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78 Outdoor furniture
Where is your favourite place on earth? I’m still agonising over mine because there are so many to choose from, and so many memories...

Let me explain why I’m asking. The other day I read about a project in Bali where the residents of a small town are making braided cord bracelets with a ‘tag’ carved from the horns of water buffalo. (There was no cruelty involved, they assured me on the website; there is an abundance of water buffalo and when they die, their horns are used for something with lasting value.)

The tag is engraved with the GPS co-ordinates of the buyer’s choice. It works like this: you go online and enter an address or location somewhere around the world, then your computer spits out the co-ordinates. Voila: the place you love most is on your wrist, a reminder of a destination you want to remember forever.

With Christmas around the corner, many of us will be taking to the road, heading to our favourite destinations – whether it be a cottage by the sea or, if you’ve managed to save enough, a distant land.

Maybe you’re staying at home. Who knows, maybe your house is someone else’s favourite destination and they’re coming to you: children from abroad, a partner who has to work far away, a mother or father battling the frailties of old age.

I remember such a holiday all too well. I was living in PE in an awful flat with cockroaches ready to cart off the dustbin in the dead of night. I was new to town; still embroiled in an argument with the landlord of my sea-facing rental about who should pay for the pest control.

My parents were coming to visit for Christmas. I’d warned them that there’d be no cooking in my flat because of the cockroaches. I’d been fighting a losing battle: no rubbish in the bin; plugs in the bath and basin drainage holes; any food that came into the flat put straight into the fridge as it was the only safe place.

If it was a normal Pretorius seaside holiday, the fridge would have been packed to capacity by Christmas Eve, the table set in the dining room, the gifts hidden away (the latter not because our family confuses Christmas gifts with Easter eggs but because for years now, come October, my mom calmly, for ice cream. He fell ill shortly after...

My dad, not one to indulge a sweet tooth, took a short nap while I drove with his favourite destination and they’re coming to you: children from abroad, a partner who has to work far away, a mother or father battling the frailties of old age.

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If it was a normal Pretorius seaside holiday, the fridge would have been packed to capacity by Christmas Eve, the table set in the dining room, the gifts hidden away (the latter not because our family confuses Christmas gifts with Easter eggs but because for years now, come October, my mom calmly declares: “Remember, we’re not buying each other Christmas gifts, okay?”). But we all know full well that there will be something small on the 25th that she had unsuccessfully tried to hide away from us as a ‘surprise.’

On Christmas morning that year in the Friendly City, we started the day off with coffee and a sandwich. At midday, I lit the fire in my tiny courtyard – chops and wors, braaibroodjies, a green salad.

My dad, not one to indulge a sweet tooth, took a short nap while I drove to McDonald’s – ice cream in plastic tubs for dessert. We devoured it just like that in the car at the beach.

It was one of my best Christmases ever. And if I had to make a braided bracelet, the co-ordinates of that cockroach-infested hovel would be displayed on my wrist forever. Not because of the locality, but because of the memory, forever sweet, of that wonderful day. It’s a pity my dad didn’t join us for ice cream. He fell ill shortly after...

Wherever you find yourself this Christmas, whatever you eat, may it be a joyful occasion. And worth remembering – whether it’s because you are in the loveliest place on earth, or because you have amazing company.

The co-ordinates of your life’s path having brought you to precisely where you need to be.
WINNING LETTER

Inspired to create!

Gael Dewar of Pietermaritzburg writes Home is my favourite magazine because it’s filled with colour (something I can’t live without) and because the homes featured are decorated by people who love their treasures and display them in wonderful ways.

I want to share with you what happened when I decided I really had to fix my ‘jacuzzi room’; we had no money to remove the monstrosity or retile it... I used paint from the garage, a tablecloth and bulldog clips, a piece of board from a canteen table in my son’s garage, a roll of masking tape and I purchased modge podge for the decoupage. The total cost was just over R100 and I now have a book nook (top) and play space for little visitors.

Also, when the chalk paint bug bites, nothing can stop it but this chair from my childhood home (right) remains unscathed. The wear on it conjures up wonderful memories of time spent around the kitchen table: Sunday breakfasts cooked by Dad; watching Mom make bread; teatime twice a day (a sit-down affair) and countless more…

Step it up with tiles

Delene Morgendaal of Bedfordview writes My old dining room was getting on my nerves after so many years! A change was imperative and, as usual, your magazine gave me the courage.

First, we painted the wooden furniture (what an undertaking!) and then I started looking for black and white tiles, because I think they have a timeless elegance. I nearly gave up and started looking at something entirely different when I found them and a tiler to do the job. I just love the look!

Fresh hope

Riza van Rooyen of Kraaifontein writes Dear Wicus and all the creators of Home, your October edition was by far the Issue of the Year! Yes, I’m sure the last two issues of 2018 will not surpass it. You managed to encapsulate all my favourite things in 132 pages: roses in bloom over several pages, all three houses resonated with me and the recipes were old favourites (which I can cook from my pantry) presented in a way that was as fresh as spring. Thank you for new hope and the reminder that beautiful and new possibilities don’t run dry just because the cost of living and our worries are so pressing.

WIN!

The writer of the winning letter gets a Summer Wonderbag hamper worth R700!

With the revolutionary Wonderbag, slaving over a hot stove for hours during the holidays is a thing of the past. All you need are your ingredients and a festive recipe: put everything in a pot and bring it to the boil then pop it in your Wonderbag and it will continue cooking for 12 hours – no extra power needed! This Christmas there are loads of special deals and hampers on offer; for details, go to wonderbagworld.com.
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**Favourite Things Market**

**Christmas Market in Durban**

Browse the stalls and savour foodie delights while you hum along with the musicians who will ensure your Christmas spirit is fully lit.

**Market in Windhoek, Namibia**

Visit the East & West Market in Windhoek for a fun-filled day as well as local delicacies and handmade goods. Visitors can also join the Breakfast Run & Walk at 08:00 for N$20; call +264 (81) 853 8242 or visit tannery.com.na.

**Locally Yours Market**

Shop 'til you drop! Contact locallyyoursmarket.co.za for more information.

