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HOMES
with soul
*Modern spaces full
of inspiration*



RECALL: 29/9/2011



Home profile

THE OWNER Matthew Hodgson, an investment banker and part-time property developer.
THE PROPERTY A new-build house in mid-century modern style in Cape Town, South Africa. There's a living room, two bedroom suites, two further bedrooms and bathrooms, one WC and a laundry room on the ground floor, an open-plan kitchen, dining area, living area and media room on the first floor, plus a courtyard garden and pool.

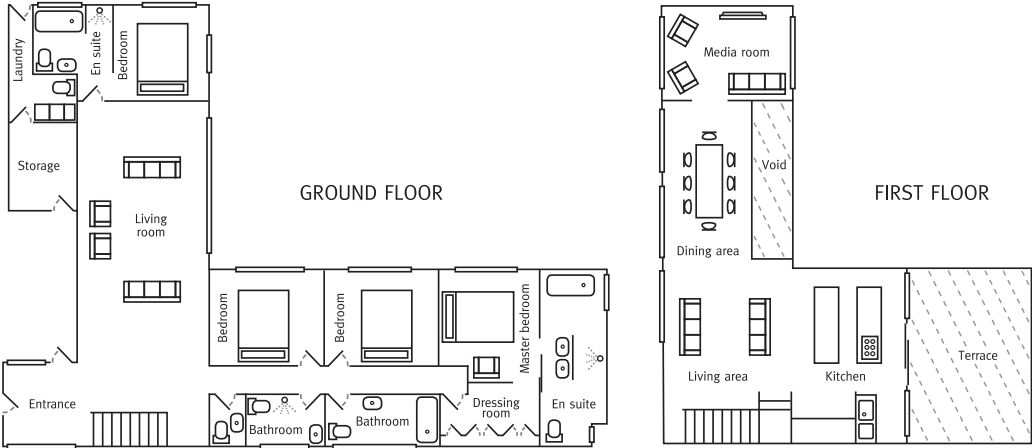
EXTERIOR
The house – Waterline – is a modernist's dream, all low-slung glass, steel and concrete, but with sections of warming timber. 'We wanted to balance the hardness of the concrete and glass with the softness of wood,' explains Matthew.
Get the look For sleek modular garden furniture similar to this, see Dedon's range at Leisure Plan. Clifton Nurseries does large planters in different finishes. >

Natural beauty

Ever doodled your dream home on a napkin? Matthew did, and look what happened...

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PRODUCTION **KERSTIN ESTER/FRANK FEATURES**

THE BLUEPRINT



LOWER LIVING ROOM

Charlotte, a young friend of the family, epitomises the laid-back mood Matthew has created in his home. 'My entertaining style is relaxed and inclusive,' he says. 'I don't go in for formality much. In fact, I love it when friends and family arrive unannounced.'

Get the look The artwork was specially commissioned in Japan, but create your own at Surface View, which can blow up and mount photographs to your specifications.



Ask financier Matthew Hodgson what he would have been in another life and he doesn't hesitate to tell you: 'An architect.' So it's no surprise to learn that, after years of dreaming, he has finally designed and built his own mid-century-inspired home. 'My day job is investment banking, but my creative outlet has always been dabbling in property,' he says. Four years ago he had a sudden impulse to turn 'dabbling' into building his dream home. 'I was on a plane and started doodling. I thought, "How would it look if I designed something from scratch?"' Amazingly, with a few tweaks, those doodles became a stunning house by the sea in South Africa.

Originally from Cape Town, Matthew now lives in west London, but returned to his roots to build the house. 'I've been lucky enough to travel extensively, but Cape Town will always be home,' he says. 'With a house here, I'm more inclined to spend time visiting, catching up with family and friends.'

Although the decision to build happened in a moment, the process of designing, refining and getting planning approval took another two years. Joining him in the project was his property business partner Anthony Meyer, who handled things over in Cape Town. 'We communicated through daily phone calls, email and digital photographs. You could say it was built by virtual reality,' he laughs.

According to Matthew, it was tough to find the right site in the right area, 'but the place I've ended up in – Noordhoek – has a relaxed beach vibe, yet is just a short drive from the city,' he says. 'I had decided on the area when a seafront house ripe for demolition came up for sale. I took inspiration from mid-century architects, in particular Pierre Koenig's Stahl house in Los Angeles,'

says Matthew. 'The idea of building a modernist glass and concrete home in an area of natural beauty was very exciting.'

Matthew wanted the house to be at one with the elements, but had to factor in local weather conditions. 'This area is not known as the Cape of Storms for nothing,' he says. In fact, during the build, a massive storm claimed the roof of a neighbour's house. 'That made us realise how vulnerable we were, so we reinforced the structure with steel and installed storm-proof windows and doors.'

