

Di Henshall's

# INSPIRED

## Kitchens

WHAT'S YOUR STYLE?

## Heavenly New Build

A CONTEMPORARY  
RESIDENCE WITH  
RETRO ROOTS

## Uluru

A TRIP TO AUSTRALIA'S  
PRICELESS GEM

## Rural Retreat

IT IS EASY BEING GREEN



# CONTENTS

## **5 Heavenly Cloudsley**

A new build design with retro roots.

## **11 Gibraltar Rocks**

Put this one on your bucket list.

## **13 Let's put a bit of Light on the Subject**

The latest in table lamps.

## **14 African Heartbeat on the River**

How furnishings can soften the edges.

## **18 Portuguese Tarts Anyone?**

Lisbon and Porto.

## **22 It's Easy being Green**

A rural residence reborn.

## **28 Uluru – Who knew?**

The experience of a lifetime.

## **34 Resene - 7 Colours for Bedroom Bliss**

Hot tips from Supreme Resene.

## **36 Kitchen Style**

What is your style?

## **42 I'd Rather Calatrava**

Santiago Calatrava, a living legend.

## **46 Retro Inspired Riverfront**

Could this be timeless?

## **52 Back to Work**

An office fit-out in coastal Queensland.

## **54 Storing is SO Boring**

One man's trash is another man's treasure.

## **55 Five More Things That Di Likes**

The list is growing.

## **56 Cape Town**

The jewel of South Africa.

## **62 Why use an Interior Designer?**

Because you need one.



Read Di's adventures in Uluru on page 28.

## About the Cover



Light floods through the huge skylight with a sweeping staircase below - a grand entrance to a retro inspired riverfront home. See page 46.

# EDITOR'S LETTER



When Covid hit the planet, I was with my good friend, Amanda Stevens, world-renowned keynote speaker, crying into our respective beverages, wringing our hands lamenting, what is going to become of us, what is going to happen next? In a flash of fuelled brilliance, Amanda announced that I should write a magazine. I laughed so hard I nearly dropped my corn chip. Urged on with Amanda's persuasive enthusiasm and her natural joie de vivre, a plan was hatched. Within a week she had come up with a name, a front cover, a loose layout and a plan of attack – this woman is good. So, that is how our first magazine drew breath two years ago and crazily we

decided to do another one last year. Renamed and reformatted (because we are now media-savvy publishers) we launched our second one. This stuff must be infectious because, lo and behold, here is the third edition.

As international travel has been severely curtailed, my overseas' adventures, described within, happened just before Covid, so some facts may have been lost in the fullness of time, but I do hope you get a kick out of some of my stories. This is dedicated to my wonderful team.

*Di Henshall,  
Design Director*

**dihenshall**  
INTERIOR DESIGN

# HEAVENLY CLOUDSLEY

*A contemporary residence replaces an old  
original cottage for new glory days.*



Di Henshall Interior Design was approached by a developer, planning to demolish a small, original cottage not far from the Noosa River. The intent was to design and build a contemporary residence to replace the old house that had long since seen its glory days.





## The brief was simple...

Design a house that would suit an older couple, or a young family, or empty nesters, or a single person with visiting family, or an executive couple, or .... Whaaaaat? In other words, design a fresh, interesting home on a small build footprint that would basically appeal to everyman and his pet!



Soft limestone-look tiles clad the chimney breast, softened with retro wallpaper flanking the fire



Scullery off the kitchen.





Di had only recently returned from another visit to Palm Springs, one of the places in the world that lights her fire, so she drew inspiration from the clean lines, the simple architecture and the use of glass, stone and brick as so frequently seen in Palm Springs. She called upon her colleague and industry associate, Brad Hunt, to help her with the design of the roof, several other key elements and the tightening of dimensions to suit the restrictions of the site.

A spa quality generous ensuite bathroom forms part of the master suite



Ultra hip kitchen



Guest Ensuite



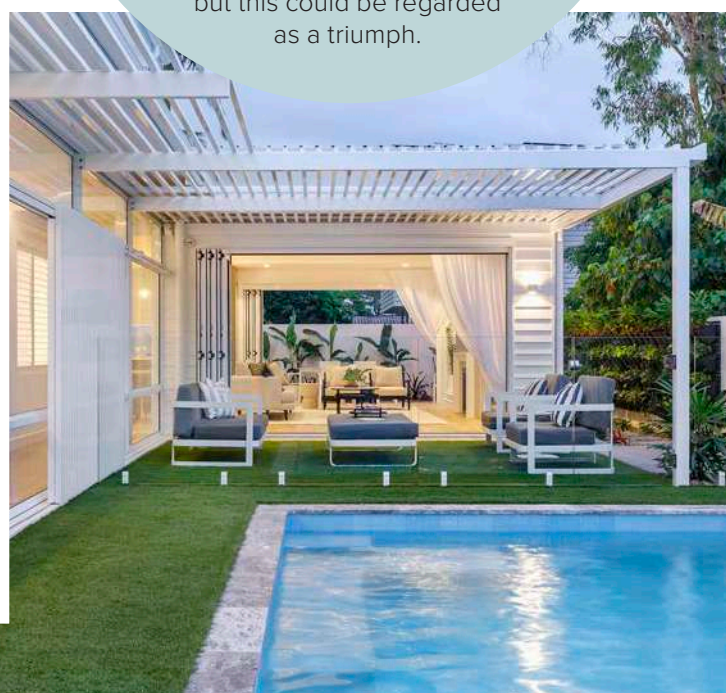
## The result

is stunning -and it did indeed appeal to a very wide and varied demographic when it was unveiled in 2021. Four bedrooms, a study, walk-in wine cellar, gas fire, sauna, pool change room and shower, a library and second study nook, a scullery off the ultra-hip kitchen, huge master bedroom suite and two separate outdoor living areas are all included. There is a playfulness that is apparent throughout the house, giving a sense of joy as well as homeliness, a hard act to pull off, but this could be regarded as a triumph.

Moveable slatted screens diffuse light into the gallery. A door with a porthole window leads to the sauna and change room.



Clever use of glass, stone and brick.



Separate outdoor living areas are on both sides of the spacious living room.

Limestone caves found inside the Rock of Gibraltar; Old Saint Michael's Cave.

# Gibraltar ROCKS

*The gateway into the Mediterranean Sea  
- that every country wants to own.*

I am sitting in a Moroccan restaurant at the top of a hill away from the crazy hubbub of the main shopping area of Gibraltar. I felt obliged to go for Moroccan, considering you can clearly see Morocco from the shore/rock of Gibraltar. Gibraltar is owned by the Brits, so there are heaps of poms here, eating fish and chips and drinking pale ale in the endless stream of Pommie cafes. Always bewildering –I guess it's the only way of extracting some Englishmen away from their remote controls – the promise of a pint and some cod in an “exotic” location. I already love Gibraltar, which is all of ten square

miles –you can literally see the entire place standing on a hill, including the (2 mile, very short) runway of the local airport. Seven flights a day arrive from the UK. Only the UK. If you want to go to Morocco (which is a spit away) you have to go back to a Spanish airport, as the only planes in and out of here are UK flights. **Other than the very short runway, the other alarming peculiarity of the airport is that the main road that takes you to the Spanish border happens to cut right across the runway. Pilots radio ahead when the plane is about ten miles out so the authorities can close the road to let the planes land and take off. How cute is that?**

The Mosque located at Europa Point and Rock of Gibraltar.

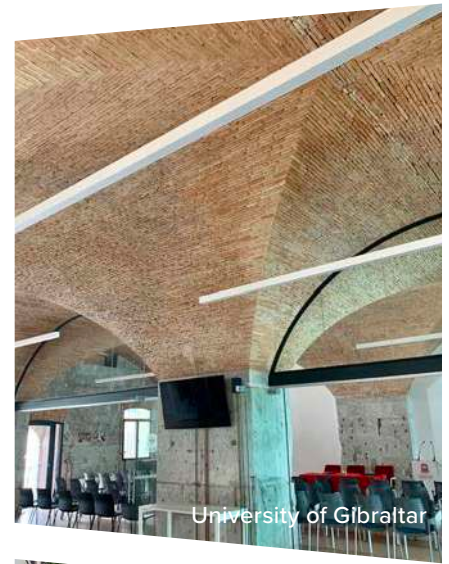




Steep city streets



Tunnel openings with cannons



University of Gibraltar



Cityscape

As Gibraltar is literally the gateway into the Mediterranean Sea every country seems to want to own it. It has been invaded several times by the Moors, the Spanish, the French, the Brits, Moroccans and possibly a few more going back to Roman times. So as you can image the place has garrisons and battlements and fortifications built over the centuries, including the most remarkable feat in the 1700s, when British soldiers, led by a vegetarian general, thank you very much, tunnelled their way through the Rock for hundreds of metres. They created an underground fortress with openings peeking

out towards the sea in all directions for their cannons to attack the French and Spanish in a siege that lasted three years. They did all of this by hammer, chisel and limited explosions. The lack of air and accidents amounted to 600 soldiers perishing

*Today, these amazing caves host rock concerts, opera and world-famous performers with up to 15,000 people in the main chamber, which tiers down to a natural stage floor.*

within six weeks of tunnelling. In 1941, Hitler threatened to invade Gibraltar with the help of Mussolini, intending Germany and Italy to take control of the whole of the Med. Thank the Lord this never happened, but Eisenhower used these manmade caves and tunnels as his headquarters, planning the invasion of Tangiers from here. The tunnels housed barracks, kitchens, dining halls and ammunition depots. Absolutely amazing. **Equally godsmacking are the St Michael's Caves, dating back 300 million years, with massive caverns of stalactites, stalagmites and even stalagnates (where the tites and mites meet over thousands of years of dripping). During the second world war the caves were used as a bomb-proof shelter and military**

**hospital. They used explosives to open up another access into the caves to give easier access to the stretchers. This space, which is truly awesome, could house up to 17,000 people, which represented the entire WWII male population of Gibraltar. The women and children had already been evacuated, ironically to London, where they stayed for up to five years, enduring the Blitz.** Today, these amazing caves host rock concerts, opera and world-famous performers with up to 15,000 people in the main chamber,

which tiers down to a natural stage floor. Even the Japanese (who have been everywhere, man) are awestruck when they see this place. **I guess I should mention the Barbary Macaques, the only wild tribe of monkeys in Europe, that are everywhere over the rock and reserve. They're cheeky things, but not as frighteningly brave as the ones in Ubud in Bali. They get pretty excited when they see us emerging out of the caves.**

During my trip to Gibraltar, I also visited the tiniest university I have ever seen, where local architects have connected two beautiful, heritage-listed military buildings (designed and built by the Royal Engineers) with a translucent beamed roof with white marble floors and stark white walls. Coupled with the beautiful clay Roman-style tile brick arches and vaulted ceilings it looks truly brilliant. From the terrace of the adjoining university restaurant, you get a clear view of the harbour, with its reclaimed land, now amid a

frenzied building programme of multi-storey blocks of flats for the locals. There is no land here for houses. Africa, just blinking away, 15 kilometres across the blue water. Gibraltar only has 33,000 people and has over 165 miles of tunnels through the rock, totally relying on tourism and of course finance, being a VAT-free zone, many Brit companies have their headquarters here. I can see why tourism is so successful here, its rich history, coupled with the incredible landscape, youthfulness, friendliness and even the monkeys make it a must-see.



Cheeky wild monkeys



# Lets put a bit *of* LIGHT on the subject



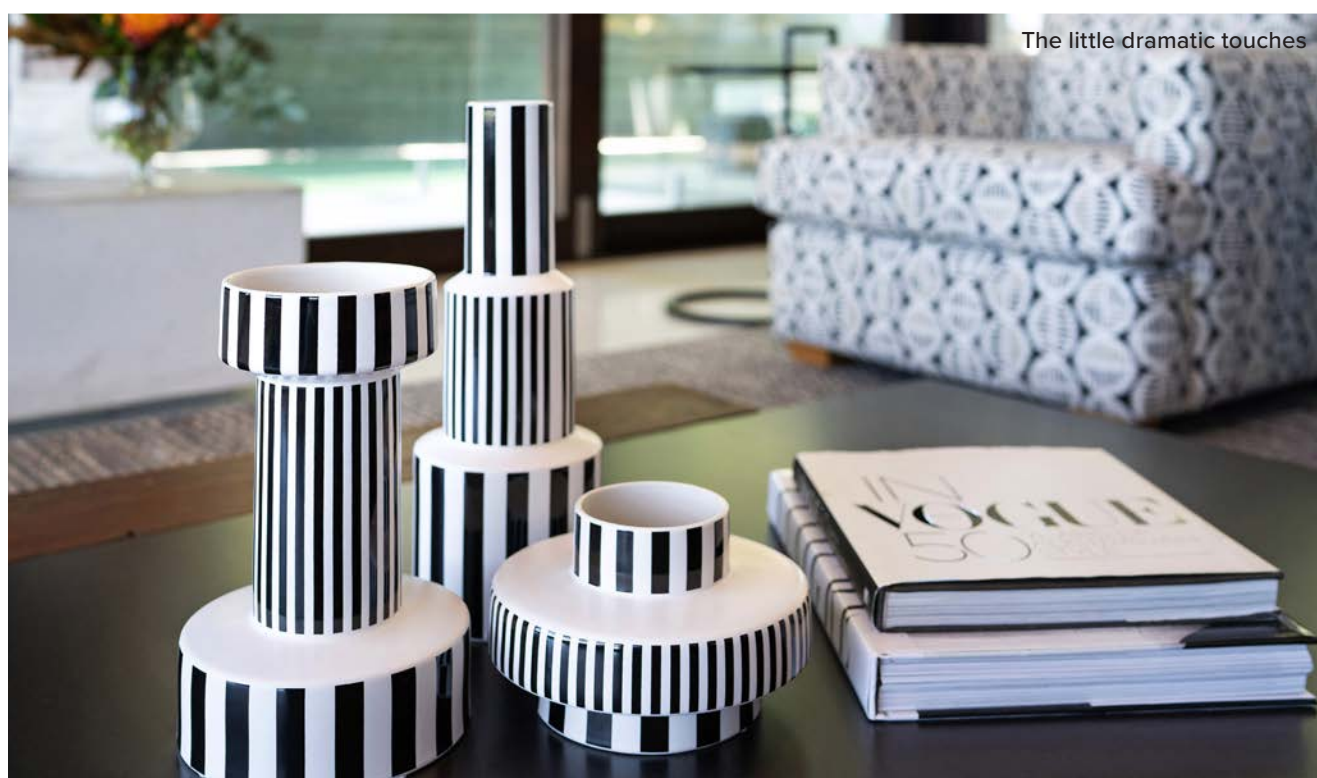
A simple table lamp can add energy, ambience, texture and drama to any room. There is a big shift towards softer, curvier, organic shapes in architecture as well as furnishings. Lamps add to the list of elements that have been given this makeover and I can see this particular trend continuing, as it has its roots way back in time. The most prevailing design movement was the Art Deco period, between the world wars, where we saw curves, angles, geometry and stylised forms. Here are some of the latest shapes that fit so many different styles of interiors, from traditional to ultra-modern. Curves are playful as well as graceful, so add a bit of curve appeal to your place.



