

Magic makeover

A young designer's creativity has helped a home-owner with buyer's remorse transform an ugly duckling into an elegant, light-filled home

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Photographs Angie Lázaro

Resembling a light box at night, the house offers breathtaking Camps Bay views from every room



This page

From the balconies one can look right through the glass box, which houses the main bedroom upstairs and the informal lounge downstairs. Architectural designer Louise Wileman created the box-like extension in order to maximise the view.

Opposite

A soft blue palette and a glass backsplash in the kitchen provides a crisp, cool feel, echoing the ocean. Solid beechwood flooring from Soluzioni adds some warmth to the contemporary interior. The dining table and chairs are from Future Classics

Not every story that begins with severe buyer's remorse has a happy ending. But the story of this former eyesore in Camps Bay does. When the owner bought the dilapidated house in February 2005, he wanted to do a 'minor facelift', sell it, and move on.

However, three years down the line he's living in the house with his wife and their two children.

'I viewed the house a year before I finally put in an offer. I was blown away by the view, but the house was a monstrosity. It was poorly designed, badly built and it had several arbitrary additions,' says the owner, who has a demanding career in the financial services industry.

A year later the house was still for sale, and he put in his offer. He explains: 'Having looked at everything else in Camps Bay, we looked at what it could become, rather than what it was.'

The next step was to find an architect who would transform the ugly duckling into a contemporary showpiece. 'I consulted several architects and all of them were very negative. They wanted to demolish the house and start from scratch.

'I downscaled my ideas to a few cosmetic changes which would make it possible to sell the house without losing money. Louise Wileman was recommended by one of the architects as "someone who could help me pull together a minor facelift".'

This is where things took a turn for the better, because when Louise and the owner put their creative minds together, the project turned into a full-blown makeover. Their creative juices really started flowing as countless hours were spent pouring over drawings and visual references and debating the architectural possibilities.

Several walls were demolished to lighten up the interior. Upstairs a long, dark passage disappeared to make way for a double-volume living area.

Louise redesigned the entire top floor, where exposed steel beams lend an industrial feel the house. 'A great addition was the



decor

clerestory windows in the main bedroom upstairs. They offer a mountain view without compromising privacy. We also added a balcony upstairs.

'Another favourite addition is the double-volume window behind the staircase. The house has such beautiful views from every side, but before the renovation it had the tiniest windows,' says Louise.

'The owner exceeded the usual level of client involvement, in that he has a good eye for design and came prepared with a very definite brief on which elements he wanted to incorporate. We share a very similar aesthetic vision,

which made it easy to agree on the final design,' says Louise.

There's no doubt that what this house lacked in style, views and natural light, Louise made up for with brilliant architectural changes.

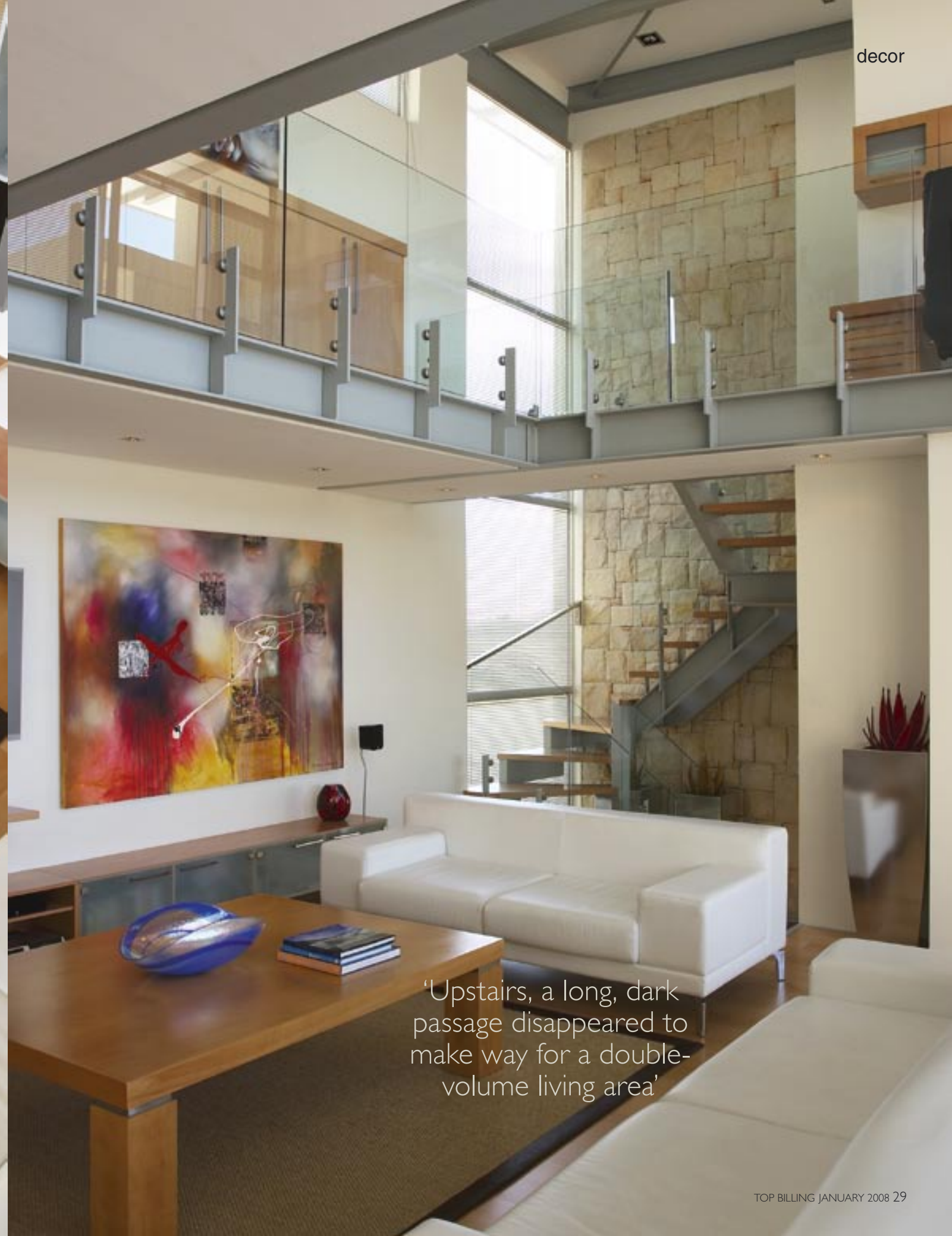
Impact was created by not skimping on the finishes. A solid-beechwood floor from Soluzioni unifies the interior. Carefully selected pieces were added to create a comfortable, stylish residence for the family of four, who moved in early last year.