The concrete and steel structure is softened inside with iroko wood and outside with balau decking and cladding. 'The setting, with its sand dunes and long grasses, does a lot to blur the minimalist lines of the house, too,' says Matthew. Internally, year-round sunlight streams through the vast glass doors and windows, which frame the views outside. 'We made the ceilings high and left doorways open in the hall and upstairs living areas to make it feel as spacious as possible,' he adds. Rather than hanging curtains, he installed discreet electric blinds throughout, so as not to distract from the clean lines of the house.

Matthew paid the same attention to detail with the furnishings. 'I did the interior myself,' he says. Design classic furniture sits alongside artworks commissioned in Japan and photographs taken by Matthew. 'I wanted the furniture and art to act as the glue between the house and its mid-century inspiration,' he says. 'That was uppermost in my mind with every purchase.'

Not surprisingly, Matthew escapes here as often as possible. 'It's a place to relax,' he says. 'It's private, yet lends itself to communal life, with family and friends who come to stay a lot.' Lucky them. *Matthew's home is available for holiday lets at villawaterline.co.za.*

UPPER LIVING AREA

Matthew chose to site a second, informal living room on the top floor to take advantage of the ocean views. 'By having two lounges – one facing the beach and another, downstairs, facing the garden – I can choose how to start the day,' says Matthew. 'Some mornings it's a coffee and sea view, others it's curled up and looking onto the trees.'

Get the look Find similar sofas and ottomans at Minotti. For luxurious rugs, check the range at Jacaranda.



LOWER LIVING ROOM

Full-height glass doors and windows let light pour in throughout the day. 'I love sitting in the lower living room at night,' says Matthew, 'glass of wine in hand, with the doors open to the garden and the trees all lit up.' The dark gloss of iroko wood, used right through the interior, adds warmth and softness.

Get the look Find a classic Eames lounge and ottoman at Vitra. For lamps in this style, see the Mega Tolomeo floor lamp for Artemide at Utility. For a similar console table, see the Alto at Chaplins. Ikea's Orgel Vreten lamp is in this style. >





*Home truths

Matthew, which place inspires you most? Florence. Without the Renaissance, life would not be what it is today.

Any hobbies? Trail running in the mountains.

If you could change your profession, what would you be? An architect, or business manager of a large architectural practice.

Secret vice? Heliskiing. Once you've done it, it's hard to go back.

Do you collect anything? Architectural books.

Describe your perfect holiday. A large dose of Africa, skiing in the Canadian Rockies or sailing a gulet along the Turkish coast with friends.

What are you reading at the moment? *Outliers: The Story of Success* by Malcolm Gladwell.

BATHROOM

Clean lines and simple fittings reign in the en-suites, but all have big shower heads for invigorating bathing. 'The aim is to move from just being awake to genuinely feeling alive,' says Matthew.

Get the look Find a shower head and hand-held shower like these at CP Hart. For a wooden shower tray, go to Alternative Plans.

BEDROOM

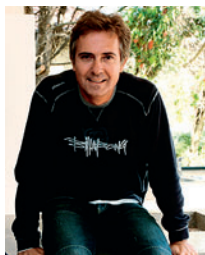
The ground-floor bedrooms are 'private, contained spaces that make the most of the peaceful garden,' says Matthew. 'When you want bigger views, you just head upstairs.'

Get the look For a similar rug, go to The Real Rug Company. Find a bed in this style at Viaduct. The White Company does similarly crisp, plain bed linen.

For stockist details, see page 198



LEFT TO RIGHT Tobias leather **easy chair**, £2,495, Gerard van den Berg at Heal's. Lilac velvet **cushion**, £36, Living In Store. Galilea **floor lamp**, £450, Pascal Salvador at The Conran Shop.



IDEAS TO STEAL

from MATTHEW'S HOUSE



CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT Stowaway Double **bookcase**, £499, John Lewis. Sidney **sofa** in Brown, £1,650, Habitat. **Cowhide** (JAN37A), £225, City Cows.

KEY SURFACES OF THE HOUSE

(From top) Rustic laminate **flooring** in American Cherry, £21.49 per sq m, Quick-Step. Card Room Green **estate emulsion**, £29.50 for 2.5l, Farrow & Ball. Adore **rug** in Cream (60 x 120cm), £125, Ligne Pure at WovenGround.

IN AND OUT

Matthew has chosen colours and materials that link the inside with the outside.

Earthy tones chime with the landscape, while the poured-concrete floor echoes the exterior finish of the house. Steyson specialises in this type of flooring, or get the look using sheet vinyl. The Colour Flooring Company has a good selection, including four greys.