# AFRICAN Heartbeat

*on the river*

*Rich textures,  
feature lighting and  
chunky rug softens  
the edges.*



The little dramatic touches



A quiet reading corner by the water.

Escape from the world in the master bedroom suite





A totally new guest bathroom was created.

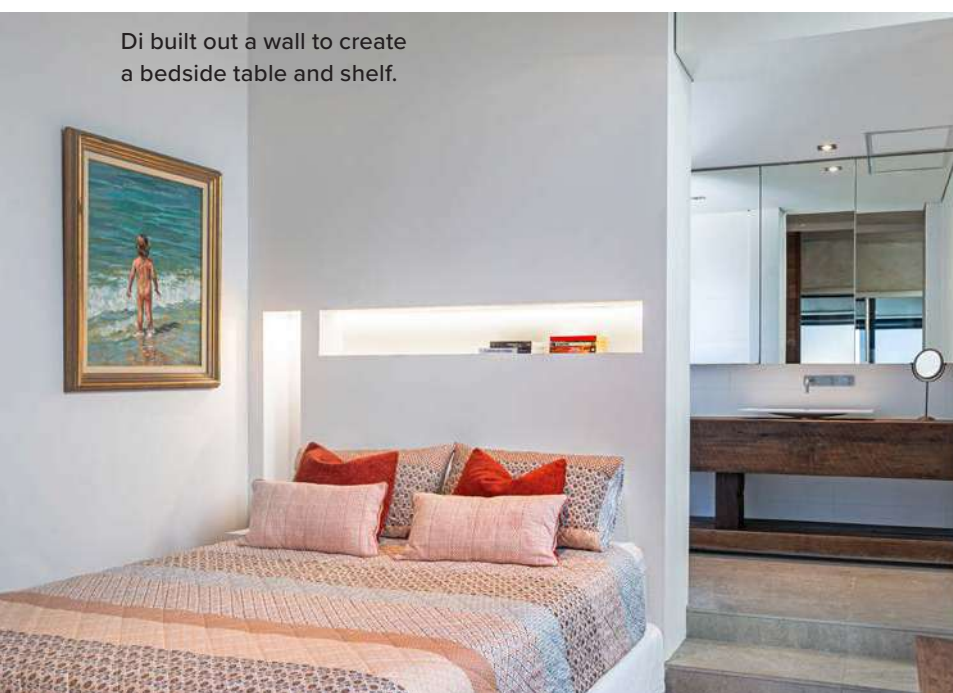


Moveable cushion pads soften a concrete ledge.

*A twenty five year old concrete, glass and steel house gets a soft makeover.*



Custom made rug in the media room.



Di built out a wall to create a bedside table and shelf.

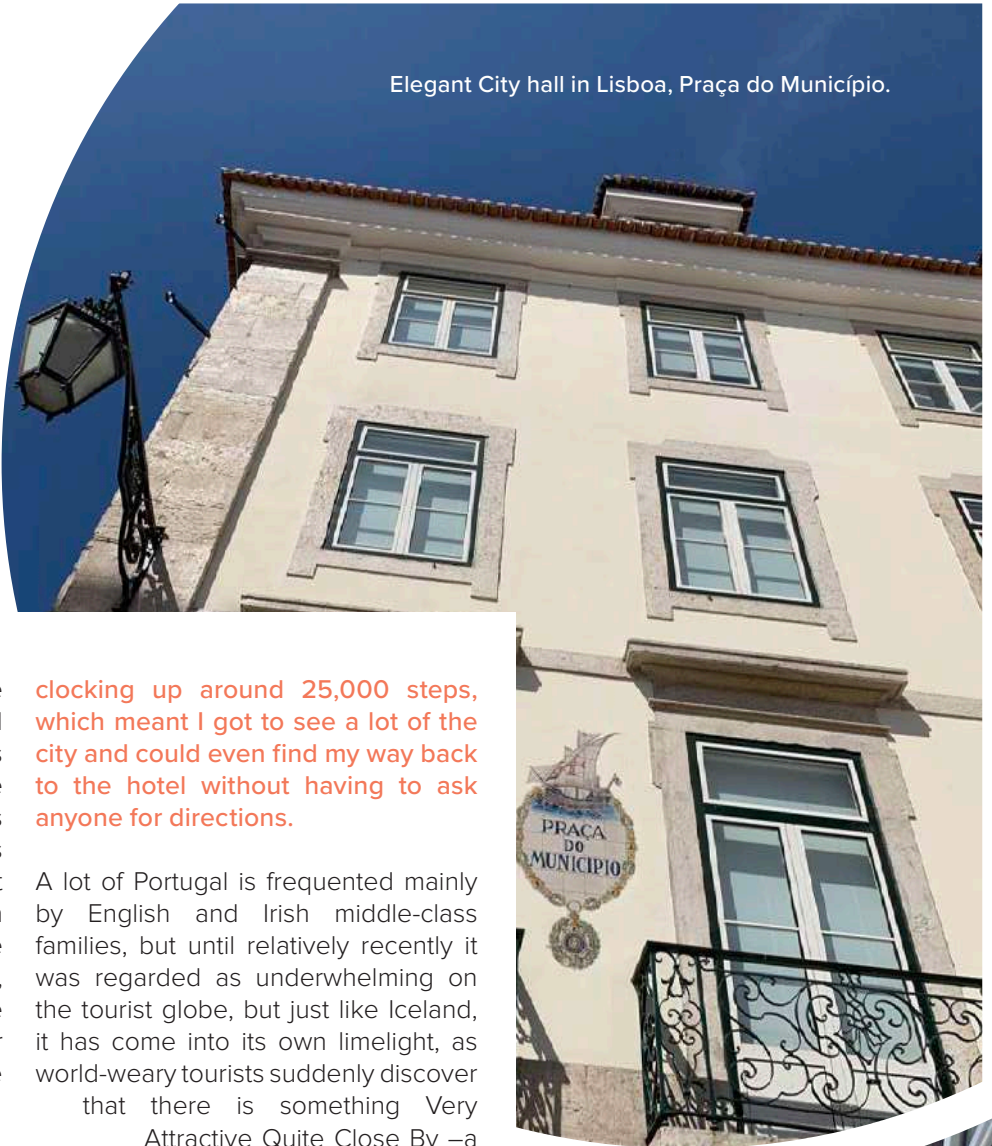


*Dramatic feature  
lighting connects the  
soaring ceiling with the  
cosy lounge below.*

# Portuguese *tarts* anyone.?



Elegant City hall in Lisboa, Praça do Município.



Lisbon is a lovely city. The locals are still getting used to the idea that foreigners are actually interested in the place, so there are some hit-and-miss tourist attractions in place. Signage is something they're not that good at yet and hardly any of the older population speaks English (which is the same in Spain). Food is also hit-and-miss, but thankfully the Portuguese have recognized that invaders like their Portuguese tarts – so they are EVERYWHERE. You can have them for breakfast, lunch and dinner, midnight snacks – everywhere

I wandered I witnessed pink tourists stuffing themselves, tell-tale flaky pastry crumbs sitting on their rotund middles. Even I surrendered and took three on the bus with me – they are irresistible.

Lisbon has a downtown area which is formed in a grid pattern of streets, which makes it incredibly easy to walk around. The whole city was severely damaged by an earthquake 200 years ago and the downtown district was totally rebuilt, hence the grid network. The streets are lined with beautiful 200-year-old buildings, statues, stately municipal buildings, with all streets seeming to lead to the waterfront.

I had arrived at midday from Australia and was determined to stay awake all day, so I trotted around the city,

clocking up around 25,000 steps, which meant I got to see a lot of the city and could even find my way back to the hotel without having to ask anyone for directions.

A lot of Portugal is frequented mainly by English and Irish middle-class families, but until relatively recently it was regarded as underwhelming on the tourist globe, but just like Iceland, it has come into its own limelight, as world-weary tourists suddenly discover that there is something Very

Attractive Quite Close By – a bit like Prague or Split, but an hour's less flying.

Anyway, Portugal has some amazing architectural talent, including the Starchitect Alvaro Siza (pronounced Caesar), who is enigmatic, generous and a delightful talent on the world stage.

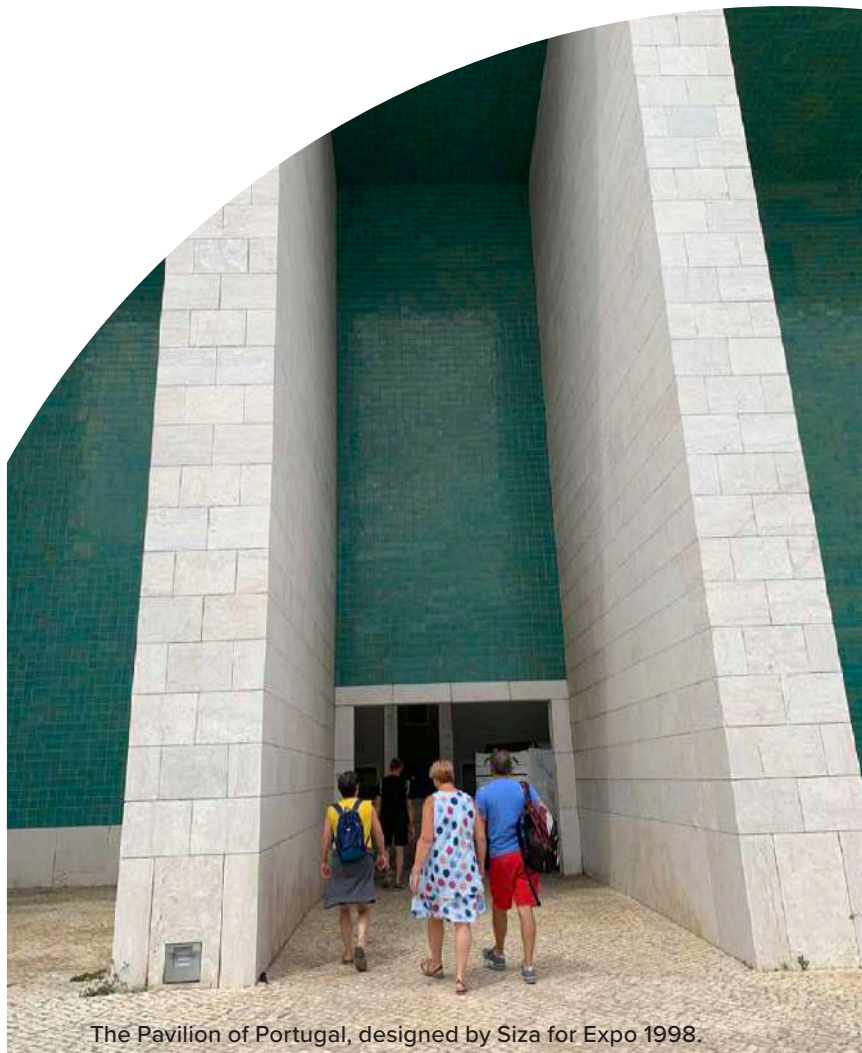
He has, justly so, been the recipient of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, which is the equivalent of an Oscar in Architecture World. Other famous winners include Jean Nouvel, Richard Rogers, Jorn Utzon and our own Glenn Murcutt.

Siza's design for the 1998 Portugal Pavilion for the world Expo is stunning. Unbelievably it was the inspiration for one of my clients' ensuite bathroom a couple of years ago, which I designed after seeing a photo of the pavilion in a magazine. I didn't know where it was, nor who had designed it. Seeing it in real life was a gobsmacking

*"You can have them for breakfast, lunch and dinner, midnight snacks. Even I surrendered and took three on the bus with me - they're irresistible."*



View from my hotel room window in Porto



The Pavilion of Portugal, designed by Siza for Expo 1998.



Concert Hall Porto. Rem Koolhaas

moment for me, because not only did the photo I had seen several years ago not identify where the building was, but it also didn't prepare me for the sheer scale of it – it is the size of a six-storey building! Another of my architectural heroes is Santiago Calatrava (see my write-up on him on Page 40), who was responsible for many unique buildings including the Oriente Train Station in Lisbon which is, as expected, saturated in his design fingerprints. I love his repetitive bone-like structures that give real meaning to biomimicry in architecture.

Travelling to Porto, we visit Rem Koolhaas's concert hall which is only 15 years old but already it is showing its age, an example of bold architecture, with its weird shapes, aluminium floors, polycarbonate sheeting, fluorescent tubing, hidden doors, angular hallways and the massive edifice plonked in the middle of an otherwise respectable, dignified neighbourhood. As you can gather, I wasn't a big fan. The old town centre of Porto nestles in alongside the Douro River estuary with steep cobbled ancient laneways and we were staying in a hotel called Pestana Vintage Porto Hotel, right on the bank of the river and the Dom Luis I bridge. Whenever something is described as vintage I think it might be because it is going to be shabby, second-hand rubbish, or just plain tired. Far from this, the hotel is the most fabulous, centuries' old building filled with funky

60s furniture and equally funky artifacts. The staff were brilliant and welcomed us with a glass of port (of course). My room was palatial with three large casement windows opening directly onto the beautiful waterfront—what a brilliant surprise! The little town of Porto was buzzing and everyone I spoke to was just so happy and friendly, it was totally cool.

There was thick fog when we arrived at a beach just outside Porto. Fog contains sound. It is a stunning phenomenon – we are so used to seeing what we hear and hearing what we see, but when this is suffocated, not to the point of losing consciousness, but enough to be super mindful of your own breath and your expectations of what you should see and what you actually see. It transports you into a dimension of which you were totally unaware.

*"I would genuinely fly back to Porto just to do it all over again."*

The biggest hit in Porto wasn't architecture it was FOOD! We had lunch at a cliff-top restaurant called Boa Nova Tea house (designed many years ago by Siza) and the experience will stay with me for a long time. Food is one element of a great dining experience. Atmosphere is essential, as is brilliant service, great wine, beautiful scenery and great company. If all those things match up, you've got a hit on your hands! They nailed it. One of the best dining experiences of my life. I would genuinely fly back to Porto just to do it all over again.



