

# collective soul

AS COMFORTABLE AS IT IS STYLISH, A YOUNG FAMILY'S ORANJEZICHT HOME PROVES THAT THE UNDERSTATED AND THE ELEGANT CAN COMBINE WITH EASE

TEXT **NATALIE BORUVKA** PHOTOGRAPHS **HENRIQUE WILDING**



## CHERISHED HOME

The armoire was salvaged from a shop in Salt River and restored by Jacqui McArthur, the owner of this home in Oranjezicht, Cape Town. The deep-buttoned leather recliner, one of her favourite pieces, was a splurge buy in Dubai. OPPOSITE 'These two Krisjan Rossouw (krisjanrossouw.com) photographs are powerful, sensual and feminine all at the same time. They reflect the epitome of a woman,' says Jacqui.







The table in the dining area, which is part of the open-plan kitchen, is from Block & Chisel ([blockandchisel.co.za](http://blockandchisel.co.za)). OPPOSITE, FROM LEFT Jacqui with her children, Rhett and Brooke Eva; the floral artwork is by Nicole Cohen ([nicolecohenart.com](http://nicolecohenart.com)).

Upturned on the lawn, a little red digger is the first sign that the garden is the McArthur children’s happy place. And while they’re not yet back from school, it’s easy enough to imagine six-year-old Rhett and nine-year-old Brooke Eva bounding through the front door to play under the final rays of winter sun in the backyard. ‘The two of them are always outside exploring and having adventures. We’re fortunate to have this outdoor haven so close to the city,’ says Jacqui, an interior decorator and stylist who has chosen to return to her passion after 18 months as creative director at Jenna McArthur PR.

It took two viewings to convince her that the colonial-style double-storey house shrouded by Table Mountain in the inner-city suburb of Oranjezicht was one she

could work her identity on. ‘The kitchen was bright blue, the living room walls were red and the existing furniture made the house feel oppressively dark, but despite this I recognised an intrinsically elegant space characterised by lofty ceilings and gorgeous sash windows. The bones were right and I was up for the challenge,’ she says.

Declaring a penchant for spaces that reveal character and rouse emotion, Jacqui imbued her bedroom with a persona of strength and courage set against a backdrop of verging-on-black walls. ‘I love that the colour provokes such different responses,’ she says. ‘For me it’s a feminine, uplifting space, and when the kids and I bundle into my bed on a Sunday evening, it’s certainly the happiest room in the house.’ Throughout the home the moody hue is juxtaposed

with discretion against crisp white walls. It’s a palette that amplifies the generous proportions and creates a suitably neutral platform for a diverse mix of contemporary and classical furniture, much of which was gathered over a decade living in London, Singapore and Dubai.

The walls are also a canvas for Jacqui to indulge in her love of photographic art. ‘There’s something immensely precious about the moment a photograph captures and the personal response that follows,’ she says. Some of her favourites include a Vanessa Paxton ballerina print and a portrait of Roger Moore, ever-debonair as James Bond with Martini in hand. A trio of recently acquired fine art prints by local photographer Krisjan Rossouw makes an exotic and compelling statement on a server. As with the arrangements>

