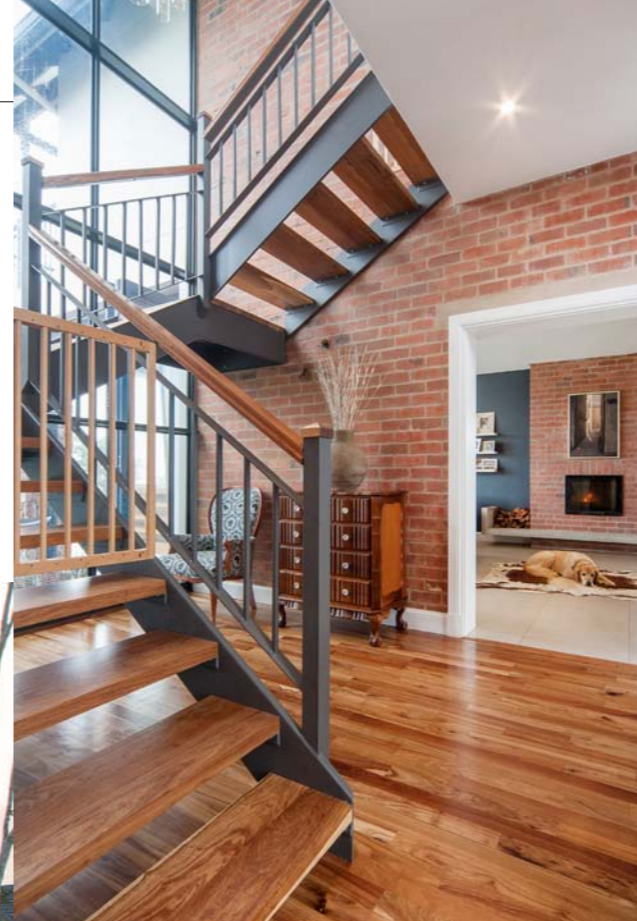


MADE FOR MAKING MEMORIES

This contemporary Cotswold Downs home is the perfect backdrop to a family with a rich history and a passion for life



RICH COLOUR
"People thought I was mad when I chose a dark grey wall colour for the lounge, but we love it," says Bianca.

INSPIRED LIVING

Architect David Baker took inspiration from the Cotswolds in the UK for this build. "The main house reflects two traditional farm houses, connected by the contemporary glass entrance hall," says David.



story **hayley dennyson** photographs **adi weerheim**

Bianca and Garth Woolley have created a warm, welcoming home, layered with family memorabilia and perfect for their three energetic young boys. In 2013, Garth was offered a fantastic job opportunity with one downside – it involved a 100km round-trip from their Durban North home. Having played golf at Cotswold Downs, he knew that the estate was the perfect place to build a house for his family and set about convincing Bianca, who was heavily pregnant at the time. "I wasn't keen on the idea of building, especially as we had renovated before and know the challenges it brings," said

Bianca. "But Garth eventually persuaded me and I am delighted with how it turned out." The couple found this plot in November 2013, with the foundations already laid. "It was great being able to leapfrog the initial permissions, etc, but still have a say in the way the house was designed. We had a fantastic team of professionals to work with – architect David Baker of Baker and Partners, Ian Holt of Hindle Homes, and Chris Wynne of Wynne Landscapes. It was so exciting to see the progress at our weekly site meetings." "We wanted to incorporate as many eco-friendly elements in the house as we could and worked closely with David Baker

to achieve that," says Garth. This includes solar heating for the geysers and pool, sustainably-sourced wood for the finishes, stone cladding harvested from the foundations, LED lighting throughout and a closed-combustion fireplace. Under-tile and wall insulation, as well as advanced low-e factor window glazing have been used to efficiently manage the internal temperature. "David made the most of the available space, meaning that there's plenty of room for us and the boys, and our friends and family, who we love to entertain," says Bianca. "The kitchen was designed to accommodate us all, with a large central island, breakfast bar, a desk and a dining table for laid-back meals. It means that we can do everything we need to do, while being together, and we don't have to worry about messing up the lounge." »

QUALITY FINISHES

Right: Garth and Bianca discuss the joys of their new home with architect David Baker (centre).
 Below: "We love the little luxuries we chose, including the V&A bath in the bedroom, the brass outdoor shower and the solid Kiaat stairs in the entrance hall," says Bianca.
 Bottom right: The red brick garage and guest suite continue the British design concept, representing the popular barn conversion.



ROOM FOR ALL

Above: The modern, spacious kitchen is big enough for family and friends to enjoy time together.
 Right: Garth, Bianca, twins Cole and Luke, and one-year-old Roarke outside their much-admired home.



"We've been blown away by how lovely it is to live at Cotswold Downs," Bianca continues. "It's like living on a nature reserve – daisies in the garden, buck on my morning run, owls and birds in the garden. We're really getting into it."
 "We love the freedom of the estate and there are numerous play areas nearby, but it was important to us that we have a flat garden for the boys to play in at home," says Garth. "It's great being able to cycle round the estate and run along the many trails. Bianca's even learning to play golf."
 "At night, the house is like a nest, with beautiful views of lights twinkling below," says Bianca. "And on clear days, there's a beautiful sea view – the last thing we expected moving up into the hills, but it keeps us close to our roots. This really is our dream home!" *