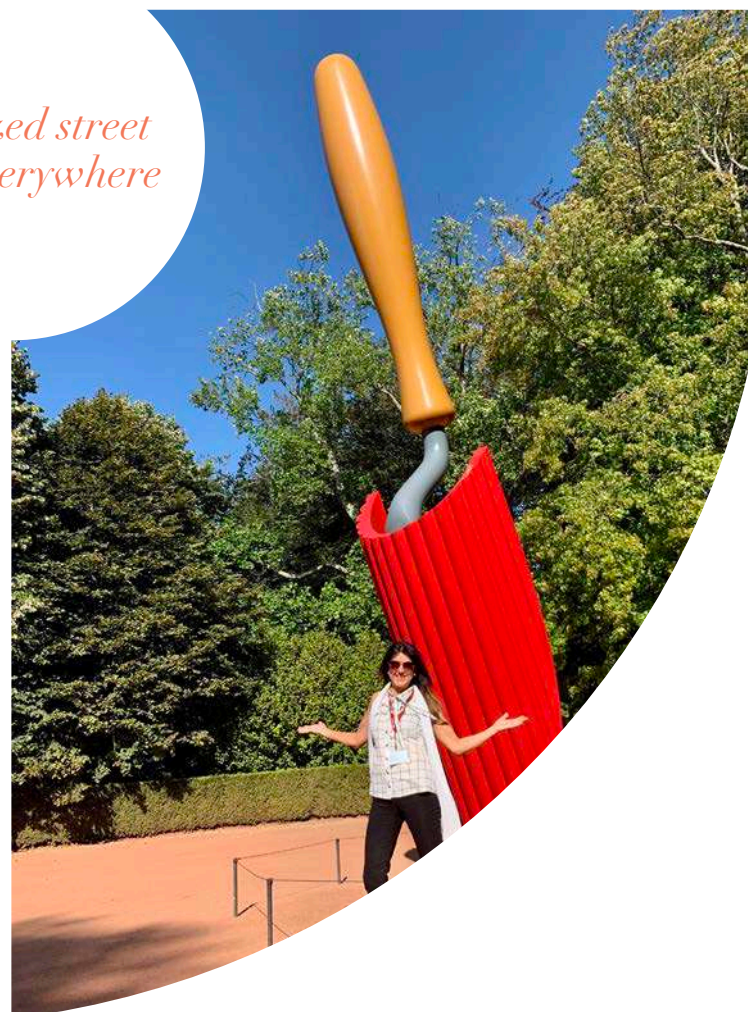
Pestana Porto  
Vintage Hotel.



Totally funky shops in Lisbon

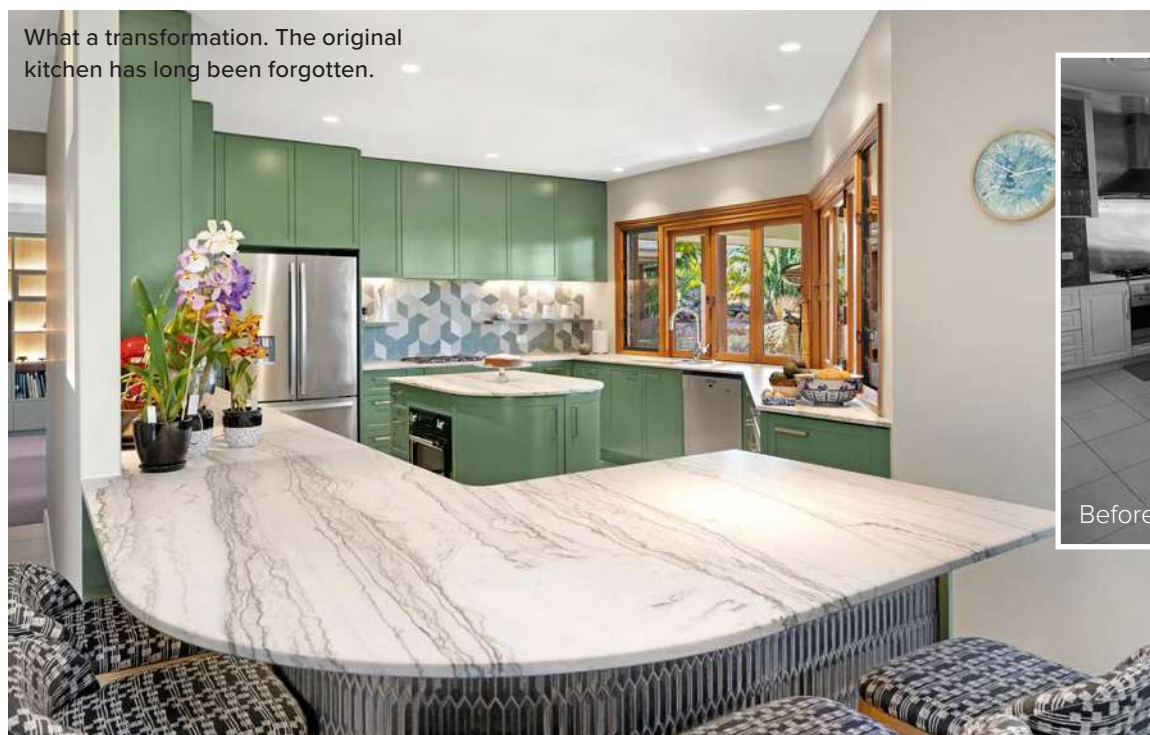


*Oversized street  
art is everywhere*





# It's easy BEING GREEN



# Resene

the paint the professionals use

Resene supplying their high quality paints for this project.

Ceiling - Ceiling White  
Walls - Half Lemon Grass  
Custom Joinery - Easy Rider



A centre island bench was made possible by widening the kitchen.



Striking mosaic tiles protect the beautiful cabinetry

*The stunning grounds of this country property were the inspiration for the new enlarged kitchen, bringing the outside in.*



Falling leaves gave Di inspiration for the custom mosaic splashback.



*Never be afraid*  
to use feature lighting  
in a bathroom. It will  
transform the space  
into pure luxury



*Client brief: Make our bathroom look like a resort.  
Check.*





Even with the shutters closed the room feels bright and welcoming, the right use of lighting can't be underestimated.



*Laundries should not be ignored. Even small laundries can look fabulous with the right finishes and storage solutions. Leading from the kitchen the same colour palette flows.*





# Uluru

## *Who knew?*

Every time I go somewhere new I always amaze myself at how little I know about the destination before arriving. Half of me thinks this is deliberate, the idea of exploring (my favourite word as a kid), makes it almost essential to be surprised and enlightened with no prior knowledge, preconception or expectation to get in the way. The idea of going to Uluru last year was so exciting I didn't even think that the journey there would be part of the wonderment and joy of such an adventure.

Full flight of 100 people on a Fokker 100, which thankfully is a fully fledged jet, not a prop job, which I had been led to believe. We are heading due West, fighting 300km head winds, so the anticipated flight time of three hours and fifteen minutes blows out to over four hours. We settle into what I thought would be a boring flight looking down on bush, bush, bush, followed by desert. Noooo! This is the first mind-blowing surprise of our trip – the scenery is truly amazing, made even more amazing by the fact that it literally changes, dramatically,

every few minutes. What looked like an electrical diagram from the air turned out to be mine sites at the end of roads, seemingly to nowhere, heavily forested except for the perfect little postage stamp squares of mine activity.

Blink – and there is an ochre and white mottled landscape with rich, red bulging crags seeping into the piebald wasteland. The

scene is changing again, with what looks like rivulets of rain down a window pane, corrugations of a crocodile's back, sinewy silver veins of tiny tributaries, onyx-coloured rivers dissipating into the never-never.

One enormous tract of land looks like bronchial capillaries followed by a landscape straight out of Iceland – it looks like two tectonic plates have converged creating sheer cliff faces dropping into the abyss. This is NOTHING like I was expecting the

outback to look like.

Less than an hour out of Uluru and the pilot tells us we're running low on fuel and we are now heading for Alice Springs instead. Another huge surprise, more of a sad shock really, as we land we see mile after mile of planes parked near the runway. Half

of the Cathay Pacific fleet is parked here, along with

a great proportion of Singapore Airlines,

Cebu, Jetstar and others, with no anticipation of the repatriation - a shocking sight.

So, 24 hours in Uluru and we have experienced so much already it is staggering.

**Facts I knew about Uluru before getting here: It is a rock, it is in a desert, it gets cold at night in the winter, it is sacred.** That is the extent of my awareness, so not quite enough to qualify me to go on Mastermind. A ten-minute coach trip and we are walking on powder-soft red, red dust, with silvery green gorse-like bushes

*"To describe Uluru is almost impossible without experiencing it, but again, I am flabbergasted at how different it is close up to what I thought it would be"*



Our pilot, Alida, flying us over the magnificent landscape.

Kata Tjuta at sundown.  
Taken from my iPhone.

and skeletal blackened spindly trees, a setting sun and the outrageously beautiful Uluru rising up out of the desert floor with the voluptuous Kata Tjuta looking on from a respectable distance. There is a cool, soft breeze with muted chatter amongst our tour group as we sip wine looking at the piercingly bright almost full moon, rising steadily in the northwest, vying for attention with the setting sun.

**The spirituality of this place hits deep and it is truly an honour and unique privilege to be able to be here, present with the ancestors, whom I am sure are watching our every move. This is the scene for our Sounds of Silence dinner, tables of ten set out on the soft red earth, each with a singular LED lantern and a gas heater nearby. As the sun sets (so quickly), the moon takes over, which is beautiful, but it somewhat diminishes the stars, to the point that only the brightest are visible. A didgeridoo player, unseen, plays a haunting, mesmeric chant in the background. We can't stop**

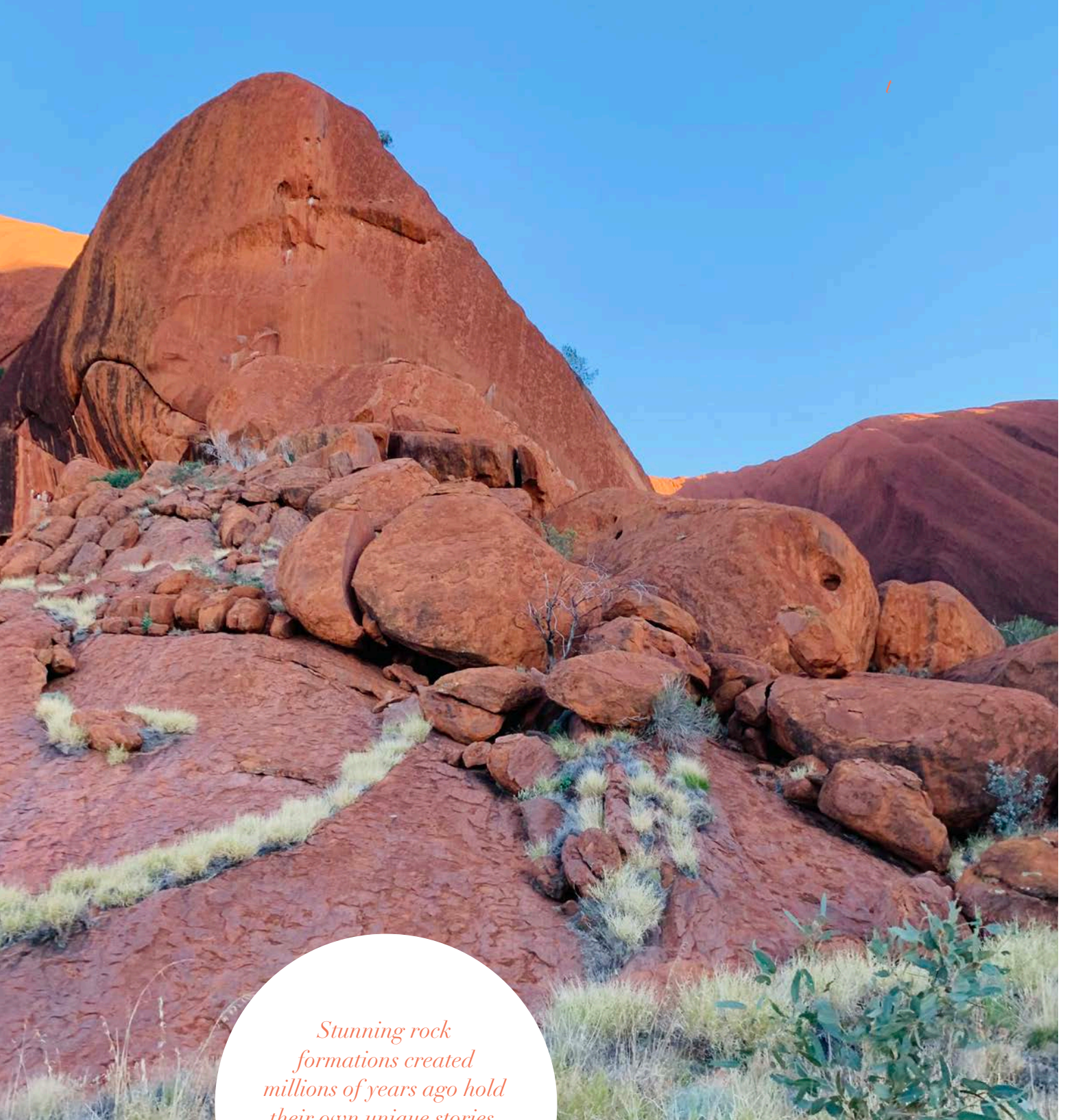


Uluru rising up out of the earth on the horizon.

ourselves taking incessant photos of the ever-changing light around us. After dinner, the lanterns are extinguished to allow an astronomer (with extraordinary knowledge) to give us a condensed, simple-man version of some of his capacious insights into the solar system, the galaxies, our miniscule position in the universe and some mind-blowing intel on the distance of our nearest stars. I should've, could've, didn't take any notes, so not prepared to

repeat the stats, but needless to say we are a grain of sand, if that, in the scheme of things, which immediately makes one feel humble, less arrogant and somewhat irrelevant. It also makes us feel hugely grateful to share this sacred place, even for such a short space of time, to learn, love and appreciate how fortunate we are.

**Still within the first 24 hours, we are quietly whisked away by coach before dawn to witness the sunrise at Uluru, stepping through a series of platforms strategically placed several kilometres away from Uluru, which is a dark, brooding, prostate giant when we arrive, with just a thin, intensely orange band of light on the horizon. Within minutes, it is though the giant has awakened and very quickly the light on its ramparts**



*Stunning rock formations created millions of years ago hold their own unique stories, handed down to generations for thousands of years.*

identifies its form, which is far more rugged and misshapen than I realised. Soft, dusky mauves make way for berry-coloured textures and deep shadows climb from the base to the very top, showing its vertical, stratified sandstone composition. Berry moves to pink, moves to coral and to red, announcing a new day with the iron oxide beauty of its form. All the while, in the distance, Kata

Tjuta is swelling into view, her colours softer and much more feminine, looking on – you can sense the pride. We are told that neither Uluru nor Kata Tjuta has a gender, but I believe Kata Tjuta is a female. This is what we have come to see and now we know what all the fuss is about. It is easy for me to feel like an intruder and I want to apologise, but I am not exactly sure who to apologise to, or for what?

Probably to the land, to the spirits, to the elders, for my race, my ancestors, all the injustice and commotion – it is felt, but not uttered. After our very cold early start, we arrive at the base of the rock, with the old walking trail still visible from where the bus stops. There are mixed attitudes about whether or not it was a good thing to be able to climb it all those years ago, but I am glad we're not allowed to. It takes away the responsibility and controversy from the people who would have to



Trekking through the unbelievable landscape of Kata Tjuta.

*An eight-kilometre hike into the Valley of the Winds deep into Kata Tjuta is something I think every able-bodied person should have the opportunity to do. It is, once again, awe-inspiring, challenging and uplifting (for mind and body).*

make those decisions, even though the earlier decisions were made by people who had absolutely no right to do so.

