

“On a hot Lowveld day, it’s the colours that take the
temperature inside down”

spaces

spaces

cool calm & collected

This gorgeous holiday and weekend home on The Rest Nature Estate in Nelspruit has everything the resident could desire in the Lowveld. A large swimming pool for hot summer days, a fire pit for chilly evenings, an expansive wooden deck and built-in braai for entertaining, and panoramas worth boasting about

Words Nicky Manson **Photos** Anthon Wessels, Africa Photographic Services



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“The client required a spacious home for family and friends featuring a simplistic design with contemporary features and finishes,” explains architect Klippie Du Toit of Earthswitch Architects. And the result is spot on.

A mix of concrete, glass, steel and wood have been used throughout the architectural design; characteristic materials in the Earthswitch sustainable repertoire. A closer look will also reveal the integrated concrete benches in the home as well as the use of concrete walls as a feature, a signature style of Klippie’s.

The interiors are equally muted. A combined design effort between EarthSwitch Architects and the owner, the choice of an unobtrusive neutral palette is beautiful. The furniture and décor infuse a collection of creams, greys and whites and the effect is surprisingly elegant. It is a calm and tranquil space to put up your feet and enjoy the views.

Complementing the desired look is the space’s minimal approach to décor and art. Walls are mostly bare. Instead, lighting installations create dramatic focal points and architectural creations like the glass kitchen shelves are talking points in an otherwise minimalist space. Simple yet effective.

Earthswitch prides itself on its green approach to building and this home is no different. Klippie explains, “A 8Kva solar system was installed to reduce electricity demand from the grid, all light fittings have LED bulbs, a gas stove reduces the energy demands of the house and heatpumps are used for hot water supply of the house.” But that is just the



The bedrooms are simple and functional
yet inviting and cosy. They are compact
and feature various sleeping configurations
with the odd cupboard and headboard
thrown in for good measure.



spaces

Wood is another favourite material of Earthswitch's and it has a dominant presence in the home. It contributes lovely warmth to the space despite its cool surrounds. Used in the deck (to the, right), the shading and shutters.

beginning. Bio-climatic design principles were introduced to aid the house in climate control. Energy efficient glazing was installed, and the roof was insulated. In fact, a green roof was designed over the carport, which essentially reduces heat gain, while looking good at the same time. The exterior timber sliding shutters also assist with solar control.

Other important aspects of design that Klippie considered were the site and how the design would integrate with the space. The house's orientation, the interior light quality, the ventilation of the home, and the interaction between the indoor and outdoor spaces were equally important. "My favourite part of this design is the the open plan interior and exterior living spaces. I also love the concrete canopy that wraps around the house!" says Klippie.

These cleverly designed featured are also hugely functional too. "The idea was that the interior and exterior living spaces function as one space, so the concrete cantilevers function as solar protection and also an integrated feature. Due to the angle of the roof and the allowance for clearstory windows, the concrete cantilevers are necessary to shade the interior spaces too," explains Klippie. "The swimming pool has a concrete roof with an opening. This is good to look at visually, and allows enough sun through to aid in heating the pool. The large steel frame is used to stack the sliding doors. The area can open up yet still remain protected from the elements," he adds.