**Charity Christmas Market**

Visit the Charity Christmas Market in Johannesburg and support a good cause while you shop.

**JAKARANDA CHILDREN’S HOME LIGGIEFEES**

1–31 December: Pretoria

Visit the Jakaranda Children’s Home Liggiefees for a spectacular festive celebration. Their 21 homes will be decorated with thousands of lights and opened to the public; you can also look forward to live performances, a carousel, big wheel and stalls. Tickets cost R30 at the gate; call 012 800 4700 or go to jacarandachildren.co.za.

**SPIER LIGHT ART SHOW**

8 December – 30 January: Stellenbosch

Experience a dazzling display of light and sound artworks at the historic Stellenbosch farm where guests will be treated to a choreographed opening ceremony by Jay Pather on the 8th and 9th. Pre-book a picnic or enjoy a feast at Eight before the procession starts. Tickets cost R200 per adult or R580 per couple, including a glass of MCC at the annual Champagne Festival. Tickets cost R395 on webtickets.co.za and include a complimentary tasting glass and MCC tasting coupons. Go to franschhoekmcc.co.za.

**Franschhoek Cap Classique & Champagne Festival**

Experience a festive season at 1FOX Market Shed in Pringle Bay. The banting-friendly menu includes slow-cooked beef brisket and a vegetarian chickpea curry; book your seat for R500 on quicket.co.za and include a complimentary tasting glass and MCC tasting coupons. Go to franschhoekmcc.co.za.

**Blythedale Coastal Christmas Market in Durban**

Celebrate the festive season at Blythedale Coastal Christmas Market in Durban for a day filled with adventure and the best of local produce. Enjoy the slippery slide, quad biking, browsing the stalls or a family picnic. Call 061 820 3518.

**Locally Yours Market**

**Display**

Scott McGillivray takes his passion for real estate to a whole new level in Buyers Bootcamp (Season 1 starts 25 December on the Home Channel, 176 on DStv). With years of real estate and home renovation experience, Scott knows a thing or two about flipping properties for profit and now he is showing rookie investors how it’s done.

Two amateur investors pitch their properties and Scott picks the one he thinks presents the best opportunity. He then puts up his own cash to pay for the renovation and teaches them both everything he knows about how to renovate to maximise value. If they succeed, they split the profits and if they fail, they fail together. Check it out!

**ON THE BOX**

**Compilation by Suné Esterhuizen**

Send diary entries to diary@homemag.co.za at least three months before the event.

**December flashes**

29 Nov – 1 Dec; 6–8 Dec: Participate in one of the oldest fundraising projects in SA, the Noddy Party in Somerset West. Bring the kids for tons of fun and activities. Tickets from R25 are available on webtickets.co.za; call 082 929 0828 or visit noddy.org.za.

30 Nov – 1 Dec: The Eastern Cape Wine Show in Port Elizabeth presents more than 200 wines from Steenberg and Spier, amongst others. Get tickets for R190 from computicket.com; call 011 482 5936 or go to easterncapewineshow.co.za.

1: The Gin & Tonic Festival returns to Newtown, Johannesburg with more than 50 local and international gins, creative cocktails and live music; call 071 641 6327 or go to ginandtonicfestival.co.za.

1–2: Step out in style and enjoy a glass of MCC at the annual Franschhoek Cap Classique & Champagne Festival. Tickets cost R395 on webtickets.co.za and include a complimentary tasting glass and MCC tasting coupons. Go to franschhoekmcc.co.za.


4–9: Explore a treasure trove of handcrafted goods from more than 170 unique creatives and foodies at Noddy Party in Port Elizabeth. Tickets from R25 are available on webtickets.co.za; call 082 929 0828 or visit noddy.org.za.

5: Explore a treasure trove of handcrafted goods from more than 170 unique creatives and foodies at KAMERS/Makers Irene, Cornwall Hill College. Get tickets for R60 on quicket.co.za.

7: Celebrate the festive season at 1FOX Market Shed in Pringle Bay. The banting-friendly menu includes slow-cooked beef brisket and a vegetarian chickpea curry; book your seat for R500 on quicket.co.za and take a look at brianberkman.com.


7: Sing along to your favourite Boney M. hits (featuring Liz Mitchell) at Kirstenbosch in Cape Town. Tickets are available from R290 at webtickets.co.za; call 021 799 8783.
TOPS ON TOP

Cindy Crawford on Silestone Eternal Calacatta Gold

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Suede
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what’s new

Compiled by Kim Arendse

CREATE, INNOVATE!

BUSINESS
This & That Ceramics

WHO
Anita Steenkamp

WHERE
Krugersdorp, Gauteng

HER WORK
Anita creates beautiful ceramic pieces from a little makeshift studio in her garage. “I put my heart and soul into making each piece by hand, sometimes working right through the night. But I love it!” she says.

Anita used to be a stay-at-home mom but when her daughter started school at the beginning of the year, she found that she was able to put more energy into fulfilling her dream of becoming a ceramic artist. After posting photographs of her first pieces on Facebook, orders came flooding in and she soon launched her website, thisandthatceramics.co.za.

“I’m inspired to create pieces that I’d like to have in my own kitchen. When I serve something, I want to serve it on something beautiful or interesting – I believe food tastes better that way!” says Anita.

Moroccan vibes

Now you can find the popular recycled Fabhabitat rugs, like this Puebla Blue rug (R1 299; 1.8 x 2.75m), at selected Builders stores. Go to fabhabitat.co.za.

Moroccan vibes

We love these quirky pen and acrylic family portraits by Malani Venter of Kaatjie Produkte (from R300). Simply WhatsApp your photo to Malani and she’ll courier the portrait to you once it’s done – no matter where you’re based in SA! Go to facebook.com/kaatjieprodukte.

We love

Fine fabric

Add a touch of red with this cheerful Pincushion Poinsettia fabric from Carole Nevin Designs (R465/m; 142cm W); it’s ideal for curtaining, cushion covers and upholstery. Visit carolenevin.com.