Yes, it is a rock in the desert, but it is its own universe – it has huge chunks taken out of it, caves, waterfalls, rock pools, paintings, birdlife, trees, ravines, cliff faces and colours that range from purple, blue, pink, white, orange, red and green – simply unbelievable. We keep trying to drink in every ounce of detail so we can't forget what makes this experience so edifying and bountiful, it is impossible.

Can any other aspect of this get any better? Well, yes if you jump into a

chopper. In the air, it is only really then that it is easier to see the scale and complexity of both Uluru and the far more fascinating Kata Tjuta (The Olgas) which bulge out of the ground in spectacular fashion. Our pilot, Alida, ex-Melbourne, gives us our first stories about both sites, beautiful stories handed down by the Anangu people for thousands of years, so graphic and plausible it is hard not to believe this is exactly how these rocks were formed and what spirits still inhabit them.

I am glad we did the chopper flight after being here for a while (well, a day anyway!), because it helped put into perspective where we are and how the land lies.

The afternoon adventure - travelling to Kata Tjuta itself and walking into the Walpa Gorge, magnificent. The staggering scenery further entrenches our awareness of how small we are in comparison to the majesty of nature, profoundly evident

in the soaring cliff faces of the gorge. Those two facing cliffs could easily converge on each other, as a joke by nature itself, swallowing us all up with no evidence left of our existence.

We later gathered at a viewing platform for drinks to witness the sun setting on Kata Tjuta, which can only be described as a spiritual experience, another one. It sounds trite to say so, but we all felt it. A sense of oneself rose, with a feeling of awakening that surely must be some of spiritual intervention from the ancestors of the land, encouraging us to open up our hearts to not only understand our sense and sensibility but to recognise our worth on this earth and how we can serve ourselves and the people we love for the highest good.

We discussed this at dinner and we all feel a sense of calm and clarity that is a result of being out of normal everyday life, heightened and enhanced by feeling the rhythm of this desert land and its sacred position on Earth. It also has the unique claim of being closer to the International Space Station when it



Divergent rocks rise up making humans feel very, very small.



Every painting and sculpture has a unique and beautiful story.

KALTJITI ARTS

passes by than to a traffic light!

We know this place is a must-see-before-you-die place, which almost makes you not want to come, so you can retain your non-conformist union card, but realistically, tourist attractions are called such because they are attractive! If this weren't the case, we'd be taking photographs of bus stations and power plants.

So, having exonerated ourselves for being mere Minga (Anangu for "ants") or "tourist" in our lingo, we hook into our next adventure, a Segway loop once around The Rock. Again, pardon us for being so conformist, but this really is a lovely way to see the entirety of the rock base (even to the very points where it groaned out of the ground all those millions of years ago). You might have cottoned on by now that every action on this trip is an out-of-body experience and this is testimony to that – we are whirled around at a lightning top speed of 10km/hour, stopping every now and again to hear a rendition of the sweetly naïve, yet powerful stories of the rock, always giving us a message that is aimed to give us an insight into the wisdom of the elders and the foolishness of youth. Sounds familiar in any culture, doesn't it?

When we were on our outward-bound flight, we witnessed many landscapes from 30,000 feet in the air, that are reminiscent of both ancient granite or marble and aboriginal artworks, many of which we have seen countless times. The question is: how do aborigines paint, so accurately, scenes that are only seen from 10 kilometres above the Earth? Is it because they now have 4G network and can see what Earth looks like from above? Or is it because their spirits are able to float

above the earth? The 4G theory has a lot of holes in it, so I will leave you to ponder.

Why do you think that all cultures and civilisations idolise and immortalise their artists, architects, musicians, sculptors? Rather than their bankers, magnates, accountants, high-flying lawyers and the richest, most powerful men? I think it is because we all (from time immemorial) know that these artisans document our humanity, illustrating in the most beautiful ways, our mark on the world. So, this is my reasoning and justification for buying a beautiful painting by a female aboriginal artist, depicting women foraging for food to feed their family. If you hear a piece of music, or eat a certain dish, or look at a painting, it immediately transports you to a different time, a different dimension. Every time I look at that painting I think of the women caring for their families.

An eight-kilometre hike into the Valley of the Winds deep into Kata

Tjuta is something I think every able-bodied person should have the opportunity to do. It is, once again, awe-inspiring, challenging and uplifting (for mind and body). Most friends know I have a fear of heights, so scrambling up sheer cliff faces and equally terrifying, scrambling downwards are things I constantly have to overcome mentally. My darling friends, whom I am with, know this and (armed with my friend's homemade walking pole, fashioned from a dead Mulga tree) and their constant reassurance, I exalt in the challenge. I marvel (all over again) at the might and power of the

celestial landscape that envelops us. 8km sounds reasonable, but we are traversing mountains here, folks. About 3km in and I have my first blow-out.

The heel of one of my boots decides it likes The Olgas more than me and pings off. In the ensuing two to three kilometres several other parts of my soles leave to stay with their cousin, Right Heel. The last few kilometres of the trek and I am virtually walking on stocking feet, every now and again, resisting the urge to squeal! It just goes to show that pain or discomfort is largely cerebral, because the atmosphere, the landscape, the serenity and my friends' encouragement and support keeps be buoyant and extremely happy.

We've already eaten the baguette that we prepared for the journey, so, oblivious to fatigue and dehydration, we knock off a bottle of Brockenchack on the way back to the resort. It seems only fitting that one celebration of life follows another.

The Field of Light – oh my – this is a man-made, supposedly a six-month art/light installation, within the watchful eye of Uluru, conceived by a Pommie artist, Bruce Munro, back in the teens, inspired by – I dunno? – Uluru? Kata Tjuta? Australian desert? Aboriginal heritage? World notoriety? All of the above, I suspect, but here it is, six years after its intended lifespan. We are all here to witness how man (English man) and ancient culture can meet as one, in the middle of the bloomin' desert.

It is a sight to behold - for all sorts of reasons. The amount of imagination to conjure it up; the number of

*"No one comes away from that experience untouched by the audacity, genius and splendour of another phenomenon of this awesome, hallowed ground."*

Uluru - a majestic giant that is a universe of its own.



technicians to make it possible; the complexity of installation – and sustainability to keep it going (reminds me of Eiffel); the endless dialogue to win over not just a government, but an entire cultural cartel; the site selection and the expectation of a jaded bunch of tourists! The man has to be congratulated on all fronts! No one comes away from that experience untouched by the audacity, genius and splendour of another phenomenon of this awesome, hallowed ground.

Our trip here was short, yes, but its length doesn't diminish its power. Sure, we might be regarded as Mingas, and sure we might not

fully understand what we have witnessed, but we have respected and acknowledged more than we did before our arrival. We have bought the art, the food, the drink bottle and the T-shirt, but our lives have changed, perhaps imperceptively, but don't judge us for our clumsy way of appreciation and love for this land. Recognise that these encounters and experiences can only serve the people, all people, for the highest good.



Contributed by Resene Paints

# 7 Colours for bedroom bliss

Don't look now, but the colours you're surrounded by are having an effect on your brain. Bright hues tend to stimulate and energise us, while softer ones work to calm and reassure, making them ideal for sleep spaces.

With all that life throws at us, everyone could do with dialling up the serenity and down the drama in their bedroom, and paint is a way to easily and affordably create the relaxing room of your dreams. Consider any of the following shades to help you rest, recharge and reduce stress.

## UP THE LUXE

with rich greens teamed with tactile materials. This wall painted in Resene Stone Age and ledge in Resene Wilderness combine with the floor in Resene Green White and side tables in Resene Alabaster given a marble treatment with Resene FX Paint Effects medium coloured with Resene Rolling Stone. Other colours in this palette feature in the vase in Resene Toffee, lidded dish in Resene Hampton, small plant pot in Resene Teak and large plant pot in Resene Celeste. Bedding and cushions from Città.

**Green** Kiwis love to be inspired by nature. Green is typically associated with nature and a fixture of many places we frequent when we want to decompress – parks, gardens, the bush. Pretty much any shade of green will leave you feeling calm, though muddier Resene greens like complex blue-grey-green Resene Harp and Nordic blue-green Resene Juniper will leave you feeling more chilled out than their cleaner, brighter counterparts. For a more opulent luxury-escape effect, try old college green Resene Palm Green or deep green Resene Midnight Moss on the walls, teamed with tonal, textured fabrics such as velvet.



**White** White brings with it connotations of purity and cleanliness, however if you go too white, it can leave a room feeling clinical and cold. For bedrooms, choose creamier versions such as sweet and gentle Resene Half Bianca and aged linen Resene Half Albescent White. Paint your ceiling, skirting boards, window frames and door the same colour to swaddle the room and ensure you really unwind.



**Purple** Pale lilac lavender and violet typically have a blue base, so it makes sense that these colours also have a restful effect. Using a lilac tone on your walls, such as Resene I Do or Resene Alluring, will evoke feelings of balance and inner peace, while creating a look that's refined, elegant and romantic. Deeper, duskier Resene Gun Powder and Resene Chaptal And Verse will have a similar blanketing effect to the dark blues mentioned above, helping you feel safe and secure.



**Beige** Rarely as boring as its reputation suggests, beige is a fantastic neutral that works well on its own or as a base for highlighting other colours. Black and beige is just as classic as black and white, but a bit more homely and welcoming. Stony grey-brown Resene Westar and tranquil beige Resene Serene have a certain warmth to them that's reminiscent of the romantic ambience created by candlelight.



**Grey** Far from being all stormy skies and moody moods, the right shade of grey on your walls can be the best thing for a bedroom. Soft, barely there greys like Resene Black White and Resene Wan White from the Karen Walker Paints collection feel clean and are perfect neutrals that go with just about every other colour. Mid-tone greys with red undertones, such as Resene Pale Slate, will add visual warmth to cool rooms, while blue-toned greys such as Resene Neutral Bay and Resene Freestyling can have the opposite effect. For an insulating appeal, go dark with charcoal Resene Shark.



**Blue** Many of us seek out blue when we're strung out, via time spent gazing at the sky and sea, say, or in the cool tranquillity of a pool. In bedrooms that get lots of natural light and sun, cool, soft grey-blues, such as Resene Dusted Blue, Resene Casper and Resene Longitude, are a sophisticated option. Deeper grey-blues like Resene San Juan and Resene Cello have a cocooning effect, which can help you drift off to sleep more easily. If you're using blues on your walls, opt for off-whites like Resene Rice Cake or Resene Half Spanish White for your ceiling and trims – they'll create a softer ambience than sharp, crisp whites.



**Yellow** Bright yellows are probably more suited to making a statement than sending you to sleep, yet in paler form, they're just as inviting and inspire the same optimism. Buttery yellows such as Resene Buttermilk are warming, while muddier Resene Golden Sand, creamy ochre Resene Manuka Honey and desert ochre Resene Apache are on-trend routes to feeling like you're swathed in sunshine – and it doesn't get much more relaxing than that.

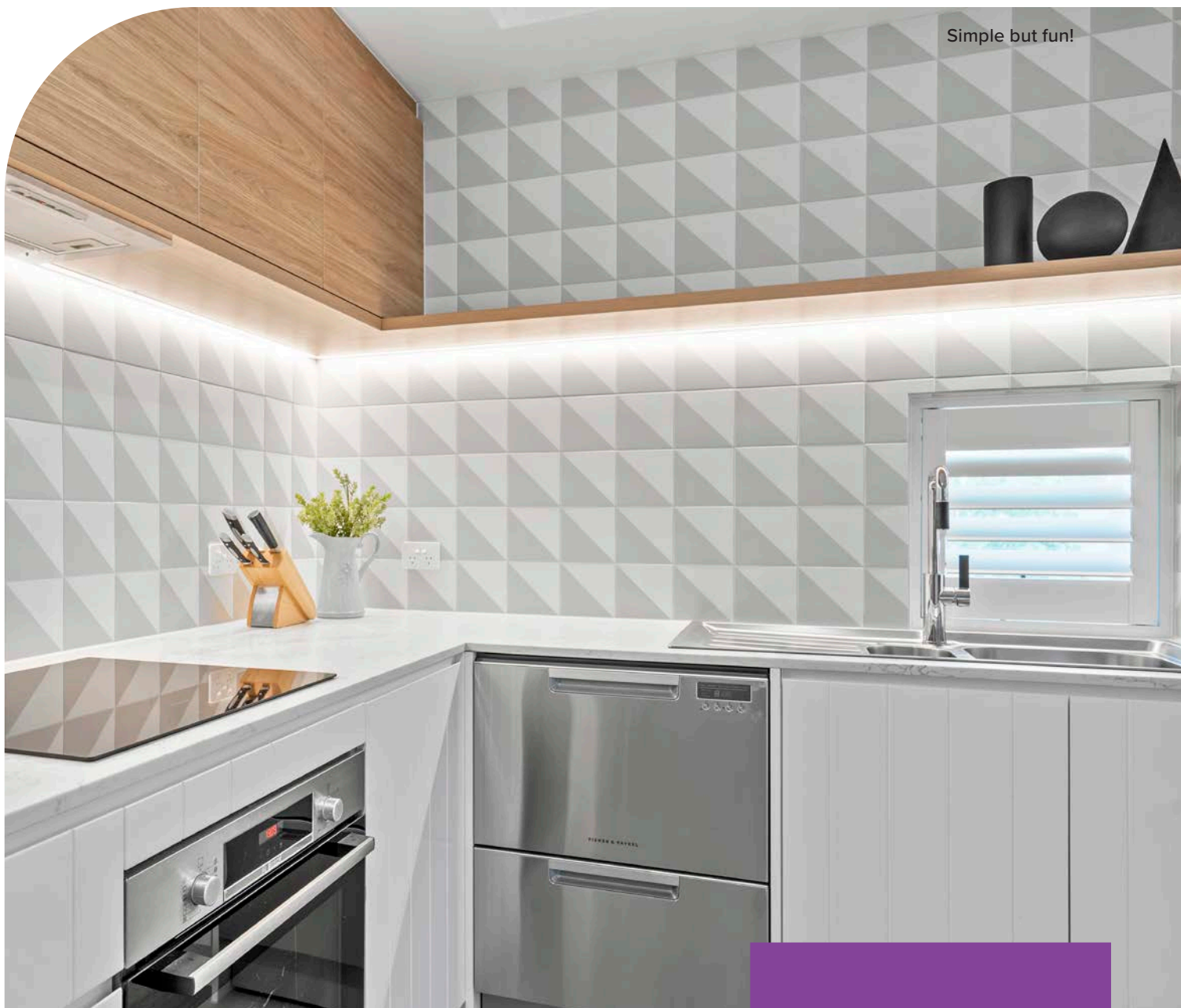
A modern kitchen island with a dark, textured countertop. Three large, clear glass pendant lights hang above the island. On the island, there is a French press, two patterned mugs, and an open book. The island is surrounded by bar stools with a geometric pattern. In the background, there is a kitchen sink with a black faucet and a vase of white flowers. Large windows and a glass door provide a view of the outdoors.

# Kitchen STYLE

*What is your style?*

A massive island bench serves as dining for six in an elegant setting.

Simple but fun!



### Generous bench space with good lighting

Lighting needs to be over benchtops not in the centre of the room where there is no need for general lighting.