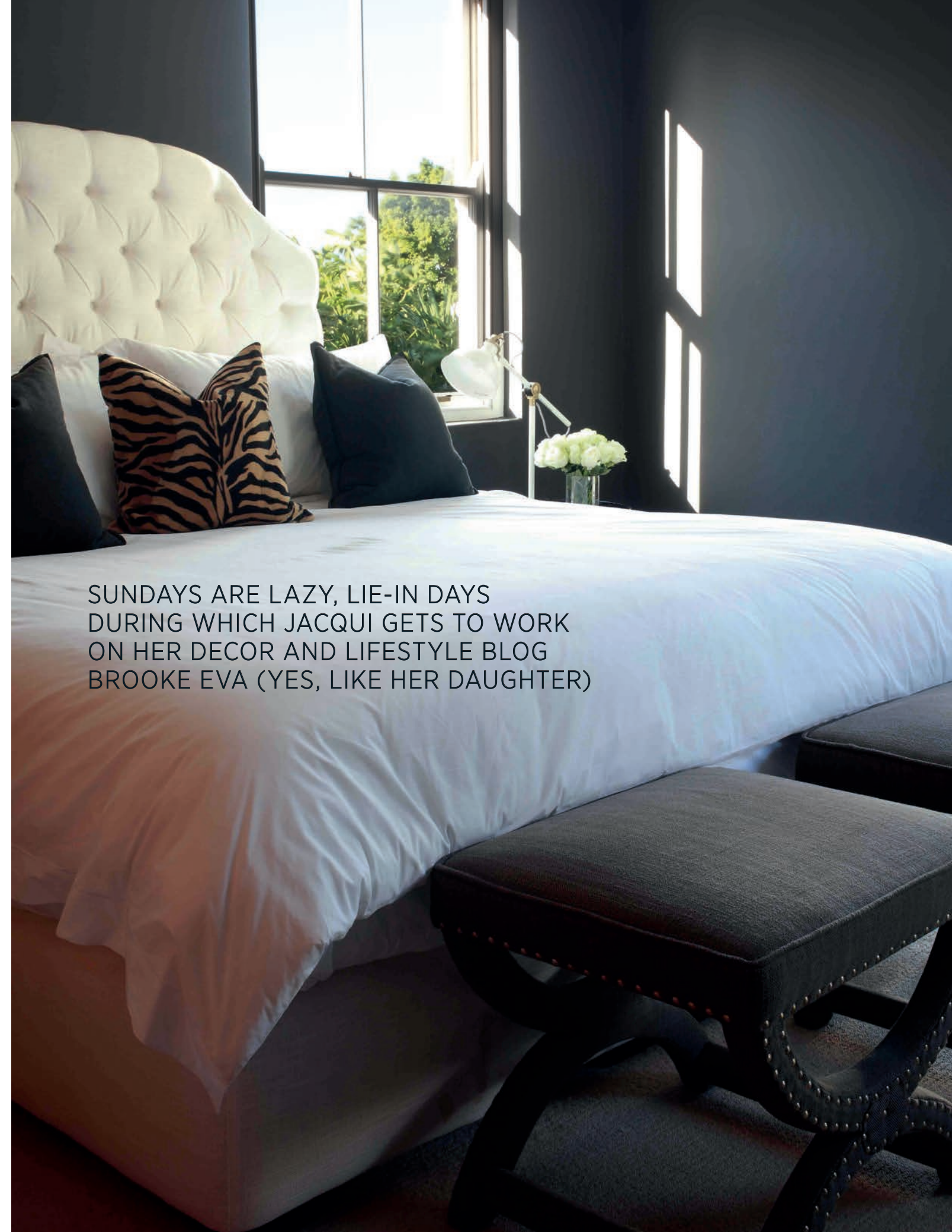


FROM TOP The gilt-framed mirror was bought in a Chinese warehouse in Dubai. 'You could get lost in there for days and not find anything worth buying, or you could strike it lucky as I did with this mirror,' says Jacqui; she updated the Ikea Hemnes chest with black and gold paint and gold upholstery tacks. OPPOSITE The walls in the main bedroom are painted in Dulux's Pebble Black.

of furniture, the compositions of art are subject to change. 'My home is constantly evolving. If I see a piece I love, I'll make a place for it because the pleasure it provides is invaluable.'

The galley-style kitchen – a large rectangular space that lends itself to modern, open-plan living – functions as the heart of the McArthur household. One end features a chunky wooden table; the other, which was the previous homeowners' dining area, holds its own almost defiantly with just a bold rug and a dramatic feature wall. It's exactly the kind of unexpected scenario that Jacqui enjoys creating. 'Filling it would have pointlessly obstructed the flow of space, which is not practical with young, energetic children around,' she explains. 'It's simply a beautiful, dead space.'

Despite a frenetic work schedule Jacqui prioritises supper with her children. 'Rhett and Brooke Eva both love cooking, so I'll put things out on the dining table and they'll help me to chop and mix. Food is a big thing for us and a chance to spend time together in the evenings.' Unlike weekday mornings, which start early and run with strict precision, Sundays are lazy, lie-in days during which Jacqui gets to work on her decor and lifestyle blog Brooke Eva (yes, like her daughter) and the children are allowed time on their tablets. 'Lunch happens late at home or out with friends and family,' says Jacqui, 'and the day always ends with the three of us on the couch with pizza and a movie.' □ [brookeeva.com](http://brookeeva.com)



SUNDAYS ARE LAZY, LIE-IN DAYS DURING WHICH JACQUI GETS TO WORK ON HER DECOR AND LIFESTYLE BLOG BROOKE EVA (YES, LIKE HER DAUGHTER)



#### JACQUI'S HOME TRUTHS

**To me, family means** everything. I look to my siblings, parents and extended family for support and honesty, and I learn from Brooke Eva and Rhett daily, even though it should be the other way around. **The best thing I've ever inherited** is my beautiful antique christening gown. Both kids were christened in it and I hope their children will be too.

**The best thing about living where I do** is that it's so central and there are amazing mountain views. **My favourite room** is my bedroom. I love my ballerina print from Citizen Atelier. **I'm drawn to** photographic art. **My favourite piece of design advice** is never to follow trends. Identify your own style and cultivate it.

**What I love most about winter** is the rain. **The first thing I do when I get home** is kick off the heels, kiss and hug my little ones and ask them to tell me about the highlight of their day.

**When I go shopping** I don't buy impulsively. **When it comes to entertaining** I keep the food fresh and organic. It's about a beautiful table, fresh flowers and your guests having fun.

**I'm always** coveting art. I spend a lot of time searching for new artists doing interesting work.

**My favourite local getaway** is our holiday home in Stilbaai.



RIGHT For her bedroom, Brooke Eva chose Cole & Son's Hummingbirds wallpaper from the Collection of Flowers range, available at St Leger & Viney (stleger.co.za). OPPOSITE, FROM LEFT Rhett's bedroom walls feature Cole & Son's Woods from the New Contemporary Two collection, available at St Leger & Viney; the adidas photograph is another Nicole Cohen.



'MY HOME IS CONSTANTLY EVOLVING. IF I SEE A PIECE I LOVE, I'LL MAKE A PLACE FOR IT BECAUSE THE PLEASURE IT PROVIDES IS INVALUABLE.'