We love

Hot product

Up the flower power in your home with these eye-catching wooden proteas (from 36cm tall). They are available from Beetroot Inc; check out beetrootinc.co.za.
European home improvement store Leroy Merlin has opened its first South African branch at Stoneridge Centre in Edenvale, Gauteng. You’ll find local and international hardware products and accessories for every room in your home – from baths and basins, wallpaper and kitchen cabinets to flooring, lighting and more! Check out leroymerlin.co.za.

Edgars Home has launched its first store! You’ll find all their homeware products including luxurious linen, bathroom and kitchen accessories, décor and more – all under one roof! And, of course, you can still find their in-house labels such as Hotel Collection and international brands like Jamie Oliver and Noritake. Pop in at one of the new Edgars Home branches in Sandton City Shopping Centre, Menlyn Park Shopping Centre, Clearwater Mall, Canal Walk Shopping Centre, East Rand Mall, Eastgate Shopping Centre or La Lucia Mall.

Inspired by Nordic minimalism, the new two-door, wall-mounted Kompas cabinet from Italtile (from R4 990; 290 x 350 x 1000mm) will add a fresh, contemporary touch to your bathroom.

It’s time to throw out that grubby old dish cloth! Mungo’s cotton 3D-effect checkered Vadoek (R250; 56 x 81cm) comes in various vibrant colours. It’s also ultra-absorbent and has a nifty tag so it’s easy to hang up. Go to mungo.co.za.

TOP SHOP

Edgars Home has launched its first store! You’ll find all their homeware products including luxurious linen, bathroom and kitchen accessories, décor and more – all under one roof! And, of course, you can still find their in-house labels such as Hotel Collection and international brands like Jamie Oliver and Noritake. Pop in at one of the new Edgars Home branches in Sandton City Shopping Centre, Menlyn Park Shopping Centre, Clearwater Mall, Canal Walk Shopping Centre, East Rand Mall, Eastgate Shopping Centre or La Lucia Mall.

Try the new Lounge Pillow (from R899) designed by the sleep experts at Vencasa. It supports your upper body perfectly while you’re sitting upright in bed and its bamboo velour cover is soft and hypoallergenic. Available at Vencasa-Tempur stores nationwide; visit vencasa.co.za.

Love to read in bed?

We’re smitten with this red-and-white patterned vinyl floor graphic from Smart Art (R550/m²)! Check out the full range at smartart.co.za.
Get crafty this Christmas and create your own fun and fragrant holiday decorations.

**X marks the spot**
Christmas is the perfect time to showcase your creative talents! Whether you sew, embroider or paint your decorations, why not display your handiwork on a large branch suspended above the table? These stunning DIY cross-stitch ornaments from Just Love Stitch are hand-stitched on a hardboard template. The kits come with a base, how-to template and just the right amount of thread. It’s the ideal gift for someone special who enjoys crafting!
The Midas touch

All you need to make this beautiful leafy wreath is a wheel-shaped cardboard cut-out for the base, a selection of hardy leaves and sprigs (such as magnolia, lemon, bay, broad-leaved pepper, cypress or pine), some metallic craft paint or spray paint and a glue gun. Look around the garden for leaves with different shapes and textures, keeping in mind that you want the wreath to dry out, rather than wilt after all your careful glueing; choose hardy leaves rather than delicate ones.

Spray-paint some sprigs in metallic colours and allow them to dry before using your glue gun to assemble your artwork. >>

Inspired by the blog pieceofrainbow.com.

Make like a tree and leaf!

Instead of hanging a pair of antlers on the wall, try a staghorn fern on a piece of bark! “Like any air plant, this beauty likes a bit of shade and a sprinkling of water from time to time,” explains Biddy Riley of The Pink Geranium nursery.
Shooting through hoops

Encourage family and friends to capture their memories at your next get-together by hanging a ‘picture hoop’. It’s easy: use an inexpensive plastic hula hoop and gold spray paint to create the base and then adorn the bottom half with twigs, leaves, berries and blooms. The Koopman family – Rupert, Florence and little Amelia (2) – show us how it’s done.

Tips

Hang your hoop from a ribbon in a spot where the light is good and the background is pleasing. We used delicate battery-operated decorative copper wire lights to help keep the greenery in place and add a bit of sparkle.

Decorative copper wire lights (10m) from Neat Things
In the atmosphere

This succulent sphere was made by joining together two hanging basket bases filled with potting soil and an oasis to form a ball shape. It was then carefully planted with all sorts of succulents from The Pink Geranium nursery.

If you want to make your own, remember to give the succulents plenty of time to take root. Feed them with liquid fertiliser added to water in a spray bottle. Whether you stick to one type of succulent or plant a variety, the effect is especially striking when they flower in all directions. Alternatively, order one directly from The Pink Geranium nursery.

Scents and sensibility

A small fragrant wreath of hardy herbs such as rosemary or lavender will not only smell lovely but also look pretty on the back of a chair or hanging from your kitchen door. Arrange the sprigs in the shape of a circle (all facing in the same direction) then wind them together with a ribbon.

If you want your wreath to keep its shape, create a wire circle onto which you can attach the herbs. We added chillies for colour and citrus peel stars for flair. Use a cookie cutter to form the stars, make a small hole with a kebab stick and string them up on the wreath. As the stars dry, their shape will change and they'll give off a subtle citrus aroma.

Spice is nice!

Use a glue gun and cinnamon sticks to create little lantern shapes. Hide the glue with dried spices and decorate with citrus peel stars and hardy herbs.

CONTACT AND STOCKISTS

Just Love Stitch 082 457 4150, justlovestitch.com
Neat Things 082 967 6675, neatthings.co.za
The Pink Geranium 021 884 4313, thepinkgeranium.co.za
Let's get festive!

Celebrate the season with these cheerful accessories.