Everyone in the household uses the kitchen, as well as friends and visitors, so make sure you open your mind to a new way of thinking when planning your new kitchen. When in doubt – ask a professional! Di Henshall Interior Design has designed literally hundreds of kitchens, all very different from each other and I have personally designed thousands, winning many awards.

Just because your kitchen is a particular shape, doesn't mean you have to stick to that shape when you re-design the space. The kitchen is one area in particular that can be reinvented to be more suitable for modern living. Clever design will enhance the way you work in it, live in it and enjoy it.



A scullery complete with huge cool room was created to evoke the feeling of a fuselage, with mirrors adding to the effect of length and space.

There are some key ingredients to a good kitchen:

## Refrigeration

Don't under-estimate how much refrigeration we need in the Australian climate. How many of you have a fridge in the garage? Not exactly the right place to have a fridge! If you are redesigning your kitchen, consider having a second underbench fridge.



Dark coffee colours in the tall cabinets are a strong backbone to this apartment makeover.



## Dry storage

Don't get sucked in to having a huge pantry that you then fill with everything else other than dry goods! How many of you have pantries that are filled with baskets, crockery, glasses, large pots, flower vases, shopping lists, files, etc. These are not pantry items and should have their own appropriate storage. Just a note on dry storage – don't also get fooled into thinking that you need large storage facilities for things such as flour, rice and other cereals. Unless you are a prolific baker or chef, these things are better stored in the freezer where weevils and other nasties can't get at them and they also won't go off.



White is timeless. This kitchen was designed by Di fifteen years ago.



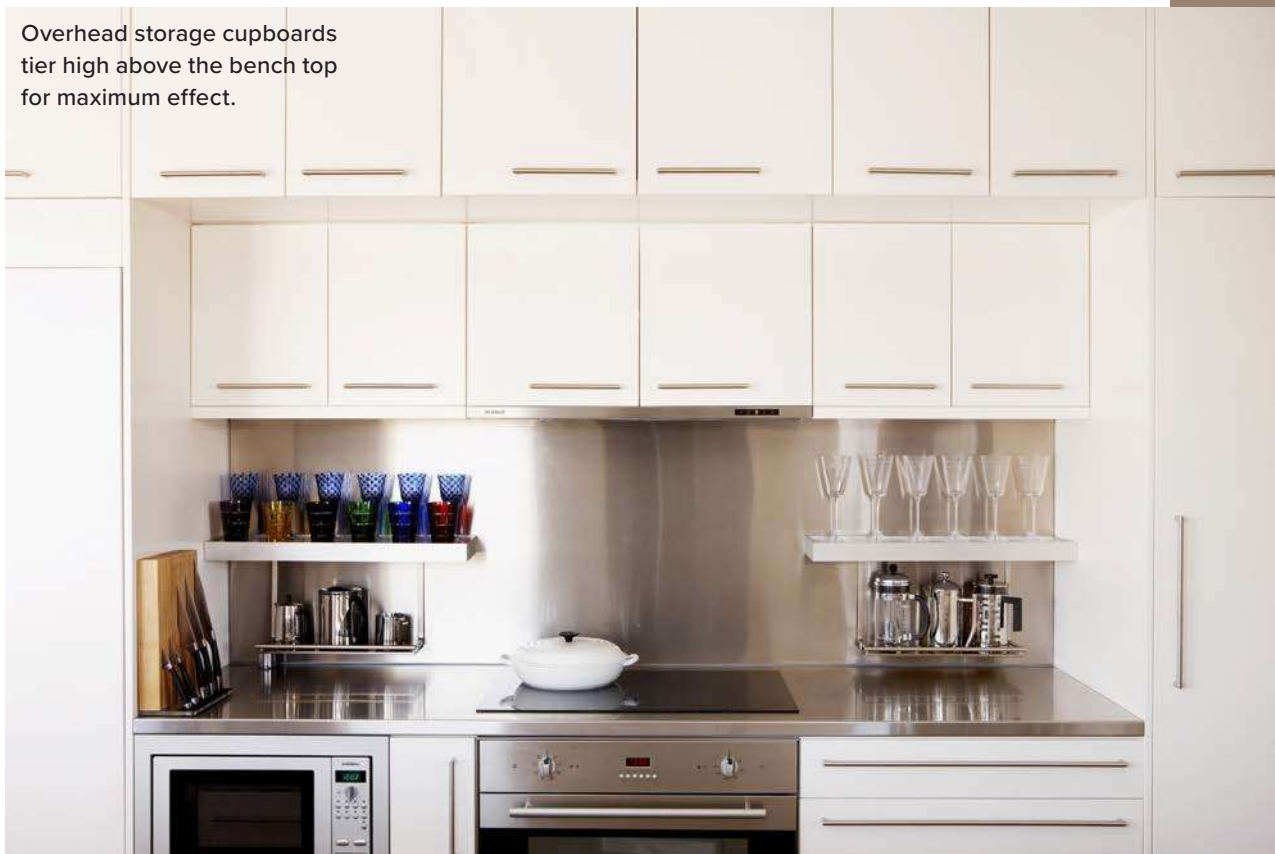
### Adequate, accessible storage

The most important factor in any design solution. Do you have enough storage and is it the right sort of storage? Cupboards are basically useless and space wasters. You can retrofit drawers in many instances and concealed drawers can be installed behind doors. Look at compartmentalised storage for bottles, cans, plates, etc. These small tips can vastly increase your storage capacity.



A bold block of colour  
creates a focal point.

Overhead storage cupboards  
tier high above the bench top  
for maximum effect.



People often ask me to design them a kitchen that is “timeless”. If you truly want a timeless kitchen then steer away from current trends. Stick to basic colours,

neutrals and whites, introduce colour and texture in items that are easily changed when trends move, such as backsplash, breakfast bar panels, stools and accessories.



Natural tones of the earth  
blend with the rocky  
landscape beyond.



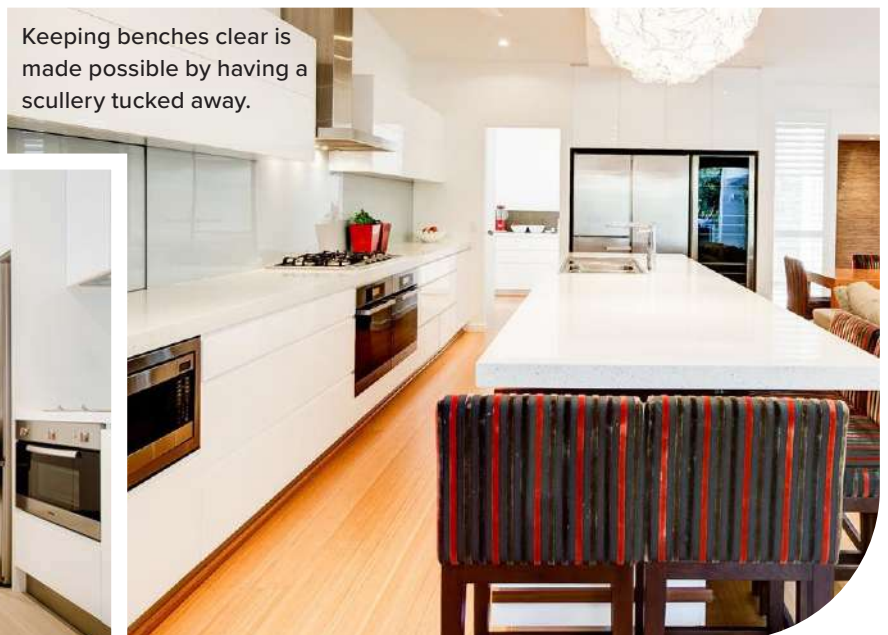
Grey mirrored splashback hides a television screen and reflects the awesome scenery.

### Easy access into and out of the kitchen for more than one person

An island bench, space permitting, adds to the natural flow and rhythm of family life.

*"Using white as the base colour for kitchen cabinetry gives the opportunity to introduce colour and drama in other ways such as feature back panels, feature splash backs, accessories and lighting."*

Keeping benches clear is made possible by having a scullery tucked away.



An example of the timeless quality of white.



Palacio de las Artes opera house Valencia, Spain. Designed by Santiago Calatrava architect and engineer.



# *“I’d rather CALATRAVA”*





Milwaukee Art Museum in Wisconsin



The City of Arts and Sciences architectural complex in Valencia, Spain

*Calatrava is not just an architect, he is also a civil engineer and talented artist. After completing his architectural studies he went further and ultimately received a doctorate in Technical Science.*

What do Malmo (Sweden), Milwaukee and Valencia have in common? In all three you can witness the genius of Santiago Calatrava, Spanish architect and living legend. You don't see Calatrava buildings you experience them. They envelop you and play with your mind. Some of his creations defy logical thinking, how the heck do these things stay upright, how did he possibly come up with such imaginative, beautiful sculptures? How can one mind reach such a lofty stature in architecture within one lifetime? I have experienced several of Calatrava's masterpieces around the world including the mind-bending examples in the above three places. They are almost impossible to describe in words sans extreme adjectives because the word WOW just doesn't cut it!

Santiago Calatrava probably couldn't have come up with most of his designs without the aid of computer



Milwaukee Art Museum in Wisconsin

drafting, similar to some others that come to mind, like the brilliant, late Zaha Hadid, who also challenges our consciousness with incredible structures. Before the advent of computer drafting a lot of their work would have been impossible to create. Can you imagine what the engineers go through when presented with some of the drawings? Speaking of engineers, Calatrava is not just an architect, he is also a civil engineer and talented artist. After completing his architectural studies he went further and ultimately received a doctorate in Technical Science. He threw out a lot of what had learnt in architecture school and challenged himself to draw like an engineer and to think like one. He describes his forms as simple, which may technically be true, but the execution of his ideas into amazing reality is where his true genius lies.

The Milwaukee Art Museum in Wisconsin is one of the most remarkable buildings I have seen. Originally designed by another great, Eero Saarinen, Calatrava beat out 77 architects in a competition to create a new grand entrance and a redefinition of the museum. Calatrava doubled the size of the original museum and designed a visual and astounding marvel, with its moveable canopy, or brise-soleil, that opens like the wings of an eagle soaring high above the roof. It is an awesome sight to see it unfold like a massive jet-age bird taking off. Google it and see for yourself, you might be amazed.

The bird-like design is also seen in his beautiful WTC Transportation Hub in New York City, this time the

superstructure looks like a dove being released into the air. It is a very poignant reminder of where we are and what happened all those years ago when terror struck the States. The symbolism of his work is not lost on anyone who sees it and offers an almost sacred place in the form of a railway station! Extraordinary.

Santiago Calatrava is only in his early 70s which is the same age as Frank Lloyd Wright was when his career took off for the second time – culminating in the design of the Guggenheim Museum in NYC, Wright dying just months before its opening at the ripe old age of almost 92.

*"I can only wonder and hope that Calatrava keeps being intrigued with life, built form, humanity, beauty and sculpture. We need more visionaries like him in our world to make us appreciate our surroundings, nature and the genius of our fellow humans."*



World Trade center, New York City

# Retro Inspired Riverfront

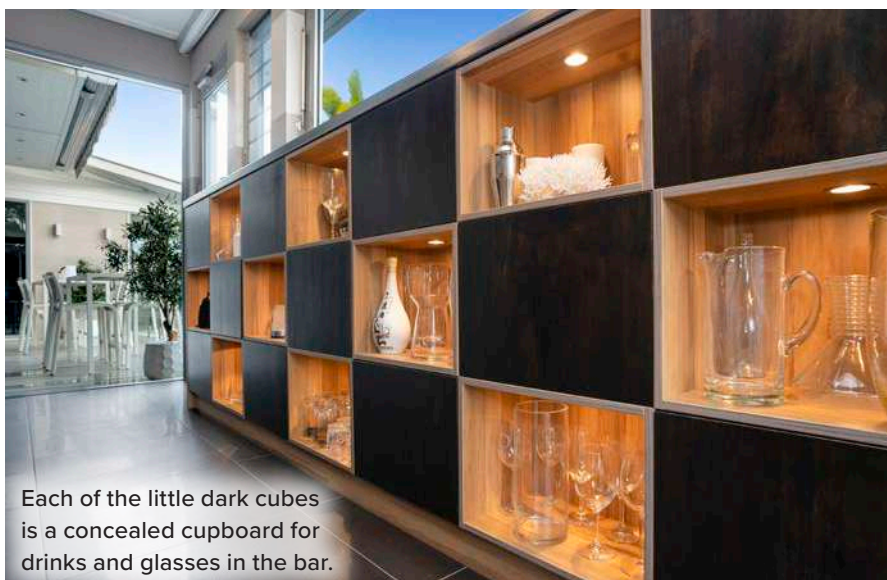
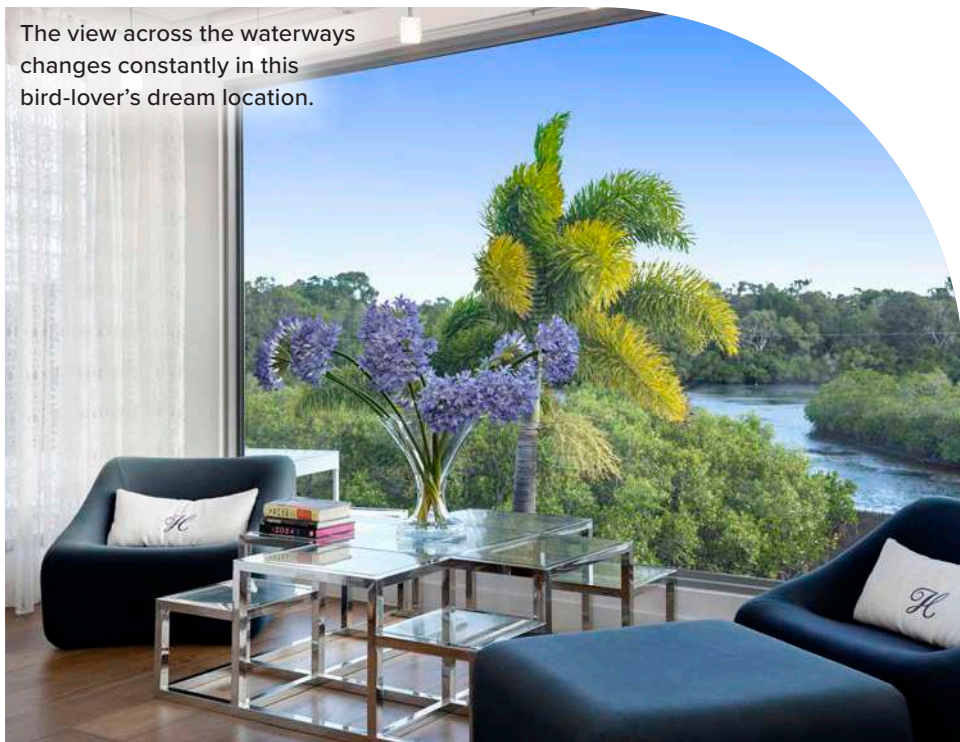


Cool green mosaics adorn the back panel of the third island bench, reflecting the soft green of the glass doors to the scullery.

1960s light fitting found in a Marylebone London flea market.



