

**this spread** White floor-to-ceiling curtains, LC03 lounge chairs by Maarten Van Severen for De Padova and a Prado sofa by Christian Werner for Ligne Roset set the scene in the airy open-plan living space of this family home in Magaliesberg.

# ELEGANT ESCAPISM

*Surrounded by sweeping Highveld grasses, a modern farm-style house on the fringe of Johannesburg holds its own with a singular sense of space and a dose of Danish hygge*

*Text SHARON SOROUR-MORRIS Photographs ELSA YOUNG Production MARUSHKA STIPINOVICH*

**this page** A Wiggle side chair by Frank Gehry for Vitra and a Blow Up Bamboo side table by the Campana Brothers for Alessi provide light wood touches in the entrance hall, seen here from one of the outside patios reached via expansive glass sliding doors.

**F**or all its Nordic charm and minimalist interiors, there are lovely juxtapositions playing out in the sophisticated abode of a cosmopolitan Johannesburg couple. There's a palpable tranquillity unusual for Gauteng living permeating from the house itself as well as its peaceful surroundings. There's also the fact that this 600m<sup>2</sup> build, which epitomises 'less is more' with its 5,5m-high Oregon pine ceilings and abundance of glass, is very much a family home.

Set on an eco-estate with astonishing views of the majestic Magaliesberg mountain range, the four-bedroomed, single-level house is the couple's dream home where they live with their five children ranging in age from 11 to 18. They chose to build in this farm-like setting about 35km from Sandton because they are naturally inclined towards an easy slow-living philosophy and the positives of a green lifestyle.

Architecturally, the peculiar U-shaped open-plan building comprises two adjacent barn-like structures joined by light-filled passages with beautiful views. While the couple had to stick to the estate's architectural directives, their house was inspired by structures like the Greenhouse at Babylonstoren near Franschhoek. Matching the stark exterior with an elegant interior, they drew on their love of Nordic design as well as the expertise of Classicdesign.it, an overseas interior design firm owned by family friends. They also cite the input of Dawid Augustyn of interior design and building consultancy Establishment – who sourced and supplied the light fittings – as 'inspirational'. The theme is reinforced by a neutral colour palette: here, crisp white is the leading lady, well-supported by muted shades, classic black and pops of colour in the children's bedrooms.

But while they wanted 'clutter-free', they didn't want 'cold'. In keeping with the Danish concept of *hygge*, they were keen to create a welcoming, warm atmosphere suited to the hustle and bustle of family life. To that end, they executed their plan perfectly. The dramatic open-plan kitchen-living-dining area, with its large windows and doors giving unfettered access to the terraces and pool, is the heart of the home. The dining room table is where it all happens, from all the daily family meals to homework sessions (even though the children have an expansive 5m desk designated for schoolwork in the passage just off their bedrooms). 'We spend a lot of time at home and eat many family meals at the table. As we try to live as close to nature as possible, we aim for well-balanced meals using seasonal fresh produce from our vegetable and herb garden,' they say.

Despite all of the impressive spaces that can be found throughout the home, the kitchen is the undisputed star of the show. A three-module, black stainless-steel Vipp kitchen from Denmark, it's unsurprisingly the couple's pride and joy. An exhaustive hunt for the perfect stainless-steel kitchen to meet the unique demands of the home – from the space to the style – culminated with them typing the words 'black', 'metal', 'stainless steel' and 'minimalist' into Pinterest's search function. And voilà! An image of a Vipp unit appeared, a replica of the one they'd seen in a magazine, but could not identify. 'We were so excited. Vipp was the only kitchen concept that was in sync with our minimalist philosophy of stylish yet functional living,' they say. 'We contacted the CEO in Denmark, who put us in touch with her son-in-law, who handles the logistics of shipping and overseas orders. As it is a modular concept, the kitchen is flat-packed and shipped and installed by a Danish expert. It was such smooth-sailing!' Classic and timeless, the contemporary design of the island and its two tall modules perfectly enhance the atmosphere of the living area, adding to the serene, comfortable space.

While the family spend time in every room of the house, the bedrooms are sanctuaries, especially the main bedroom which, like the rest of the house, has enviable views. But it's not only the bedrooms that have special appeal. The homeowners describe their house as 'a little piece of heaven' and experience what the Danish call *forelsket* – the heady feeling you get the first time you fall in love – every time they come home. ■ [vipp.com](http://vipp.com)



HOME MAGALIESBERG



**this page (clockwise from  
topp left)** *Objet* add a subtle  
infusion of colour; the kitchen  
is characterised by its Vipp  
modular units; fresh produce  
is grown in the garden; a rack  
from Inhaus Design displays  
heirlooms and collectables.  
**opposite** Three Wireflow  
chandeliers by Arik Levy for  
Vibia crown the living area.

**this page** A built-in window seat off the kitchen area, illuminated by a Serge Mouille wall light, is the perfect vantage point to take in the garden's farm-like setting and grasslands beyond. **opposite** In the sleek, serene living area, herringbone oak floors and an antique marble mantelpiece with handmade brass inserts, add warmth to the neutral palette.