- **Wreath (24cm D)** R159.99, MRP Home
- **Hanging heart decoration (1.8m)** R26.99, The Crazy Store
- **Geolines knob** R30, Poetry
- **Cotton Quivira napkins (set of 4)** R199, Poetry
- **Heart tree decoration** R69.95, Woolworths
- **Boho pompom ribbon (2m)** R79.99, MRP Home
- **Amalfi gift boxes from R19.99**, MRP Home
- **Moroccan Aztec scatter (70 x 40cm)** R700, Lucky Fitsch
- **Christmas tree tealight holder** R450, Le Creuset

By Kim Arendse
Velboa heart scatter (30 x 30cm) R79.99, Sheet Street

Cotton table runner (45 x 150cm) R149, H&M Home

When Everyone Came to Tea tea towel (48 x 70cm) R165, Skinny laMinx

Bird tree decoration R55, Woolworths

Basket (56 x 34cm) R350, Poetry

Secret stash Cotton stocking (44 x 17cm) R110, zanaproducts.co.za

Glass candle holder (19.5 x 10.5cm) R149, @home

Basket (56 x 34cm) R350, Poetry

Gold foiled cards (pack of 8) R119, yuppiechef.com

Basket (56 x 34cm) R350, Poetry

Light bulb moment!
LED coloured globe R42, Eurolux

Hanging plant in cement pot R299, @home

Paper stars string lights (220cm) R129.99, MRP Home

STOCKISTS @home 0860 576 576, home.co.za Eurolux 011 608 2970, eurolux.co.za
H&M Home 086 0690 707, hm.com/za Le Creuset 086 177 3321, lecreuset.co.za
Lucky Fitsch 083 775 7344, lucky-fitsch.com MRP Home 0800 212 535, mrphome.com
Poetry 0860 555 529, poetrystores.co.za Sheet Street 0800 212 535, sheetstreet.com
Skinny laMinx 021 424 6290, skinnylaminx.com The Crazy Store 0861 111 281, crazystore.co.za Woolworths 0860 022 002, woolworths.co.za
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A TOAST to new traditions

This retired couple is proof positive that 60 is the perfect age to start a fresh chapter in your life.

By Marian van Wyk, Johané Neilson and Beatrice Moore-Nöthnagel
Photographs Francois Oberholster
WHO LIVES HERE?
Serina and Eugene Chambers
WHERE Ohrusrivier, Western Cape
A wreath made with *Echinops*, silver tree and grey *Eucalyptus* foliage, as well as handmade angels, provides a touch of earthly glamour!
Serina and Eugene Chambers don’t believe in retiring, but rather in ‘recalculating’.

Their newly-built house in Onrusrivier on the Overberg Whale Coast is anything but a retirement home – and they don’t plan to take it easy anytime soon. “Nowhere in the Bible does it say you should retire,” says Serina over a cup of scented tea, tastefully served in a vintage bone china cup.

We got to know Serina as the woman behind the Nerf-Af stores, and her furniture and enamelware have often been featured in Home.

When Eugene ‘retired’ last year after 40 years of service at a financial institution, the Chambers were ready for a change. “No one can survive on just a pension these days and it has always been our plan to acquire property that will work for us in our old age,” says Serina. “Our house was designed so that the two bedrooms on the ground floor can be rented out as self-catering accommodation, as can a large cottage on the property.”

But Onrusrivier hasn’t always been part of their retirement plans. The family has camped at Stilbaai in the Southern Cape for the past 30 years; they used to own two plots there, which they’ve since sold.

“We decided that a vacation spot isn’t necessarily the ideal place to retire,” says Serina. “Stilbaai is just too quiet in the off-season and also too far from Cape Town, where our children and grandchildren live.”

Serina and Eugene laid out the garden themselves after taking walks in their area to find out which plants thrive locally. They describe it as an indigenous mountain-and-grass garden. The pathway was created with non-slip travertine tiles and they’ve had the plant pots for years.

Plants mostly from Cape Garden; tiles from WOMAG
Heaven on earth

Having decided that they wouldn’t build in Stilbaai, Serina and Eugene began investigating the countryside near Cape Town – from Tulbagh and Riebeek-Kasteel to seaside towns along the West Coast.

In the end, it was the milkwoods at Onrusrivier that sealed the deal. “It’s still a quaint village,” says Serina. “It’s also just a five-minute drive from Hermanus with its thriving tourism industry that attracts visitors keen to see, among other highlights, whales calving and dolphins swimming with surfers.

“The natural beauty around Onrusrivier is breathtaking with the beautiful Babilonstoring mountains and hiking trails, as well as a coastal walking trail to Hermanus – it really is a piece of heaven on earth.”

I have a thing for a long, sociable table; that’s the heart of the home. – Serina
Fresh architecture

Although Serina is well-known for her vintage merchandise, she prefers contemporary architecture. "I've always loved a house in a modern style as it's clean and fresh."

The exterior of the home has a beach feel, especially with its shiplap Nutec cladding. On the inside, it's clean and open with light grey-green walls and a single raw brick wall finished in white cement for a bit of texture.

Just as Eugene and Serina wanted, the living areas and main bedroom are situated on the upper level. Below are two bedrooms, each with an en-suite bathroom and a separate entrance and patio.

"Building a house isn't easy," she says. "You really need to be constantly involved in the process, otherwise things can go wrong with huge financial implications. At our age, you also don't get a bond easily, so we had to build with cash – it can be quite nerve-racking and, for the most part, it was a matter of faith!"

Serina and Eugene tackled the final finishes of the house with the help of subcontractors. They asked Chico Shumane, a contractor with whom they had previously worked, to come from Cape Town with his own team of painters and tilers. "It was the best decision," says Serina. "I really believe that good painters can recognise potential problems and with the correct preparation and good quality paint, they can make a huge difference to the final outcome. The right floor covering completes the picture."

Any vintage piece should be functional, timeless and beautiful. – Serina
Christmas at home

This is the first time in 30 years that the Chambers family will celebrate Christmas between four walls and not in a caravan in Stilbaai! Whereas Serina previously cooked everything from a leg of lamb and gammon to roast potatoes and sweet potatoes on a two-plate stove, this year she has the luxury of a well-equipped kitchen.

“For me, Christmas is a Christian celebration that’s all about family time,” says Serina. “I’m not a fan of a ‘bling’ Christmas, although a Christmas tree and gifts are part of our celebrations. As a child, I always loved the festive pine tree in my granny’s beach house in Kleinmond. The smell of a pine tree still brings back all those memories and I’d like to create similar memories with my own grandchildren. So we have our own one this year!”