The view across the waterways changes constantly in this bird-lover's dream location.



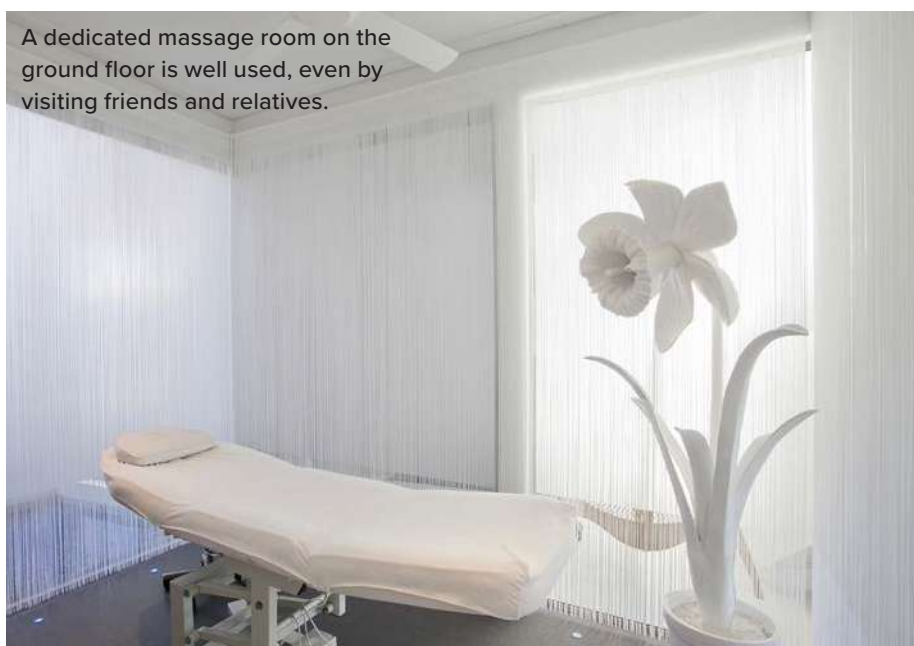
Each of the little dark cubes is a concealed cupboard for drinks and glasses in the bar.

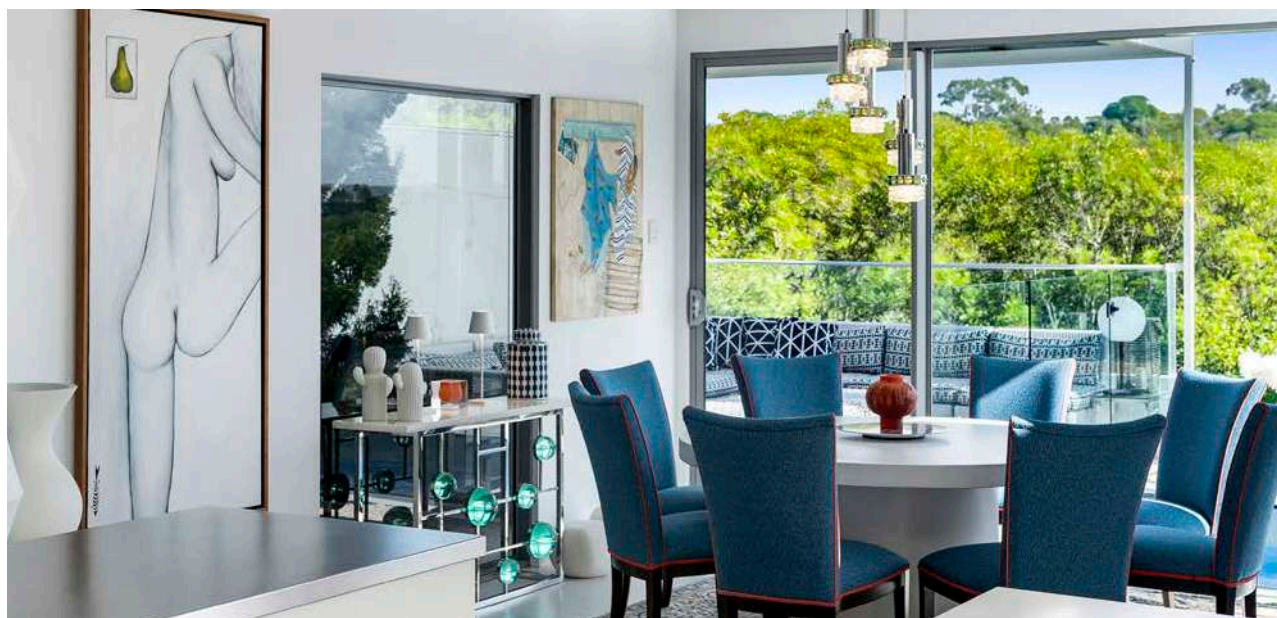


The 1960s Danish leather sofas in the bar and pool room were discovered in a designer showroom in Paris a few years ago and shipped back to Australia.

A mixture of horizontal lines, curved walls, staircase and bulkheads, quirky vintage light fittings and a gathering of furniture pieces from all over the world add up to a fun house! The backdrop of cool Resene Alabaster painted walls allows the various design details and furnishings to take the stage. Light fittings from the 1950s to 1970s, from the UK, France, Italy, Belgium and the US are part of a collection that is truly treasured. Gordon Richards' paintings and a stunning painting in the stairwell by Kurun Warun are star attractions, as is the painting by Charles Billich of The Cube, D'Arenberg Estate, McLaren Vale, sitting at the base of the sweeping staircase.

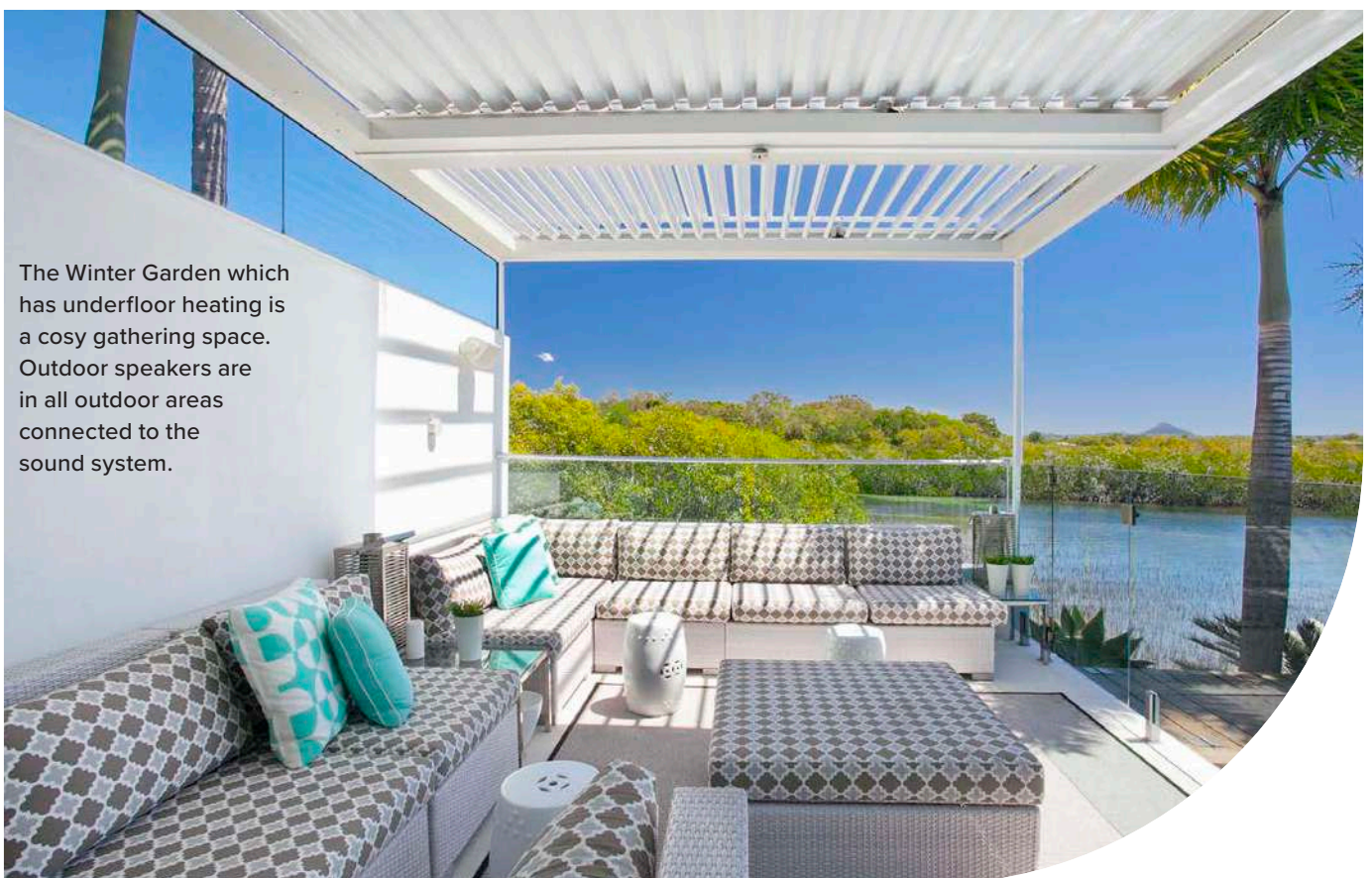
A dedicated massage room on the ground floor is well used, even by visiting friends and relatives.







*Huge, frosted glass sliding doors conceal the scullery where more utilitarian elements of the kitchen are housed, including the fridge, small appliances and pantry storage.*



The Winter Garden which has underfloor heating is a cosy gathering space. Outdoor speakers are in all outdoor areas connected to the sound system.



The curved benchtop allows people to converse easily.

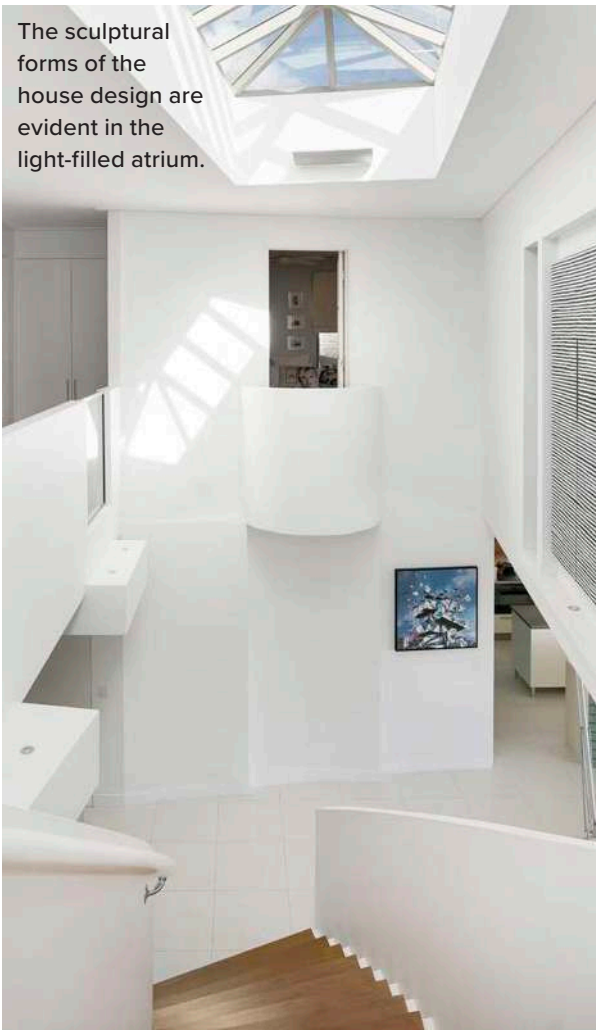


The waterfront terrace and pool where all the parties happen.



Kurun Warun Artwork.

The sculptural forms of the house design are evident in the light-filled atrium.



Italian chrome light fitting from the 1970s in a corner of the pool room.



The master dressing room is extensive.



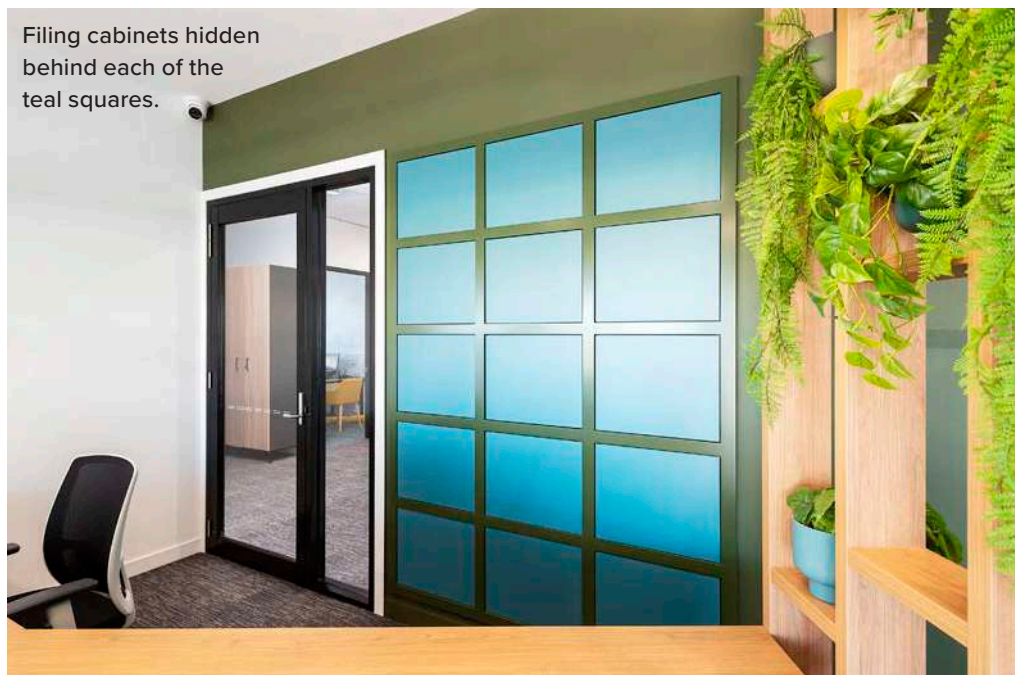
A non-descript industrial building in Hervey Bay gets a fit-out to breathe life into the stark surroundings. The largely male workforce asked for bold, without being prissy. No complaints with the result.

# Back to Work

*Expansive workspace with a fresh punchy decor*



Workspace washrooms don't need to be boring.