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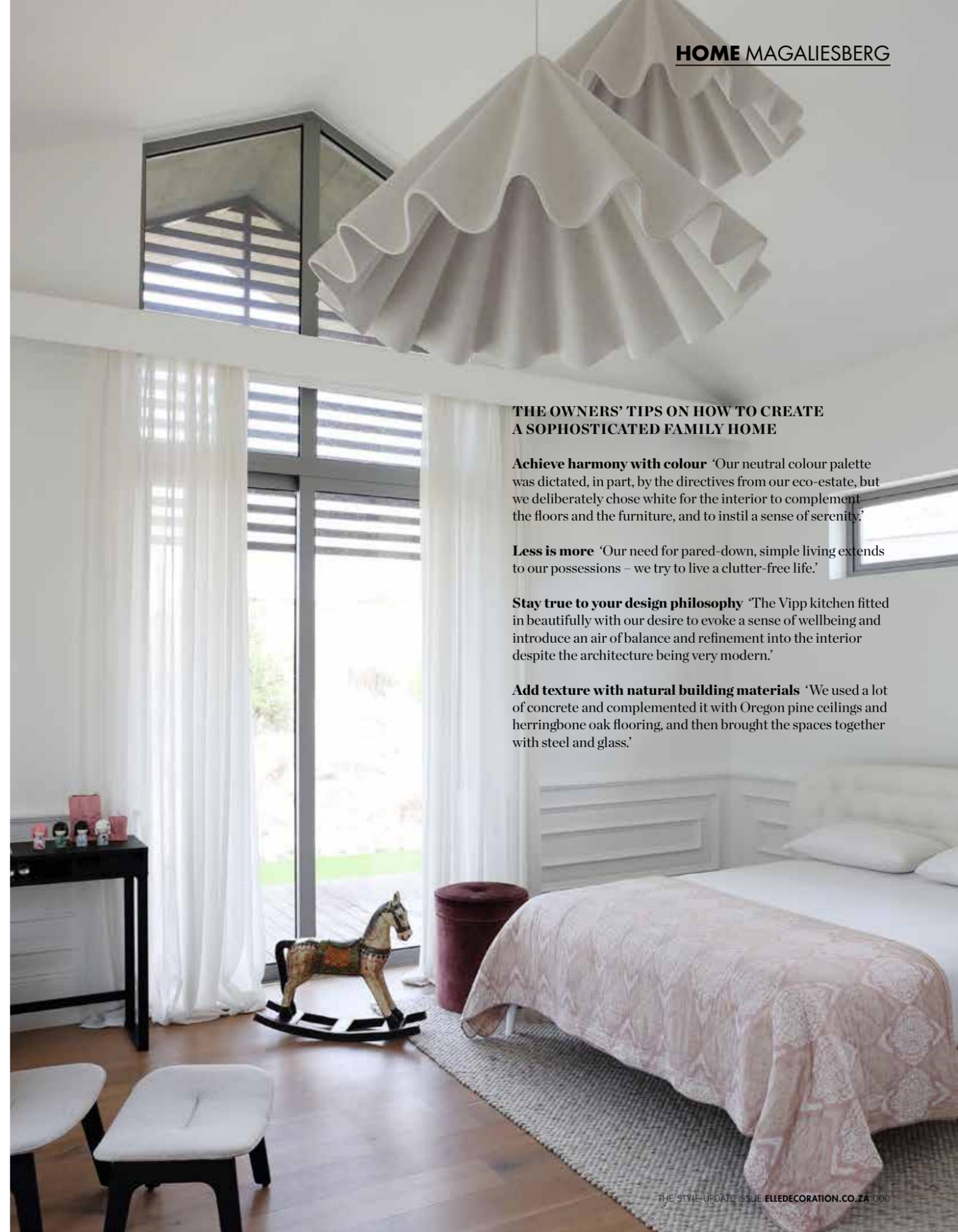




**HOME MAGALIESBERG**

**this page (from top)** Seating in the main bedroom includes a Tulip chair by Pucci + Dondoli for Jori (left) and an LL.04 cowhide chaise longue by Maarten Van Severen for De Padova (right); marble and brass abound in the bathrooms. **opposite** A Hotelroyal bed by Terri Pecora for Zanotta is paired with Taschino night stands by Gabriele Rosa for Zanotta.





**THE OWNERS' TIPS ON HOW TO CREATE A SOPHISTICATED FAMILY HOME**

**Achieve harmony with colour** 'Our neutral colour palette was dictated, in part, by the directives from our eco-estate, but we deliberately chose white for the interior to complement the floors and the furniture, and to instil a sense of serenity.'

**Less is more** 'Our need for pared-down, simple living extends to our possessions – we try to live a clutter-free life.'

**Stay true to your design philosophy** 'The Vipp kitchen fitted in beautifully with our desire to evoke a sense of wellbeing and introduce an air of balance and refinement into the interior despite the architecture being very modern.'

**Add texture with natural building materials** 'We used a lot of concrete and complemented it with Oregon pine ceilings and herringbone oak flooring, and then brought the spaces together with steel and glass.'

**this page (clockwise from top)**

Wall-mounted Tolomeo lamps from Artemide hang above three of the children's beds; just of the main bedroom is a study; greys dominate the bedroom of the couple's eldest daughter. **opposite** Two Dancing pendant lights by Isko-Berlin emphasise the high ceilings in the homeowners' youngest daughter's bedroom.

