



SEA OF GOLD

BAREFOOT GLAMOUR IS A WAY OF LIFE IN A NORTH COAST
FAMILY HOME DESIGNED BY MICHELE THROSSSELL

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IN DETAIL

What A beach escape for a big family **Where** Tropical KwaZulu-Natal North Coast **Design roots** A Kelly Wearstler-inspired mix of earthy texture and Hollywood gloss with African accents **Point of difference** City-level glamour by the sea



The Kelly Wearstler-inspired gold-frame bar stools, made from galvanised stainless steel, offer an eye-catching counterpoint to the textured wooden bar

OPPOSITE PAGE Andy and Alex van der Velde enjoy a beach walk minutes away from their house with four of their children



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hen decorating a coastal family home, glamour is hardly a top requirement. This Joburg couple, however, when acquiring a new residence on the KwaZulu-Natal North Coast, brought an appreciation of city glitz to the seaside, much to the delight of interior designer Michele Throssell, who was tasked to transform the six-bedroom double-storey home into a space that is both laid-back enough to welcome groups of children and sufficiently glamorous to entertain with elegant abandon.

‘We love her use of open areas and lots of light, and natural elegant style,’ says owner Andy van der Velde. He and his wife, Alex, both involved in the logistics industry, are used to commuting between Johannesburg and the coast, where four of their children are at school. Now choosing to make Zimbali Coastal Resort their more permanent home, they’ve managed to maintain their City of Gold lifestyle a few hundred metres away from the beach.

Throssell, an avid Kelly Wearstler admirer, has created a space that references old-Hollywood charisma – even the almost-teen daughter’s bedroom is injected with a dose of gold amid Throssell’s signature geometric treatment – while maintaining the easy-living atmosphere that sees children constantly streaming through the doors. ‘On any given weekend, we could have two or three extra children,’ laughs Andy, explaining the six-bunk-bed games room on the bottom floor, which has its own access from the courtyard deck where surfboards, bodyboards and wetsuits hang out.

At the main entrance, a cut-mirror wall stretches from the ceiling to the bottom floor, reflecting the lush KwaZulu-Natal greenery outside the front door. ‘I love using mirror,’ explains Throssell. ‘With interesting designs, they can add a whole new dimension to a room.’

In the upstairs living room, this dimension is circular – a mirror full of interlinking rings, echoing a dramatic golden chandelier by Egg Designs, which glitters above the all-white dining space. The chandelier formed the starting point for this interior, says Throssell, who then went ahead to fill the white-and-bleached-oak interior with further golden accents – from geometric coffee-table bases to peace signs on cushions. The Westler-inspired bar stools – sexy white statement pieces with flashy golden legs – were an obvious choice. ▶

FROM TOP A life-size foot sculpture and a Mervyn Gers ceramic vase make for a quirky display in the dining area; the gold Egg Designs chandelier was the starting point of the living area’s decor scheme **OPPOSITE PAGE FROM TOP** The bar offers an elegant welcome; the downstairs living room makes use of earthier, more ethnic textures



Every room exposes itself to the outdoors to an extent, offering instant appreciation of abundant thickets of verdant vegetation





Michele Throssell's clever mix of textures and patterns brings the upstairs living room together, the grey armchairs with upholstered arms offering a cool tailored contrast to the chic gold accents. Paintings by Durban artist Kristin Yang are a Zen touch in the room



‘The bar offers such a nice sense of arrival,’ she smiles, pointing out the carved square shapes in the Niemann SA board counter. The carvings are her way of bringing texture to the space, much in the same way that she’s opted for a fossil-like floor tile rather than a clean marble, and brought in rugs of various materials into every room – each one a different shape. Lamps are equally varied – from neutral ceramic bases to a steel design by Egg Designs, a copper base by Plumbago or a quirky Dokter and Misses desk lamp, each echoing the personality of the chosen space.

Downstairs, the family living room is a moodier take on the natural palette, with darker shades creating a cocooned space. ‘I wanted a massive couch that they could all jump onto,’ says Throssell of the tuck-stitch black sofa that engulfs the room. A splash of colonial nostalgia in the predominately contemporary space, the peacock chair becomes part of the outdoor living-space deck when the glass doors are stacked open.

Every room exposes itself to the outdoors to an extent, offering instant appreciation of abundant thickets of verdant vegetation, setting the home in the heart of nature, with rolling waves equally close at hand. It’s an interior that, despite its sense of occasion, is very well suited to a sand-between-the-toes lifestyle. There’s no other way the Van der Veldes would want to live.

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Even the almost-teen daughter's bedroom is injected with a dose of gold amid Throssell's signature geometric treatment



The Van der Veldes' 12-year-old daughter's room is awash with her favourite pinks and purples, the gold theme brought in here too to add grown-up glamour OPPOSITE PAGE FROM TOP The main bedroom's palette was inspired by the aquamarine tiles in the shower; a K Light Import chandelier hangs above the bath, with a Guido van Besouw glass artwork decorating the space