Their festive tree decorations include bows and lace angels made by Serina’s sister, especially for the occasion. Although Eugene and Serina stay in Onrusrivier four days a week and in Cape Town three days a week, they plan to make their home on the Whale Coast permanent in the near future.

And watch this space: there’s sure to be a Nerf-Af store opening its doors in town!

Serina inherited the blue armchair with its original upholstery from her mother, Mary. The French display cabinet behind it is an antique piece from Belgium.

The blue wicker chairs were originally green; Eugene painted them with Annie Sloan paint and finished them with a glossy sealant. Serina says the blue adds a lovely seaside feel while the wicker creates a homely atmosphere.
Serina loves to set the table for special occasions. She uses layers of French linen as a tablecloth and embroidered Irish linen placemats. Candles on antique cut-glass cake platters add a fresh twist among the elegant silver candlesticks and cutlery.

“The antique bone-handle cutlery set is from Nerf-Af and the Kings cutlery set belonged to my mom, Mary de Villiers, so it’s very special to me,” says Serina. “I have lots of my mother’s heirlooms and I love using them all.”

Although the Royal Doulton dinner service is new, it fits right in with its grey pattern on a white background and gold rim. “Nothing is really meticulously planned – I just use what I have and what I love,” says Serina. >>

The wreath above the dining table is Eugene’s handiwork. The wood comes from Stilbaai and everything is tied together with cables and wire mesh so that new adornments can easily be added. For this setting, dried blue and green hydrangea blooms fit the bill perfectly; crocheted doilies attached to the back of the chairs add detail. The charcoal-grey of the new kitchen cabinets was specially mixed, while blue mosaic tiles above the stove complement the weathered island.

Kitchen cabinets by Holly Wood Kitchens and Furniture; countertops from Caesarstone; tiles from CTM
Simple elegance!
A plain ciabatta roll tied with French ribbon looks fit for a king on the Royal Doulton plates.
Serina adores enamelware; in the kitchen, her collection forms a focal point in this beautiful old dresser. Her first enamel bowl was a gift from her mother and she still uses it today!
Clockwise from left: Danie, Daniël (7) and Marietjie Grobbelaar; Serina and Eugene with Handré Chambers (9) and Luca Grobbelaar (5) in front of them; Emma (8), Leána and Charl Chambers all share a moment of gratitude around the Christmas table.

The green ceramic vase was a wedding gift for Serina’s mother; it had a price tag of R2.65 still stuck on it!

Coloured glass vases from Nerf-Af
A combination of old and new kitchenware is displayed on open shelves – the TG Green mixing bowls date from 1920, while other bowls were recent purchases. >>

Luca Grobbelaar (5) hands out the gifts.
A touch of French flair
Serina knows how to give a brand-new home a wonderfully lived-in feel with vintage and antique furniture. But don’t think that her house is a replica of her shop; while she specialises in distressed furniture in her store, her own style is more ‘fresh vintage’ with a touch of French flair. With De Villiers as a maiden name, there’s plenty of French blood running through her veins! Serina subtly brings this heritage into her décor.

“Most of my furniture comes from my previous home; however, over the past two years I have collected a few ‘new’ pieces for our new home, including the large French wardrobes which allowed me to avoid any built-in cupboards in the house,” she says. Many of these wardrobes come from Strand Trading Post and they work perfectly with the home’s high ceilings. “French wardrobes need plenty of space,” explains Serina. “For this style, furniture pieces must complement each other and not compete with each other – the balance has to be right.”

The headboard in the main bedroom belonged to Serina’s mother. “Neither of my siblings wanted it because it takes up so much space!” Serina had it reupholstered in French linen and applied a paint technique to the frame herself. The throw on the bed, which comes from Belgium, boasts a French monogram. Pale blue wallpaper with a touch of gold adds to a tranquil atmosphere.
The alcove in the main bedroom’s en-suite bathroom was built later. “Although a freestanding bath is beautiful, you never know where to put your bath products,” says Serina. Gold paint on the wall adds a luxe feel and echoes the colour of the French antique chandelier from Nerf-Af. The Cries of London prints above the bath add a romantic old-world touch – an idea Serina got at a guesthouse in Prince Albert.

Paint colour
Metallic German Silver from Paint & Décor
In the second guest bedroom, two single beds were pushed together to make a king-sized bed; mismatched bedside tables on either side finish the look.

Aluminium shutters from Top Carpets & Floors

A guest bedroom doesn’t have to have lots of built-in cupboards; people don’t usually travel with suitcases full of clothes. - Serina

These leather suitcases create a focal point – and Serina uses them when she travels!
The youngest Chambers daughter, Danika (below), lives abroad where she works at a financial institution. During our shoot in Onrusrivier, she was in Keukenhof in the Netherlands, visiting the tulip fields!

After a delicious Christmas dinner (and a family photo or two), the grandchildren head to the beach with their moms and granny. 😊
THE SIMPLE
pleasures
IN LIFE
When it feels as if the whole world has descended on the Garden Route, the Van den Bergs of George head for Langfontein to celebrate Christmas in the peace and quiet of the Camdeboo.

By Marian van Wyk • Photographs Francois Oberholster • Assistant Sharon Welman
THE HOMEOWNERS
Marliza and Thinus van den Berg, and their sons Billy (20) and Thinus Jnr (15)
WHERE Langfontein in the Camdeboo, between Graaff-Reinet and Aberdeen

Thinus and Marliza’s granddaughter Lika Botha (7) and her cousin Layla van Deventer (nearly 2) eagerly await Santa’s arrival. The Christmas wreath was made by learners from Up With Downs, a school for special needs kids in George; Marliza threaded wild climbing roses from Langfontein’s garden through hers.
"Once the day’s chores are done, we relax on the stoep. We’ve spent many summer evenings under this pergola,” says Marliza. Green exterior doors and shutters (Plascon Graaff-Reinet Green) complement the typical Karoo architecture."
Lika loves helping Marliza in the kitchen with little sister Katrien (3). Walls between the hallway, the original small kitchen and the old pantry were demolished and additional sash windows were installed to create a spacious and sociable kitchen. Marliza bought the fabric for the blinds years ago (range has since been discontinued).
“When the shops in George start bringing in extra refrigerators for the influx of holidaymakers over the Christmas season, I know it’s time to hit the road to the farm.”