After such a major transformation it is not surprising that the family decided to stay.



This page
 The lounge area has an open, airy feel thanks to its double-volume height. The couches are from Comfort Creations, the day bed is from Linear Furnishings and the art is by Tay Dall

Opposite
 The steel lintels were left exposed for a sophisticated take on industrial style. A focal wall with drypacked sandstone cladding from Elyon Sandstone adds texture, while a double-volume window behind the staircase maximises the Table Mountain view

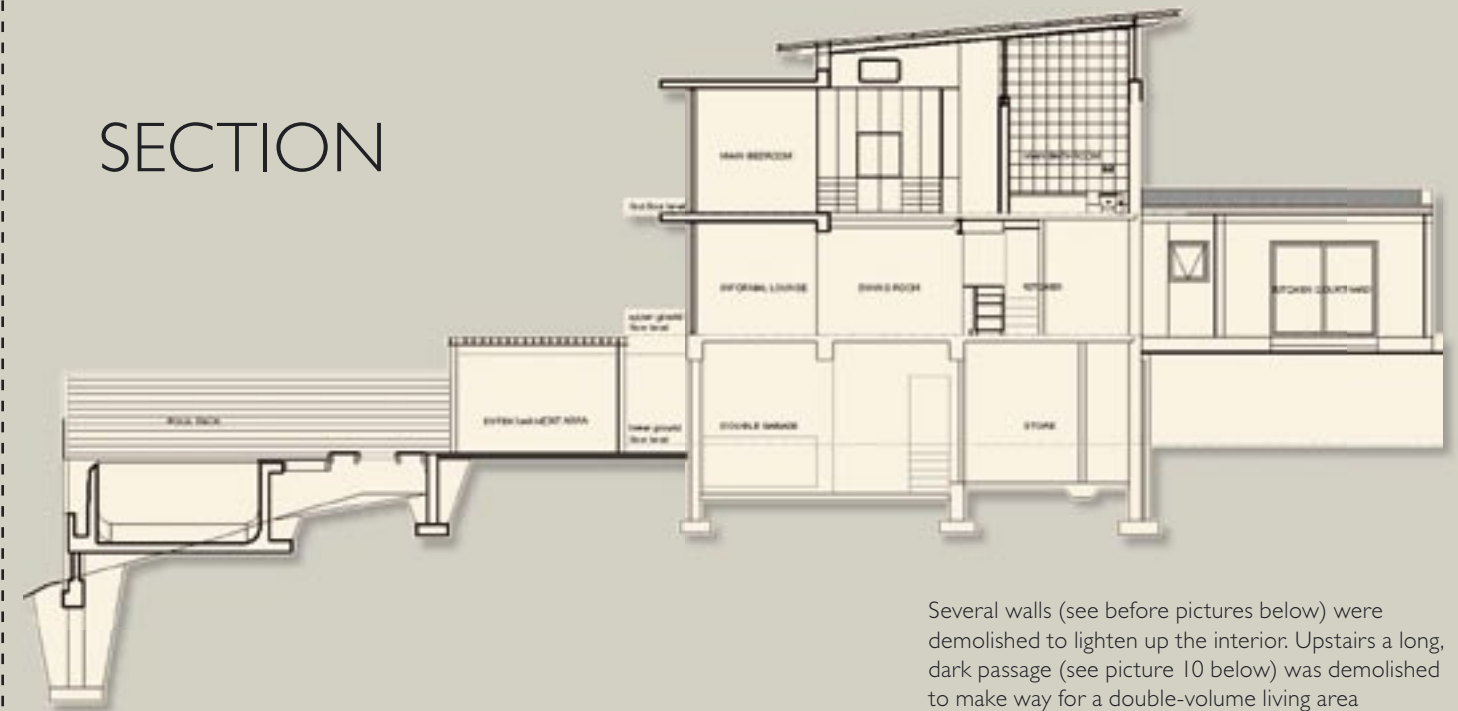


'Upstairs, a long, dark passage disappeared to make way for a double-volume living area'