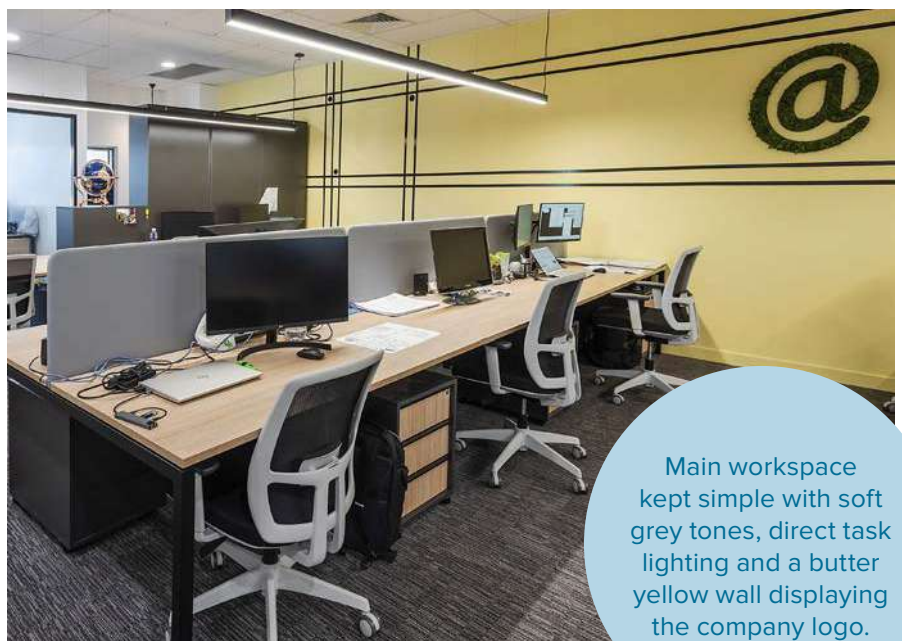


Filing cabinets hidden behind each of the teal squares.



A business meeting space that could also entertain visitors and staff events. Created by introducing brightly coloured chairs, warm timber tones, recessed lighting under overhead storage cupboards and potted greenery.

Your workplace should be just as fabulous as your own home environment, considering most people spend more time at work than they do in waking hours at home. Di Henshall Interior Design was approached by a surveying company to design an office space for a large team in Hervey Bay. The result is astounding. Di is a registered builder and a Greensmart builder which sets her apart from other designers in Queensland, and allows her to undertake design projects of all types and sizes. Collaboration with other industry professionals, including architects, landscapers, technicians, structural and hydraulics engineers ensures a seamless and comprehensive result.



Main workspace kept simple with soft grey tones, direct task lighting and a butter yellow wall displaying the company logo.

# STORING *is so Boring!*



Is this your garage?



One man's trash is another man's treasure.



Okay, don't throw the teddy away.

Storage is a massive industry in itself, there are some retail outlets that just specialise in storage goods, including Ikea, whose storage systems have helped it become a worldwide phenomenon. I know at least three multi-millionaires that made their initial fortunes by renting out empty sheds – for storage.

My questions are these: What is it that you are storing? And for what purpose? Do you actually need or even want what you are storing? When does something “come out” of storage?

What relegates some things to storage? What is the real purpose of storing things?

Some answers may lie in one's personality rather than a need or want of the actual object. Can you not bear to part with it because it has sentimental value? To whom? Did it cost you money that you can't bear the thought of “losing”. My favourite, often repeated quote from William Morris is, “Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful”. I've mentioned this one many times.

That small statement sums up getting rid of most clutter in most houses.

Another famous quote is “One man's trash is another man's treasure”. Remembering this one could help shift your opinion of some of the items carefully placed into storage boxes. There is a great deal of pleasure gained for many people by finding treasure in op shops (that do a brilliant job in raising funds for the

needy) or second-hand junk shops, where an amateur upholsterer or restorer can find what they believe to be amazing. Most of these things were regarded as someone else's trash, but to give these things a new lease of life to someone who will value their existence should aid the repair of heart-strings when giving them away.

Books – yes, we all love books, or at least say we do – it makes us look intelligent! How many books do you have and how many of them will you read again, or in some cases read

for the first time? I am not

advocating a Fahrenheit

451 concept here,

but really, do you

REALLY need ALL

those books?

Let someone

else have the

pleasure of

them.

*“Have nothing  
in your house that  
you do not know to be  
useful, or believe to  
be beautiful.”*

William Morris.

Baby clothes/kids'

clothes/departed

partners' clothes –

there are so many people

out there that would love them, genuinely get joy out of them, far more than keeping them in a box until they go yellow.

When we move house, sometimes furnishings/paintings/ornaments look rather peculiar in their new environment. It doesn't matter what is done, it feels like the ugly step-sister trying to fit the darned shoe. Give up on the idea of perfectly placing everything you own into your new circumstances.

The cleansing effect of getting rid of clutter can't be underestimated – you will feel lighter, brighter, more benevolent, happier and cleaner when you finally get rid of STUFF.

# MORE THINGS THAT DI LIKES



1 Getting together with great friends is a wonderful excuse to share stories, laugh a lot and eat far too much. Amanda Stevens, Heidi Meyer, Chrissy Mackay and Leigh McCreedy with Di having a whale of a time.



2 Di regularly gets asked to speak at industry events. One of the most rewarding aspects of her job is sharing her knowledge, insights and challenges with younger builders and designers coming up through the ranks.



3 Simon Hill — look him up. An inspiration and expert that Di listens to on his Podcast, 'The Proof' as well as referring to his book, 'The Proof Is In The Plants'. A tiny message: if everyone stopped eating meat just three times a week we might save the planet — and ourselves.



4 Sunnies! Who doesn't love sunglasses. We all need them, especially in Queensland and whichever pair you wear can change your mood, look and outlook!

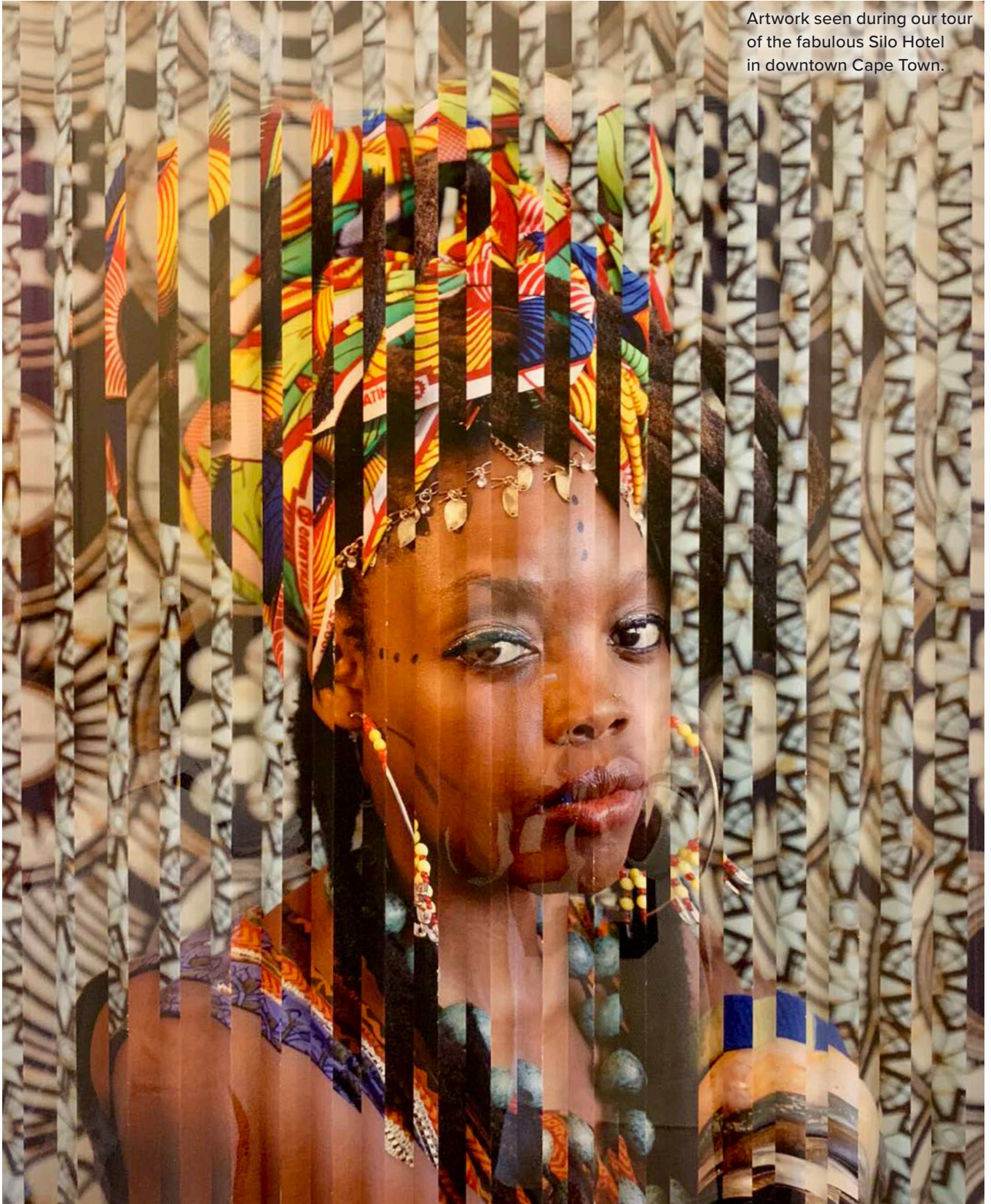


5 Books — sounds old-fashioned, but nothing compares to dog-earring a page in a book before falling asleep in bed or sharing them around with mates. All sorts of other devices are around, but books will always be irreplaceable.

# Cape Town

*A long weekend*

Artwork seen during our tour  
of the fabulous Silo Hotel  
in downtown Cape Town.





A magnificent view from the water looking towards Table Mountain at sunset.



Entrance to the restaurant in the Silo Hotel – filled with curios, incredible artwork and sumptuous furnishings.



Part of the reception lobby at The Silo Hotel, Cape Town.

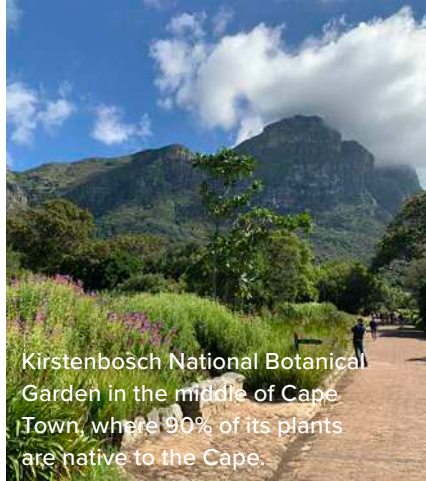
If the first day is any indication of how this trip is going to be, we're going to have a fabulous time. We've just been looking at the photos we took yesterday and it is truly astounding at what we have seen, heard, smelled, tasted and experienced in this amaaaazing city called Cape Town. We are staying in a remarkable apartment that would jockey for top position with the very best loft apartments in New York City.

This place is not only a genuine and therefore fabulous example of 1920s architecture, but also filled

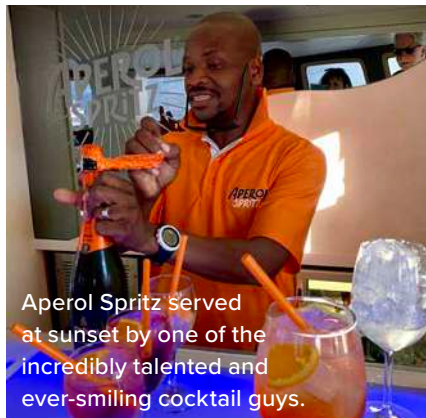
Library of the Art Deco apartment in the CBD which was our home for a few short, brilliant days.



Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden in the middle of Cape Town, where 90% of its plants are native to the Cape.



Aperol Spritz served at sunset by one of the incredibly talented and ever-smiling cocktail guys.



The central atrium of our apartment building in the original South African Mutual Insurance Co building. Art Deco at its finest.



with a diverse lifetime collection of beautiful, precious objets d'art, furniture and kitchenware. All of this makes it far more appealing than the hotel rooms we had initially booked. We're on the eighth floor of the original South African Mutual Insurance Co, with two-storey triangulated steel windows, framed with wispy muslin curtains suspended by black steel rods.

The apartment is filled with very personal touches, some brass candelabra on the metal dining table, a vast library that extends to the ceiling, complete with sliding library ladder to reach the books that are four metres from the floor. An upright fruitwood piano sits alongside a trolley, complete with (full) gin bottles, a stand displaying a variety of South African postcards, antique yellowwood chests and 60s suspended bubble chairs within the triangular convex recesses of the soaring windows. There is a restaurant's worth of cutlery, glassware, china, spices and oils together with the ubiquitous Rooibos tea. Add to this some crazy and amazing vintage telephones, limited edition artworks, wonky ornaments and Turkish tea glasses – can you picture the scene?

First up - the Victoria and Albert Dock, a sprawling revitalisation of a working dockland, right in the heart of the city, which rivals Liverpool and San Francisco. The place is awesome, with shops, restaurants, hotels, bars, tourist attractions, a smaller version of the London Eye and a mini train that weaves its way around the mini metropolis, all in the glorious sun-drenched, blue, blue sky, with the huge craggy Table Mountain as its jaw-dropping background. We meander through this coastal version of Tivoli Gardens (not really, but the atmosphere is the same) and it immediately puts us into holiday mode, almost to the point of having an ice cream.

On a coastal drive southwards along the seaside suburbs later, we watch in amazement as people literally run off a cliff towards the sea, strapped to expert hang-gliding instructors. I would love to have the guts to do it, but even filming it made me feel very queasy.

After lunch in a funky, very South African, laid-back bar/café, called Haas, we head back to the V & A Dock for a sunset cruise down and back to Clifton. It's a small cruiser with about 20 other people,

drinking Aperol spritzers and taking in the intoxicating sunset (not the drinks), we head back after dark with the twinkling lights and buzzy murmur of thousands of people dining around the harbour in a huge array of restaurants, all heaving with patrons. It really is magical.

Cape Town has so many facets; beauty, intrigue, love, music, art, architecture and history -and crazy dramatic weather changes. Our second day started off with misty rain and thick cloud over Table Mountain, making it completely invisible, but within a couple of hours it was back to bright blue sky, completely cloudless. The weather here can change in a matter of minutes.

There is a place called The Old Biscuit Mill in Woodstock, an inner-city suburb, where there is a permanent market-cum-mall of fabulous, diverse African artisan crafts and clothing. I could've gone nuts in there, but bizarrely it closes at 3pm and at 3.15pm the place was largely deserted.

So, heading back into the city we found a restaurant right in the guts of the city called The Village Idiot, which is another quirky, quintessentially



Groot Constantia, South Africa's oldest wine farm, dating back to 1685.

*The diversity of the city is no more apparent than in these two photos – (above) Groot Constantia, an outstanding example of the history and art of wine-making, stretching back over 300 years, and (below) one of the many thriving bars and restaurants that a few years ago wouldn't have been in existence.*

South African café/bar with a fantastic vibe, some whacky art and decoration. For example, a full-sized stuffed ostrich hovering over the bar. The service in all the places we've been is exceptional – friendly, relaxed, not hurried or stuffy and with each waiter, we've gained more insight into how Cape Town clicks and we are loving everything about it.