For Marliza van den Berg and her family, it’s the perfect opportunity to escape, leaving the far-too-busy town behind them. “When we travel, we take the whole caboodle with us!” she says with a grin. “Besides our dogs, Bakkies and Frik, Koos the cat and all the fresh produce, we cart all sorts of farming essentials with us – once we even had live chickens and pigeons!”

Although the sweltering Karoo isn’t a typical Christmas holiday destination, there’s a lot to look forward to on Langfontein – the game, sheep and cattle farm the Van den Bergs bought in 2004.

“It’s about the simple pleasures, like all the different sounds of the farm and hearing my family’s footsteps on the wooden floors.”

For Marliza, Christmas is all about togetherness and creating memories, much like the festivities of her childhood when 40 to 50 family members would gather every year. It also brings back many fond memories of her late father Spyker (André) Viljoen who was mad about Christmas music, especially the carol *O Holy Night.*
Christmas on the farm revolves around family and close friends: Thinus's adult daughters, Lindie Botha and her husband Wickus, and Lorraine and De Wet van Deventer with their little ones, who all ensure that the table beneath Langfontein's shady trees is always sociable.

And then there's the joy of having Billy, Marliza's son, at home for the holidays; he lives in a home for mentally challenged adults during term time.

"Christmas with Billy is very special because he is always ecstatic about it," says Marliza. "The moment the first Christmas decorations go up, he starts asking when Santa will arrive and that continues until one of our sons-in-law pulls on his Father Christmas outfit. As long as we live, we'll have to have a Father Christmas for Billy," she adds with a smile. >>

This year, Marliza set her festive table (opposite) under the white stinkwood in front of the old barn. It is bedecked with items from all over: linen napkins from French markets; plates from Checkers; herbs and flowers in jugs from Wonki Ware, Biggie Best and Pep Stores; a vinyl tablecloth from Babylonstoren and old crystal and silver ware. The Van Deventer family waits around the corner to start the celebrations: Lorraine, De Wet dressed up as Father Christmas and little Layla and her cousin Lika.
We decorate our Christmas table with what we have here on the farm. – Marliza
Marliza is a talented cook and completed a cooking course in France, but she likes to keep things simple over Christmas. “I don’t even try to bake bread. The bread made by our housekeepers, Charmaine Dunjana and Dalene Lomberg, is legendary (right) it’s the perfect starter with venison pâté.” >>
Where work is a pleasure

Whether it’s Christmas or not, Langfontein is anything but a place for loafing. It’s a working farm as well as a guest farm with three self-catering cottages. And everyone who comes here to take a break has to lend a hand. Just ask Wickus and De Wet...

“Last year on Christmas Eve, we left Pretoria in the early hours of the morning to try and get to the farm before dark,” says De Wet. “We were exhausted when we arrived. And just when I thought I’d be opening a beer, Thinus said: ‘Come, I need help. There’s rain on the way and the lucerne bales have to be loaded onto the truck...’.”

Businessman Thinus just shrugs his shoulders upon hearing this anecdote. He’s out and about on the farm long before sunrise and by the time the sun starts to peep over the Karoo hills, he’s already back for coffee and rusks with his family around the kitchen table.

“The farm is quiet and the rhythm and atmosphere is very different to the coast but it’s busy in other ways,” says Marliza. “We actually work jolly hard here but we are at last managing to achieve a better balance between work and play. We take time out to enjoy each other, the house, and the beauty that surrounds us.

“One is very isolated on a farm. Even in the holiday season, it’s just you and your family, contemplating the year that’s passed. There are no fireworks or hooters going off. Maybe a rooster crowing... We work and cook together. Here, you have to make do with what you have for meals and decorations. I keep things as simple as possible – cooking is all part of the enjoyment.

“I believe you should treasure the simple pleasures of life every day. And it’s much easier in a place like the Karoo. Here, the joy lies in your surroundings and your family and friends – there’s nothing to distract you.”

An unexpected oasis

Marliza wasn’t exactly thrilled when Thinus bought the farm in 2004. “I was quite happy with my urban existence in Pretoria, although we had talked about moving to George. When I heard that Thinus had made an offer on a Karoo farm, it felt like a death sentence...”

But when the Van den Bergs drove through the gate at Langfontein, this green oasis took her breath away. “The simplicity of the house was so beautiful, even though it needed extensive renovations. There were oak trees and a dam; it was such an unexpected oasis and so different from what I’d imagined the Karoo to be. That’s the magic of the place. After all, camdeboo is the Khoi word for green earth. It speaks volumes.”

The house was built in 1860, so it wasn’t exactly a place that could be fixed up with a 10-pound hammer and chalk paint. “It needed loads of work,” says Marliza. “All the woodwork, apart from the floors, was painted – from the interior doors and window frames to the skirting boards – and the ceilings had been varnished black.

The rooms were dark and only some of them had small windows. “I’ve watched the movie Under the Tuscan Sun quite a few times and identify strongly with Diane Lane’s character. We even had a local Polish builder, Conrad Kasperski of The Polish Way!

“It’s very special for us all to live in a house that has such a rich history. We love tradition. But, at the same time, it’s a responsibility to restore the house with the necessary respect. So many people have made memories here...” >>
The yellowwood for the floors throughout the house was apparently transported from Knysna by ox wagon in the 19th century. The soft green palette in the living room was inspired by the tranquillity of the Karoo. Koos the cat takes a nap on the chair – as a kitten, he was rescued from a veld fire by Thinus Jnr.
An old farmhouse has its own sounds that a town home just doesn’t have. It is one of the delights of spending the holidays on Langfontein. – Marliza

The main bedroom looks out over the front stoep and Marliza wanted to create an old-world feel in this space. Interior designer Cyndy Minnaar helped her to find the perfect fabric for the bed crown. “It is incredibly heavy; Thinus and I really struggled to hold it up on a ladder. It took us three hours to hang it up!”

