

architect's plan



# DISTINCT CHARACTER

Steel screens and timber shutters give the façade of this contemporary farmhouse a unique look and feel



## AT A GLANCE

**THE ARCHITECT:** Derick Britz (pictured) of Studios Architects.

**THE CLIENT:** Don Richter, who lives with his beagle, Klara, and miniature dachshund, Wouter.

**THE CLIENT'S BRIEF:** An industrial-inspired house with large rooms that incorporates exposed metal beams and lots of glass to bring in the surrounding scenery.

**THE HOUSE:** A modern farmhouse with a double-volume, pavilion-like living space at its core, four bedrooms and a striking façade that features steel screens and meranti shutters.

For many Jo'burgers the promise of a peaceful 'country' lifestyle offered by the many housing estates flourishing on the city's peripheries is too good to resist. This was certainly the case for financial advisor, Don Richter. "I wanted to come home to an environment that was the complete opposite of the frenetic city buzz I face at work every day," he says.

Don was one of the first residents to purchase a stand in Kyalami's Waterfall Estate, which appealed to him because of its focus on sustainability, homes with a low environmental impact and indigenous vegetation. He chose a piece of land between two small lakes that he says offers "an uninterrupted view over the estate's grasslands and the bordering Jukskei River".

TEXT NATALIE BORUVKA PHOTOGRAPHS CHRISTOPH HOFFMANN

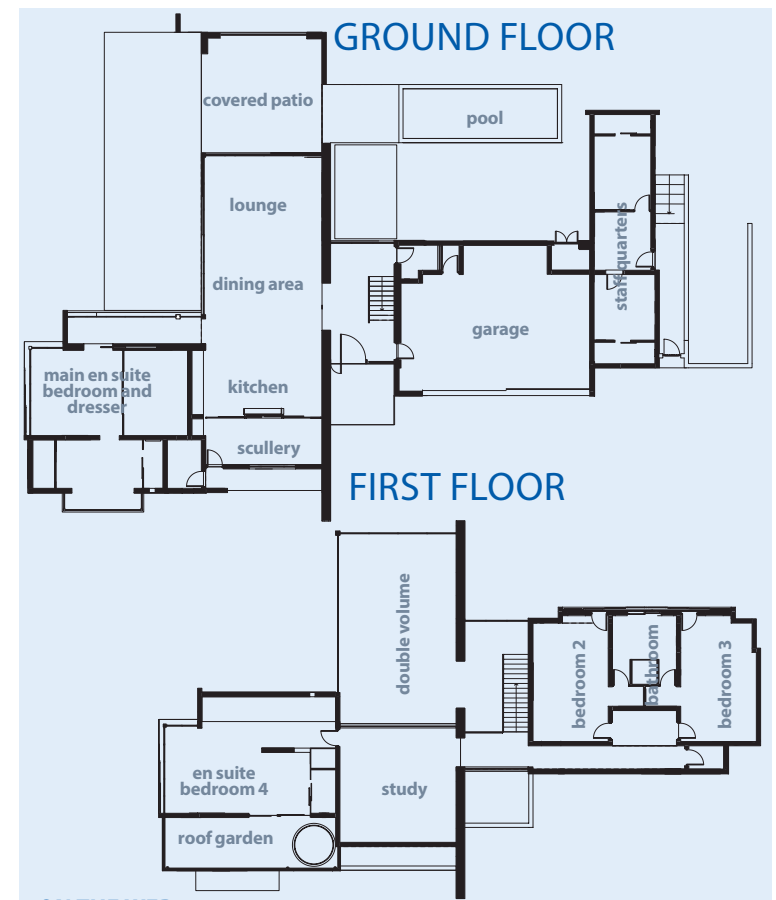
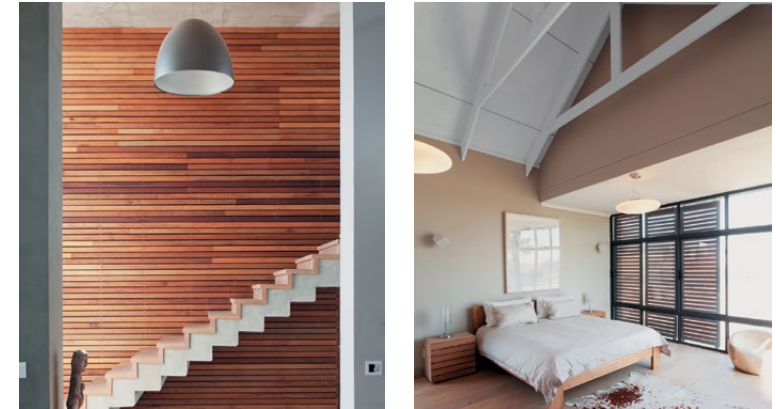


Don was lucky to meet architect Derick Britz of Studios Architects who shared his vision for a house that would remain sensitive to the natural beauty of the site. "At the same time, he also wanted the house to have an industrial feel and be architecturally distinctive," says Derick. He came up with a T-shaped design that links the house to the street on one side and the green belt on the other, while seamlessly integrating the indoor and outdoor spaces.

The main leg of the "T" is a vast double-volume space with a pitched roof that opens up to the north and west with sliding doors. It houses the kitchen and open-plan living and dining areas, which are overlooked by the study on a mezzanine level. The living areas are flanked by the garage and the main suite on the ground floor, with an additional three bedrooms upstairs.

Not only does this layout offer the bedrooms and living areas exceptional north-facing views, it also allows space for a private courtyard accessed via one of the home's most striking features: the covered patio's 4,5m-high glass and steel door that pivots open to create a canopy over the pool deck.

The house receives strong western sunlight which keeps it warm in winter, but means that the interiors need to be cooled down in summer. Steel screens on the western façade and meranti wood shutters on the bedroom windows shade these areas and enhance the industrial look of the exterior which includes a mix of concrete, glass and metal. "It's this home's ability to respond truthfully to its natural surrounds and to Don's needs that makes it timeless," says Derick. GH



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