroom.
- ♥ Find Hitchcock's *Notorious* in the movie collection and guess who done it.
- ♥ Take your watercolors along; the art collection will inspire you.
- ♥ Load your iPod with Ella Fitzgerald's greatest, use the docking station and light all the candles.
- ♥ Watch the bay, vintage Champagne glass in hand, in a kaftan (her) and a suntan (him).
- ♥ Look for a memento at one of the antique shops in town.
- ♥ Pick up some fish and chips from the Salty Sea Dog and have lunch on the veranda.
- ♥ Pack Bill Granger's latest cookbook, forage for ingredients and cook together.
- ♥ Light the fire and slow-dance barefoot in the lounge.
- ♥ Breakfast in bed – dash to Olympia Cafe in Kalk Bay in the early morning, bring back pastries and put the espresso machine to work.
- ♥ Bunker down in the library and read *The Lovers' Weekend Book* to each other.
- ♥ Take a drive to Cape Point and hike around the reserve.

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A fireplace, the softest cushions, luxurious throws and a carpet underfoot make this lounge a delight to come home to; the house is built around this spectacular view; the quaint Simon's Town harbour; all the art in the home is by the former owner Gerhard Hulme; the library is a vintage book lover's dream

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Homeware is carefully considered and adds to the bespoke feel; a rare find from the library that is sure to warm your hearts; Simon's Town's lanes and doorways are endlessly intriguing





## SIMON'S TOWN

### *Getting there*

Simon's Town is approximately 40 minutes from central Cape Town. Take the M3 towards Muizenberg, turn left on to Steenberg Road and then right on to Main Road, a coastal drive passing Kalk Bay and Fish Hoek and eventually joining up with Simon's Town Road.

### *When to go*

Spring/summer (September to March) has sultry days and warm seas while autumn/winter (April to August) can be stormy and mysterious, but will have a lovely day or two.

### *Stay*

Whalesong is available exclusively through Perfect Hideaways.  
+27 (0)21 790 0972  
[www.perfecthideaways.co.za](http://www.perfecthideaways.co.za)

clockwise from right

The indigenous garden adds to the beautiful view and attracts sunbirds and a visiting penguin; the entrance leads through a Mediterranean-style courtyard that signals holiday; a padded headboard, choice linen, great pillows and a view over the bay encourages lingering in bed