Fabric from St Leger & Viney
Although the layout of the old bathroom has been completely changed, it still has a quaint farm atmosphere thanks to a sash window, Victorian bath and cement floor. Because the farm is so remote, Marliza had to make a plan when the bath enamel flaked off. “Fortunately, Home (April 2017) featured an article on how to refurbish a bath yourself with Rust-Oleum Tub and Tile, which we bought from Builders.”

Go online to find out how to restore your own enamel bath.
WITH heart & soul

Festive fare and family fun take centre stage when the McDonalds celebrate Christmas.

By Kim Arendse, Johané Neilson and Marian van Wyk
Photographs Francois Oberholster
Assistant Suné Esterhuizen

WHO LIVES HERE?
Kathy and Eric McDonald
WHERE Kuils River, Western Cape

Gold scatter from MRP Home; Tankwa scatter from Hais; copper lanterns and silver baubles from Biggie Best
The McDonalds’ granddaughter Kate-Emily plays in the “forest” alongside the house where the walls are covered in ivy and jasmine. The wreaths on the back stoep (opposite) were a family effort: one was made using rolls of pages from The Yellow Pages; the other two were made from fabric remnants.
An additional spot for casual dining was created with tuck-away tables on castors under wooden box shelves that display some of Kathy's favourite second-hand pieces. Old sewing-machine chairs add to the rustic look of this “thrown-together” nook leading to the back stoep.
One of the first things Kathy and Eric McDonald did when they moved into their newly built home 18 years ago was buy two large AMC pots from a door-to-door saleswoman.

“I remember it as if it was yesterday,” Kathy reminisces. “We looked at the smaller pots, looked at each other and said: what use would we have for those? And this was before we really had any furniture!”

Since then, there are few things the McDonalds love more than throwing open their front door to family and friends – old and new – making sure everyone leaves their home happy and, most importantly, well fed. “We love having a full house. We expect everyone to visit all the time,” giggles Kathy.

Eric, an electrical engineer, grew up in Cape Town, while Kathy, a stay-at-home mom of three and part-time fashion designer, hails from Mafikeng but grew up mainly in Standerton, Mpumalanga. Eric’s work saw them settling in Kuils River almost two decades ago; they were one of the first families to build their property in the then brand-new Zevendal Estate.

It boasts five bedrooms, four bathrooms and five large open-plan living areas as well as a sprawling backyard – all built with the intention of creating a full and bustling home. And Christmas time is no exception! >>

A collection of delicate dinnerware that Kathy inherited from her grandmother and mother (above) takes pride of place in a beautiful old display cabinet.

Compared to the rest of the home, the kitchen (above left) is sleek and modern. “As much as I love my antiques, I think a kitchen is the place where you can really indulge current trends,” says Kathy. The handle-free cupboards are spray-painted SupaWood and the countertops are Caesarstone.

Tea towel from H&M Home; soft buckets for herbs from Streepsak
Family and friends

Over the years, the McDonald household has seen children come and go, along with family members and friends in need and sometimes, even if just for a meal, perfect strangers. “I feel like we’ve been blessed with so much, so I love getting to know people and helping where I can,” says Kathy. “I can’t tell you the number of times I’ve picked up someone in need from the side of the road — my husband jokes about it but he also worries for my safety. I’ve heard that they pray for me in church to keep me safe!”

Once their three children — Earl, Carmen and Candice — had moved out, Eric suggested that perhaps it was time they moved into a smaller place. “But I put my foot down and said: no, my grandchildren are still coming!” Kathy says with a laugh.

Double doors leading from a shady nook at the side of the house allow cool air into the dining room.

Rugs, cushion (left) and copper planters from MRP Home; cushion (right) from Haus; copper lanterns from Biggie Best
Home of their dreams

Along with her two brothers and four sisters, Kathy was raised in a creative household and she has fond memories of all of them helping her late mother Ellen tend to their home and the cooking.

“That’s how we bonded with her: sewing this, cleaning that, digging in the garden. But that’s also how we learned. My mom kept the most beautiful home and took pride in every little nook and cranny she created,” Kathy says.

“It didn’t look unlike our house now and I still have many of the furniture pieces she collected over the years.”

Kathy clearly inherited her mother’s creative touch; she’s constantly busy with needlework, various arts-and-crafts projects and, of course, decorating her home. Her creativity is evident before you even reach the front door with three large mosaic geckos, handmade by Kathy, embedded in the pathway.

The glass of the French double doors at the entrance was given a lick of purple paint – an imperfect but cheerful stain that adds a welcoming touch. Just inside is a large staircase, its walls filled with art all the way up to the second-storey ceiling. “As a girl, I dreamt of the perfect house with a grand staircase directly opposite the front door – and this is exactly that for me,” says Kathy.

Her home is filled with second-hand pieces, heirlooms and items from stores that have since closed down. She can only point out a handful of items that have been bought in the past few years. “When I buy, I buy forever. It’s only now and then that I’ll see something I just have to have. I’d rather buy a nice lamp or frame than a dress…”

An old wreath updated with fresh pennygum pops against the purple-painted panes of the front door.

A growing collection of framed art leads the eye up the wide staircase.

The interior is tastefully curated with velvet couches, artworks in ornate frames and inherited treasures.

Cushions and gift bag from Plan B Vintage.
I don’t preserve wooden pieces – I place them where I think they will work and allow them to age.

— Kathy

An old sewing machine table that once belonged to Kathy's grandmother sits next to the bath in the main bedroom's en-suite bathroom.

When Orca Baths first opened 18 years ago, Kathy bought this beautiful freestanding copper bath from them – the first one they’d put on display! “I love the tarnished look it has developed over time,” she says.
Kathy cut off the sides of a much larger ornate headboard to create this one for the guest bedroom. On either side are wooden side tables that she sanded for a lighter, weathered look.

“I bought the linen in the main bedroom from MRP Home 18 years ago, and it’s still going strong,” says Kathy. “It doesn’t fade in the wash and both my kids and grandkids have enjoyed plenty of bouncing sessions on the beds – this is not the kind of house where children aren’t allowed in certain rooms!”

Scatters from Haus

A photograph of Kathy’s grandparents on their wedding day and Kathy’s wedding dress feature in the main bedroom.

