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# TREND ALERT

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HL'S DEFINITIVE FORECAST FOR WHAT WILL BE SMOKING HOT IN 2016



# COOL COLLECTIVE

FOR A NEW KIND OF FAMILY HOLIDAY HOUSE THINK CONTEMPORARY KRAAL - AS SEEN IN THIS CLUSTER OF CONNECTED PODS ON A FRANSCHHOEK ECO ESTATE

TEXT CATRIONA ROSS STYLING MIA VICENT PHOTOGRAPHS MICKY HOYLE





Outside Rod Priestley's unit a hanging chair from Weylandts ([weylandts.co.za](http://weylandts.co.za)) and sun loungers covered in outdoor fabric by Mavromac ([mavromac.co.za](http://mavromac.co.za)) promote laid-back hours with family and friends. The head sculpture is by Vondom from Core Furniture Concepts. OPPOSITE, FROM LEFT A portrait by Luhanni Bekker from Holden Manz ([holdenmanz.com](http://holdenmanz.com)) hangs in a space with pendant lights from Eagle Lighting ([eaglelighting.co.za](http://eaglelighting.co.za)), a chair from Core Furniture Concepts and a table from Ebony ([ebonydesign.co.za](http://ebonydesign.co.za)); the patio features a 16-seat table commissioned by Decorating Solutions ([decoratingsolutions.co.za](http://decoratingsolutions.co.za)) with chairs from Core Furniture Concepts. The installation of metal baskets on the wall is from Weylandts and the pendant light in the bar and braai area is from Eagle Lighting.



# NINE YEARS AGO A LUNCH AT HAUTE CABRIERE IN FRANSCHHOEK ENDED MEMORABLY FOR A HOLIDAYING FAMILY FROM ENGLAND.

Derek Priestley, his son Roderick and younger daughter Joanne spotted a 'plot for sale' sign on the road; piqued, they turned into eco estate Fransche Hoek for a look. The family members, some of whom work in property, ended up buying 'an absolute cracker of a plot', as project manager Pete Jordan of Property Development Projects puts it. Surrounded by mountains, fynbos and vineyards, their acre is set above a dam with a goose-bump-inducing view down the green sweep of the valley – a dream location for three generations to connect as a family after a busy year in Europe.

Caribbean hotel Amanara – where they'd stayed in linked pods with a central hub – inspired the home's design, a collaboration between Stefan Antoni Olmesdahl Truen Architects (SAOTA) and Richard Townsend of Townsend & Associates Architects (TAARCH). 'It talks about people having their own individuality and space,' says Pete, 'but the whole house is built around the concept of living and being together.'

In December 2013, after two years of work, their home – a thoroughly modern take on the kraal concept styled in the contemporary Cape vernacular – was ready. The H-shaped structure comprises five units linked to a central living area and patio with glassed in walkways that hold a collection of local art. There is also a self-contained flat for seclusion seeking visitors.

Each pod has a primary and secondary bedroom with en suite bathrooms, plus day beds for guests. The main entrance leads to





ABOVE White fittings from Eagle Lighting, cabinetry custom-made by Joos (joos.co.za) and ceramic tiles from Italcotto (italcotto.co.za) turn a kitchen into a functional artwork. OPPOSITE The social hub of the house centres around the family's favourite piece, the Root coffee table from Weylandts. The bespoke rug beneath it is from Gonsenhauers Fine Rugs (finerugs.co.za) and the artwork atop the fireplace, from Ebony, is by Richard Smith. The sofa is from Weylandts, the chairs were commissioned by Decorating Solutions and the white light shades and standing lamp are from Eagle Lighting. The fabric on the chairs and sofa is from Hertex (hertex.co.za), the scatter cushion fabric is from Mavromac, and the curtains are made from organic linen gauze from St Leger & Viney (stleger.co.za) and Whatnot Natural Fabrics (011-444-2722).

into the home's heart, a 35m L-shaped living and dining zone with a fireplace, striking Weylandts Root table and 18-seat Pierre Cronje table. Outside, the range of communal spaces – pool, braai area, fireplace and three decks (oriented so that at least one is wind free at any time) – is a reason the family members seldom leave the property. 'Even in the exterior spaces you can either be together or apart,' says Pete. 'It's so big but it works so well.'