Cape Town doesn't shut down completely on a Sunday, but you do have to pick your spots to find cafes and shops open. We discovered another fabbo place called Clarke's in Loop Street that has a brilliant breakfast menu and also does woodfired pizzas and all that jazz at night. In one of the side streets we found a very peculiar little curiosity shop run by a gay guy who was sitting sewing sequins onto denim jeans and jackets. He sells tiaras,

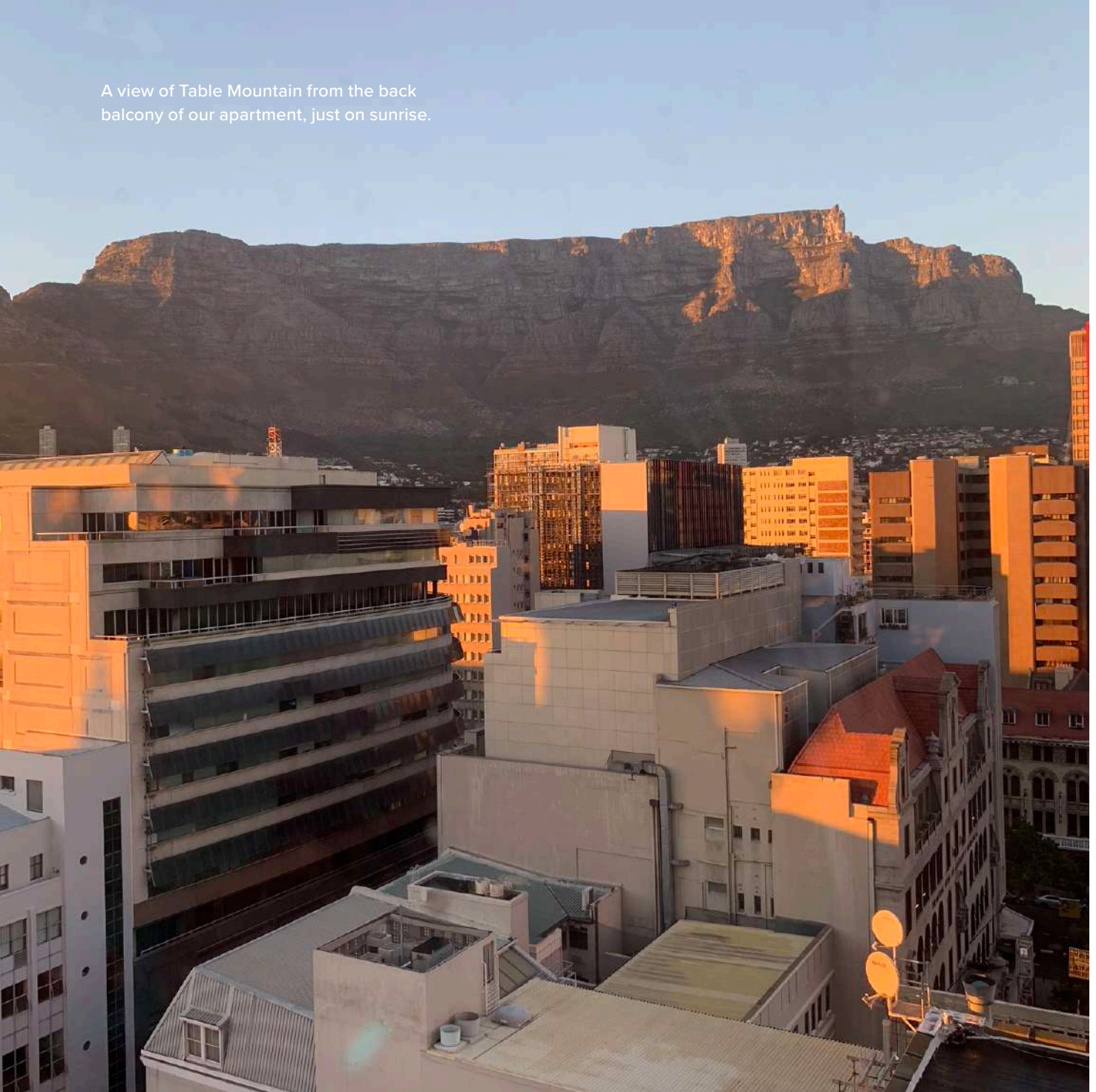
zebra skin bags, multi-coloured wigs, cushions, jewellery and T-shirts – all squashed together in a sort of Mardi gras museum.

Kirstenbosch has to be one of the most glorious places to see in Cape Town and we spent a few hours wandering around and subsequently on a little mini-train ride with an exuberantly enthusiastic Afrikaans horticulturist who told us with great passion and unadulterated joy about every bloomin' species and what day of the year they all bloom – hilarious and completely fascinating. We learned that South Africa has more species of native plants than any other country in the world, with 90% of what is planted in Kirstenbosch being native to the Western Cape. Amazing.



Funky bars and restaurants are scattered liberally around the whole of the CBD of Cape Town.

A view of Table Mountain from the back balcony of our apartment, just on sunrise.



Our first winery and it is in Constantia – Groot Constantia was established in 1685 (not a typo) and is a hugely successful business. They can seat about 400 people in their restaurant at a time. People were still streaming in mid-afternoon, so we figured that they would have done at least 800 covers for lunch that day. Food – fabulous, super-friendly service and a wonderful setting in a 350-year-old farmhouse, with yellowwood lintels over the doors and casement windows set into thick rendered walls, stable doors to the forecourt and traditional, very, very old terracotta quarry tiled floors. So, yet another quintessentially South African experience.

The Silo Hotel, on the V&A waterfront, is self-described as a celebration of art, architecture, style and design. I think they got that right – it is magnificent. It is only a few years old, with just 26 rooms (some of them 2-storey suites) and a couple of penthouses. The hotel has been built into the grain elevator section of an old grain silo complex, with the famous Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art on the ground floor and a roof top bar (on the roof!). We are given a personal tour by the head of marketing and sales, who has been assigned to show us why this was named Africa's Best Hotel for 2020, an accolade so well-deserved. He is a delightful guide and is clearly

thrilled we are here and that he can show us around this awesome property, owned and operated by a couple who have several other luxury properties, under the banner of The Royal Portfolio. The owners' names are Liz and Phil, not to be confused with Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh.

The trend of late in hotels is to be more like a home, something I have been advocating for years and The Silo is a shining, marvellous example of how to give guests a superbly luxurious once-in-a-lifetime experience with spectacular views from every window in every room, yet still make guests feel that they are

sitting in their own lounge. Personal elements are everywhere, with exquisite artworks and sculptures, all by South African artists, making it clear you are in South Africa, staring at Table Mountain and you are extremely privileged to be in this space.

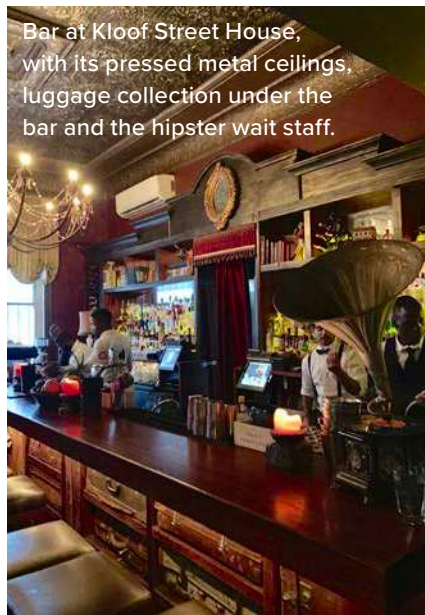
Owner, Liz, who has personally overseen the interior design of the hotel has a bit of the Kit Kemp thing going on, with mad splashes of loud colours, coupled with flamboyant light fittings and chandeliers, bowls of flowers and crystal ornaments. The whole package could be a shambles, but she has pulled it off brilliantly.

Kloof Street House, yet another wonderful dining experience. Set in an old Cape Victorian house with extensive wood panelling, dark pressed metal ceiling, mullioned timber framed sash windows and a myriad of rooms, full of mostly young, vibrant, energetic staff and diners – clearly mostly Cape Tonians (is that the right word?). The food, the drink, the music, the bordello-style decoration and the atmosphere are all delicious.

We are constantly struck by how South Africans truly embrace art into their everyday world, as inherent to them as having breakfast. Every home we have seen, every building and restaurant has its own unique expression of art being an essential ingredient of their personality and lives.

A Must-Do when in Cape Town is to have high tea at The Mount Nelson Hotel, run by the Belmond Group. The setting is simply stunning with a wide shady terrace with flowering shrubs and leafy trees partially obscuring the view of Cape Town beyond. Highly polished floorboards, moulded ceilings, studded upholstered chairs, humungous flower arrangements and sparkling mirrors everywhere set the scene.

In amongst all this we are served high tea, something that the Brits can vaguely remember (unless you're at The Ritz – yes, I've had one there



Bar at Kloof Street House, with its pressed metal ceilings, luggage collection under the bar and the hipster wait staff.



One of the many spectacular wines we tasted during our trip around the Cape.



An African lady that reminded me of the Bird Woman from Mary Poppins. She sits on a park bench inside the government building grounds feeding the pigeons every day.



Partners in crime – Rhonda and Dan Bannister, travelling buddies. Such good times.

*Food, wine, music, art, history and awe-inspiring scenery are all part of the Cape, a rich tapestry of life, fun, energy, freedom and HOPE.*

too), but tourists and South Africans, like most former colonial outposts, delight in the ritual. The thought of high tea fills me with excitement, but the reality is I don't like scones or sandwiches, or lots of little sweet dessert things, but hey, get into the spirit! It is all presented beautifully and so graciously. I am secretly pleased we did it, being part of the grandeur, complete with grand piano being tinkled in the vast dining hall, all terribly pucker.

South Africa has changed exponentially within the last generation and I would love to

spend more time exploring and learning about this exceptional nation. I am sitting in the airport lounge and feel there is so much more to say, but I feel that some of what I have experienced here can't be explained properly, so I will keep it in my heart long enough to make me come back again.

Footnote: Di travelled with her great friends, Dan and Rhonda Bannister, and this is an extract of her diary of their extensive three-week road trip around The Cape just before the pandemic.

# Why use an INTERIOR DESIGNER?



A qualified interior designer is technically trained in space planning, drafting, lighting, colour, materials and a myriad of other aspects of design. We are experts in shape, proportion, texture and colour, giving us the know-how to guide clients safely and smoothly through what can be challenging during their building, renovating or furnishing/ decorating project.

To do this effectively, we must understand our clients, their lifestyle, their aspirations and their desires to fully realise the potential of the property and how they wish to enjoy it. We want this to be an adventure of discovery for clients, pushing them gently out of their comfort zone, introducing them to design concepts that they may never have considered, taking them a step further than they would have dared by themselves.

**Yes, but I'm pretty good at that myself and I know my taste better than anyone else?** Many people, most people, know their own style. Thanks to popular television lifestyle shows and apps like Pinterest, most people can access ideas and products that suit their style.

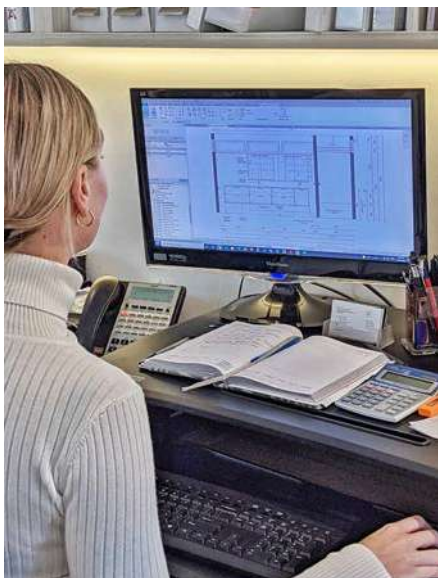
**So, where does an interior designer fit in?** Clients look to us for advice that is going to save them time, errors in selections, trials of indecision and project management. We also source, procure and install all furnishings, saving an enormous logistical challenge for our clients.

**But don't interior designers come with a hefty price tag?** We source materials and products from all over the world which can save a lot of time and money, often finding and procuring design products that cannot be found easily, even through search engines, without the contacts and connections that we have built up over a long period of time.

**So, what can I expect the journey to be like?** It is exciting and energising, with the results being long-reaching

and totally uplifting. We know building regulations, we understand practicality, we delight in testing and broadening our design parameters. We design unique pieces of furniture and built-in cabinetry to maximise impact and functionality. The before-and-after shots of projects in our library speak for themselves, some often being totally unrecognisable.

**Do you only do houses?** Buildings, be they houses, apartments, offices, restaurants, factories or hotels are all essentially boxes that can be pared back to their skeletal framework to be re-imagined and reincarnated into a new and wonderful space. We design and furnish all the above.





We do all the hard work, often pouring over minute details in technical data to arrive at the right design solution, drafting and re-drafting to get the exact right scale and proportion with fine details in every aspect of the cabinetry designs, all whilst being conscious of our clients' lifestyle, routine and wishes. Sourcing the right products and pairing with the right accessories and other furnishings is an artform that takes a lot of skill.

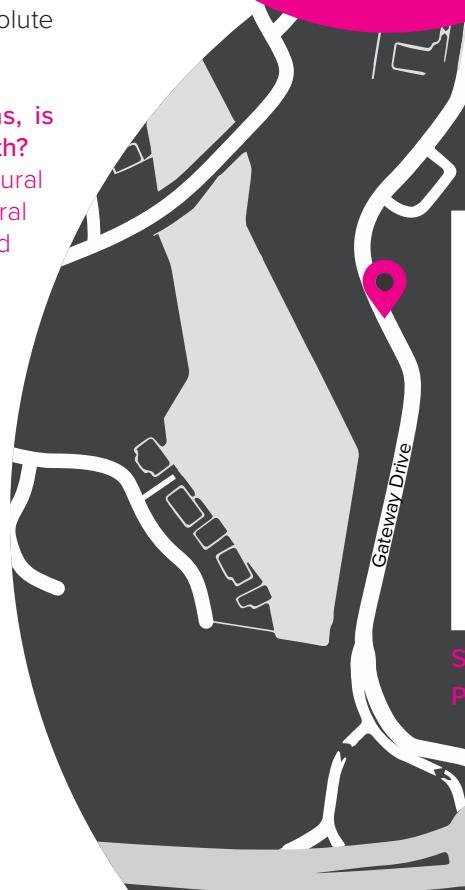


### Will you always stick to my budget?

Sticking within a budget is also an educated, carefully considered aspect of our work. We will endeavour to be realistic with budget estimates and project delivery, with fixed price contracts to ensure that any variations are kept to an absolute minimum, if any.

### I have international inspirations, is this something you can help with?

To keep abreast of architectural styles, design influences, cultural and historic contribution and gathering knowledge simply by observation, I spend a great deal of time travelling to many parts of the world, learning more of contemporary architects' creations in addition to renowned earlier artisans', designers' and architects' work. This is an invaluable part of my work as a designer, I owe it to my clients to be aware and knowledgeable of many aspects of design and architecture and I have participated in architectural and design tours all over the world.



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# DISCOVER THE DI HENSHALL DIFFERENCE



When you work with Di Henshall Interior Design, you benefit not only from Design Director Di Henshall's unrivalled experience but also the strength of her team.

The Di Henshall Interior Design team is creative, reliable and professional in their approach to every design, renovation and furnishing project - arriving at the optimum, unique solution for you, on time and on budget.

