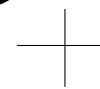


# BARN FIND

AN UNASSUMING EXTERIOR BELIES THE BEAUTY OF THIS OCEANFRONT HOME ALONG CAPE TOWN'S WEST COAST.

PHOTOS HENRIQUE WILDING

WORDS LYNETTE BOTHA



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THE BARN WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A GREENHOUSE.

Located next to homeowners Jochem and Evi Elsner's primary residence in Yzerfontein, the initial idea was to construct Evi's dream of a next-door greenhouse, veggie garden and chicken coop alongside their home. "When the plot became available, we immediately thought, 'Let's buy it and build, before someone else does, and builds something ugly next door to us'," says Evi.

Originally from Germany but having lived in South Africa for more than 20 years, Jochem and Evi's prior address was in Somerset West. "We loved living there, but over the years it became too busy and built up," Evi explains. "About seven years ago, we decided we wanted to move somewhere else, and Yzerfontein was the place to be. We had it on good authority from friends, and from the many photographers we know, that it was an idyllic location – beautiful and uncrowded. We visited the area and were sold immediately."

Unfortunately, a little municipal red tape got in the way of Evi's dream greenhouse, so they decided they'd continue with a house build, which they would then sell. "Things don't always go according to plan, do they?" she says. "Once the build was complete, we were so in love with the place that there was no way we could let go of it."

And it's easy to understand why. Situated on a greenbelt, with ocean frontage and uninterrupted views of the encircling natural beauty, on approach The Barn gives little away. It's a stark exterior with large wooden front doors and tiny windows. Beyond its entrance, though, lies a voluminous space, where light floods in through a pitched glass roof and floor-to-ceiling windows. Entirely conceptualised by Jochem and Evi, it took one year to be completed.

While it is double-volume and luxuriously spacious, it still feels cocooning thanks to Evi's carefully considered interiors, which strike a balance between the deliberate and the unfussy. "I like to call it 'curated, not decorated'," she says. "The interiors are a mix of old and new, but mostly old. I am a collector and a hoarder – our garage is filled with pieces I have found in second-hand shops and antique stores, or on Facebook Marketplace. Everything has a story."

One such story includes reinstating doors from their home in Somerset West at The Barn. "The first buyers of our previous home sold again, and the next residents wanted to overhaul and modernise the place, so they were getting rid of many of the fittings. We were alerted that they were taking out the double doors that led to the garden – beautiful doors, originally from Argentina. When I heard, I said, 'We'll take them!' – and now they're a part of The Barn."

Much of the interior includes salvaged and previously loved items, from cushions made up of antique linen to the old roof sheets that clad the inside of the ceiling. "I've always been drawn to old buildings – I once lived in a former monastery – so I love to repurpose pieces with history," Evi says. "At The Barn, we wanted to create a space where others can experience the beauty that we get to experience on a daily basis. There's no TV for a reason – it's not necessary. Here, you come to relax, unwind, take in the nature, laugh, cook up a storm with friends in the kitchen, use the pizza oven, play board games, drink too much wine, light both fireplaces... and just enjoy!" [thebarn.home-concept.cc](http://thebarn.home-concept.cc)

BEYOND THE FRONT ENTRANCE LIES A VOLUMINOUS SPACE, WHERE LIGHT FLOODS IN THROUGH A PITCHED GLASS ROOF AND FLOOR-TO-CEILING WINDOWS.



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