



# HOUSE & GARDEN

SOUTH  
AFRICA

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## FRESH TAKE

BOLD HOMES AND BRIGHT IDEAS  
FOR AN INSPIRED NEW SEASON

LOCAL DESIGN  
GOES GLOBAL

INSIDE SA'S MOST  
AMBITIOUS GARDEN

THE AFRICAN  
ARTISTS CHANGING  
THE WORLD

QUICK & CLEVER  
BATHROOM UPDATES

# TOKYO DRIFT

Embracing the Japanese philosophies of *wabi-sabi* and harmony with nature, this Lucas Interior-designed home finds cool and calm in the California desert

TEXT PIET SMEDY  
PHOTOGRAPHS DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN

YABU PUSHENBERG  
'RUA IPANEMA'  
SWIVEL LOUNGE  
CHAIRS FROM  
AVENUE ROAD  
SIT BY THE  
STEEL-PANELLED  
FIREPLACE WALL  
AND FAIR DESIGN  
COFFEE TABLE. AN  
ENY LEE PARKER  
'OO' CLAY LAMP  
RESTS BEHIND THE  
CUSTOM SOFA



THE LARGE STONE KITCHEN ISLAND 'FLOATS' IN THE MIDDLE OF THE KITCHEN, WITH URBAN ELECTRIC METAL PENDANTS AND BARSTOOLS COVERED IN DARK UPHOLSTERY BY THOMAS HAYES

# PART

desert oasis, part Zen garden, it would not be a stretch to call this California home a veritable Yin and Yang of design; a balance between equal and opposing forces – light and dark, mass and air, nature and man – that finds not just cohesion but dynamic synergy. 'The house is designed so that you are aware of the setting in every part of the home,' says David Lucas, creative director at Lucas interior architecture and design studio, who, with his sister, principal designer Suzie Lucas, spearheaded the project. 'And, thanks to its configuration, it takes full advantage of the beautiful desert weather.'

This becomes immediately apparent upon entering the home's private courtyard, which leads to the front door and open-plan interior spaces beyond and concludes at a glass wall providing views of the surrounding golf course and distant mountains. 'It really sets the mood for the house,' says David, whose team worked closely with the landscape architect to create an entry courtyard that felt 'as if you had crossed into a spiritual space.'

Inside, the floor plan is arranged so that a main, central room encapsulates the communal areas – kitchen, dining and living rooms – and leads out onto a covered lanai, also complete with a conversation space, dining area and outdoor grill and kitchen. In addition to this, there is a separate speakeasy-style bar, which can also be accessed off the main courtyard. 'Private wings extend off of these larger, main entertaining spaces that are centred in the home to separate more intimate spaces, such as the media room and bedrooms, and to allow our clients to relax and retreat to,' says Suzie. 'We focused on the flow and function of the various living spaces to achieve a cohesive experience,' continues David. 'Each design decision needed to have the effect of unburdening our clients from their daily lives to create an environment where they could truly relax.'

Drawing on the surrounding desertscape – wheat-toned sand, sun-scorched rock, silvery greens and weathered timber – David, Suzie and their team wove the ►



ALEXANDER LAMONT  
'WOVEN ORB' COPPER  
LANTERNS FLANK  
A CUSTOM BED IN THE  
PRIMARY BEDROOM

story of the land into every element of the home's interior design. 'The house is so connected to its environment that it felt necessary to let this drive decisions around texture and colour,' says David. 'Broadly speaking, we embraced the concept of *wabi-sabi* as a macro influence on the design. We wanted forms and materials to feel beautifully imperfect and simple.' Using the already existing exterior and interior limestone as a springboard, a tightly edited, mostly neutral palette was employed, punctuated by pops of metallic while bespoke oak cabinetry throughout was lightly cerused to accentuate the natural grain. This Japanese element appears again in the wet room, complete with restorative soaking tub and reflecting pool (the latter inspired by the moon viewing platform of Katsura Imperial Villa). 'It is not so literal in most of the home but is a spirit that can be felt throughout.'

Perhaps the most deftly played dichotomy within the home is that of air and mass, where robust, rectilinear architecture is juxtaposed with softer, free-flowing forms, such as the Alexander Lamont 'Woven Orb' lanterns or the statement 'Oo' clay lamp by Eny Lee Parker. 'Overall, we sought to express the feeling of being grounded in the house, so much of the design has a low centre of gravity, but is balanced with levity and light,' says David. 'Many of the interior architectural features and furniture are detailed to float, such as the indoor and outdoor kitchen islands. These are massive stone blocks that have a strong negative reveal at the floor that make them appear to hover in space. This play on weight and weightlessness is expressing the idea that, while grounded, our spirit is light.' Lucas [lucasinterior.com](https://lucasinterior.com)



THE PRIMARY  
BATHROOM PULLS  
IN JAPANESE  
INFLUENCES AND  
TRANQUIL, WARM  
DESERT TONES



LUCAS DESIGNED  
A WET ROOM WITH  
A TRADITIONAL  
SOAKING TUB AND  
LARGE-FORMAT  
SLAB WALLS. THE  
TEAK FLOORING  
EXTENDS  
OUTWARDS OVER  
A REFLECTING  
POOL WITHIN A  
PRIVATE GARDEN



ONE OF MANY  
ENTERTAINING  
SPACES LIES  
WITHIN THE ENTRY  
COURTYARD,  
CENTRED AROUND  
AN ORGANIC ROCK  
FIRE FEATURE AND  
SURROUNDED  
BY HARBOUR  
LOUNGE CHAIRS  
AND GLOSTER  
ROCKING CHAIRS



TOP DOWN  
THE GENEROUS  
BAR WITH  
THOMAS HAYES  
LEATHER STOOLS  
IN THE HOME'S  
SPEAKEASY.  
ARTWORK FROM  
HOHMANN FINE  
ART GALLERY;  
A LARGE,  
OPEN ENTRY  
CONNECTS THE  
COURTYARD  
TO THE MAIN  
ENTERTAINING  
SPACES