The spacious master bedroom upstairs has a chill area with a Le Corbusier lounger. The glass sliding door to the en-suite bathroom adds to the feel of airy, open-plan living. Clerestory windows were added to maximise the mountain view

SECTION



Several walls (see before pictures below) were demolished to lighten up the interior. Upstairs a long, dark passage (see picture 10 below) was demolished to make way for a double-volume living area

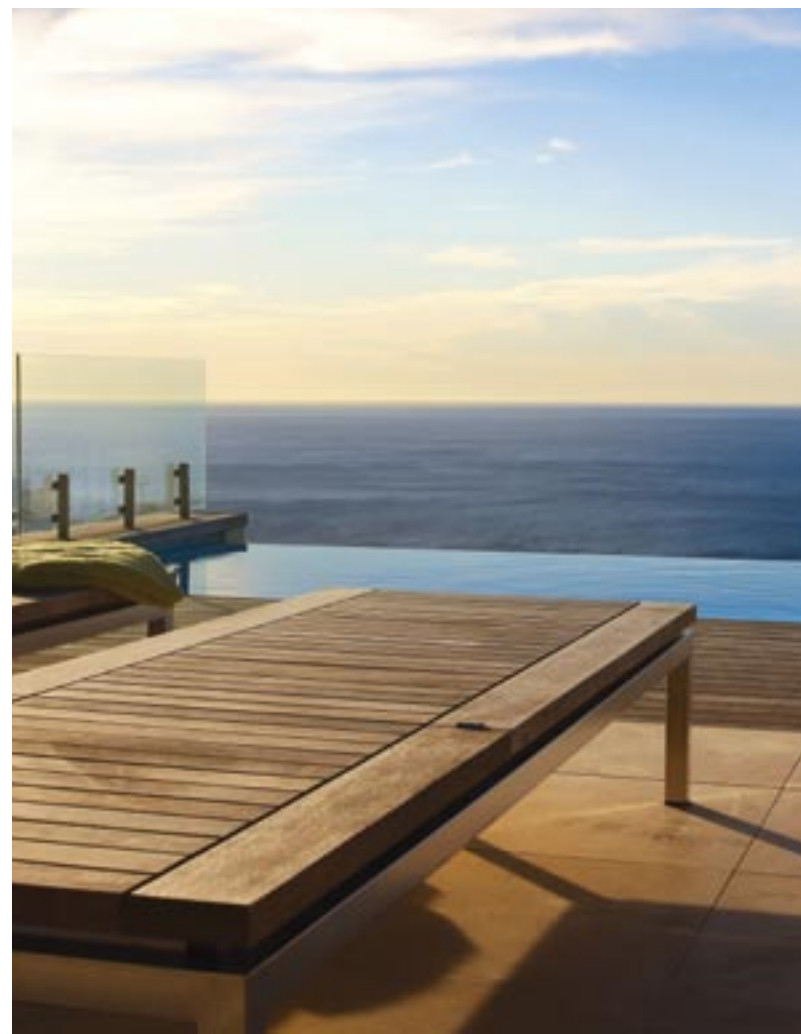


Before

1. West elevation
2. Top view of pool deck
3. Study; now part of entertainment room
4. Pool deck and front elevation
5. Patio looking towards dining-room
6. Pool deck at entrance
7. Main bedroom looking towards bathroom
8. Lounge
9. Kitchen back wall
10. First-floor passage: now double-volume area over lounge
11. Entrance foyer
12. Dining-room
13. Dining-room and informal lounge; now glass box



This page A dated kidney-shaped swimming-pool with a cramped, rotting deck was replaced with a contemporary pool with clean, modern lines and an untreated balau deck
Below left The steel structure of the slatted pergola echoes architectural elements from the interior
Below right The travertine tiles are from Natural Stone Warehouse and the outdoor furniture is from Marlanteak's Natal teak range



shopping

Le Corbusier lounge (R10 900), Linear Furnishings

Arnie sofa in white leather (R19 196), Comfort Creations

Kristen high-back chair (R1 920) in Visioni, Living Room

Source it yourself

Production Megan Stopforth

Natal Teak lounge (R23 150), Marlanteak

Day bed (R10 900), Linear Furnishings

Signature chair (R6 900), Linear Furnishings

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Glass vases (R2 400 and R855), Pa Kua Designs

Table on castors (R6 788), Future Classics

Stainless-steel plant pot (R4 100), Obligato