Built on cantilevered slabs of concrete, the home is indeed grand, with 1 800m<sup>2</sup> under the roof and a 2 500m<sup>2</sup> area including the covered patio space. To maximise its connection with the outdoors Richard incorporated glass doors that fold into walkway wall spaces and, in the bathrooms, American shutters that slide back to allow for long baths spent gazing at the mountains.

Each pod is tailored to its occupants: Derek has a study; his elder daughter's sons have a TV room. For Audrey Jordan of Decorating Solutions the task was to accommodate four different personalities. Although a common neutral colour scheme flows throughout, the family members introduced 'different handwriting' to their pods with mosaics, art, cushions, bed linen, lamps and other accessories. The surroundings provided visual inspiration, from the silhouettes of proteas to the colours of fynbos, clay bricks and rocks.

Functionally the home takes a bow to green living. 'The family, Rod in particular, asked us to look for opportunities to make the house ecofriendly wherever possible,' says Pete. LED lights are used throughout, an extensive dual insulation system was installed in the ceiling voids and water is heated by eight solar geysers. Instead of concrete retention walls behind the house, 120m of gabion wall – local stones packed into mesh baskets – were built. The garden, fynbos with indigenous cynodon lawn, requires no watering.

Holidays here are spent swimming, reading on the deck, taking walks and bike rides into the mountains and having friends over for leisurely lunches. From every point there's a view to write home about, especially when the mountains are painted evening lilac and the outside lights flicker on, framing the house in the dusk. It's a family's African dream come to life. □ **Property Development Projects**, [propertydevelopmentprojects.com](http://propertydevelopmentprojects.com); **SAOTA**, [saota.com](http://saota.com); **TAARCH**, [taarch.com](http://taarch.com); **Decorating Solutions – Audrey Jordan**, [decoratingsolutions.co.za](http://decoratingsolutions.co.za); **Cape Contours Landscape Solutions**, [capecontours.co.za](http://capecontours.co.za)





### ROD PRIESTLEY'S HOME TRUTHS

**My favourite spot in our holiday house** is the area around the braai for its sheer sociability. We've enjoyed lots of special times sitting around there with a glass of wine. **If I could start a trend** it would be for the music of Natalie Merchant. **An interiors trend I love** is concrete. One past trend I'm glad to see the back of is avocado bathrooms. **The next big food craze will be** Peruvian tapas. **The best part of a South African lifestyle** is cooking outside on the braai with lots of local wine. **My favourite way to enjoy the great outdoors** is hiking or biking. **The buildings that inspire me** are the Canada Water Library in London by CZWG and the Sliding House in Suffolk by dRMM. **My most treasured item in this home** is the coffee table in the main room. **My style icon** is my mother. **My most useful gadget** is my iPhone. **The most rash purchase I ever made** was a suit of armour from the Loire Valley on a driving holiday. It was tricky getting it home. **The most inspiring place I've been to** is the west coast of one of the Balearic Islands. **My favourite local dining spot** is Babylonstoren.

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The bathrooms celebrate their views with sliding doors and alcove windows. The heated towel rail is from Jeeves (jeeves.co.za). OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP The coffee table in Derek's unit was designed by Audrey Jordan of Decorating Solutions and made by Morgan Associates (morganassociates.co.za). The lamps are from Eagle Lighting, the painting above the chair is by a friend and the painting above the bed is by Gavin Collins (gavincollins.co.za); Derek's en suite bathroom features light shades from Eagle Lighting, packed stone and mosaic splashbacks by Douglas Jones (douglasjones.co.za) and a bath from Exquisite Bathrooms (exb.co.za). Glasshopper (glasshopper.co.za) did all the glazing in the house; seen here, from left, are architect Richard Townsend with decorator Audrey Jordan and project manager Pete Jordan.