An old bookshelf serves as Eric’s shoe cupboard. >>
Keeping with tradition

“I’m a real plasmeisie!” says Kathy. “When I wasn’t inside helping keep house, I was under the fruit trees in the garden with my siblings. Our weekly entertainment, which we very much looked forward to, was a weekend walk to the shops where my mom would buy us each an ice cream – simple!

“So you can imagine that Christmas was a big deal with food at the centre of the celebration. Especially meat and potatoes – the other stuff often found its way under the table for a pet or into a pot plant!”

It’s no wonder then that a festive celebration in Kathy’s home also begins with meat. The cooking process, which she describes as “low and slow”, kicks off the morning before Christmas Day. “It’s usually quite an early start; I don’t need much sleep generally and at this time of the year, I’m too excited anyway!”

The older siblings are in charge of the lamb and beef (sometimes pork) and the younger ones, the tongue. “The real meat requires experience – we can’t risk what the younger ones might do with it!” Kathy jokes.

After church on Christmas Day, everyone typically returns to the McDonald household to add the final touches to the various dishes. “We’re supposed to rotate where Christmas lunch is hosted each year but we love being at home and having everyone at our place, so it’s been held here quite often. Eric and I are also very lazy to drive, so it suits us!” Kathy says.

Starters aren’t usually on the festive menu. “Everyone’s waiting for the meat,” explains Kathy. “Once the first pieces have been cut, I take them to the table in their roasting pans – it’s mostly a grab-and-enjoy affair.”

Lunch is either dished up at the large dining table or served buffet-style. “We enjoy relaxed lunches with everyone reaching over each other, grabbing this and that, and mingling.” Dessert typically includes a pavlova and trifle, after which everyone relaxes in their favourite chair.

“It ends with the kids playing with their new toys outside while we eat chocolates and sing hymns as the sun goes down...” >>
Seated clockwise from left: Kathy and Eric’s son Earl and his wife Lezanne; their niece Monique and grandson Juan; Eric and Kathy; their daughters Candice and Carmen and granddaughter Kate-Emily.

Kathy and Eric’s grandchildren – Juan, Kate-Emily and Liam (left) – have a ball, opening gifts in the formal lounge. The tree ornaments echo the elegant gold theme for this year’s festivities. “When it comes to festive themes, I go to the shops a few days before the big day, see what’s available and decide what I’m going to do based on that – easy-peasy!” says Kathy. “As I always say to my children, why go looking for dungarees when all the shops have are jeans?”

One of three mosaic geckos, handmade by Kathy, that greet visitors as they make their way to the front door (right).
We love a lavish Christmas! — Kathy

Kathy's gold menu

Welcome drink
Golden fruit punch

Starter
Tongue with nasturtiums and mustard

Main course
Stuffed leg of lamb and golden potatoes,
Lamb curry pie with tomato sambal and yellow rice
Roasted veggie salad

Dessert
Ellen's preserved peaches with caramel ice cream

A sitting area at the side of the home shaded by a canopy of ivy, wisteria and jasmine is where the golden fruit punch (recipe opposite) is served.

Stars from Biggie Best; Cecilia Evergreen cushion from Haus
**Tongue**

Serves 8 • Preparation time: 10 minutes • Cooking time: 3–4 hours

- 1 fresh or pickled tongue (about 1.5kg)
- 1 large onion, peeled and roughly chopped
- 2 garlic cloves • 2 bay leaves • 2 whole cloves

1 Rinse the tongue thoroughly and place in a big pot. Add all the other ingredients and cover the tongue with water. Bring to the boil; then reduce the heat and simmer for 2–3 hours with the lid on until the tongue is cooked and tender when you test it with the tip of a sharp knife. Add more water during the cooking time if need be; it is important that the tongue remains covered with water while it cooks.

2 Lift the tongue from the cooking liquid and allow to cool just enough so you can work with it. Using a sharp knife, remove the skin gently (doing this while the tongue is still hot is much easier). Place the tongue in a bowl and cover again with the cooking liquid so that it can cool slowly before carving; serve with mustard and melba toast.

**Golden fruit punch**

Kathy and her family love making a frozen punch bowl that can be topped up with juice and lemonade during the course of the day.

1 Use a large mixing bowl that can fit in your freezer and inside your glass punch bowl, as well as a smaller one that fits inside the larger bowl.

2 Arrange slices of **citrus, berries, edible flowers** and herbs such as **mint** around the inner edge of the larger bowl. Place a few ice cubes in the bottom of the large bowl and stand the smaller bowl on top of that. Fill the large bowl halfway with **apple juice** and place ice cubes in the smaller bowl to serve as a weight so that it won’t float. Freeze until set.

3 Fill the rest of the large bowl with **juice** and garnish with more fruit and flowers. Freeze overnight.

4 On Christmas Day, carefully remove the smaller bowl and immerse the large bowl briefly in water, then rub it with a wet cloth to carefully loosen the frozen bowl.

5 Place the frozen bowl inside your glass punch bowl, then fill up the punch bowl with **lemonade**. As the apple juice melts, it flavours the lemonade, adding a delicious flavour to the punch. You can, of course, add **tots of alcohol**, some **wine** and/or **ginger beer** to your punch, if desired.
The 12-seater dining room table is decked out for the Christmas feast, served on dinnerware Kathy inherited from her mother. The tall wall of mirrors in ornate frames lends a sense of grandeur to the space.
Believe it or not, we eat curry on Christmas Day! It can be cooked the day before, as it’s even more flavourful the following day.

— Kathy
Stuffed leg of lamb with golden potatoes

The idea of removing the hip and thigh bone from a leg of lamb while retaining the lovely shape of the shank bone comes from Jamie Oliver’s new cookbook *Jamie Cooks Italy*.

**Serves 8–10**
**Preparation time:** 1 hour  
**Cooking time:** 1 hour, 30 minutes  
**Oven temperature:** 200°C

- 1 large leg of lamb (about 2.25kg), hip and thigh bone removed  
- 2kg medium-sized potatoes, peeled  
- about 30ml Worcestershire Sauce  
- 30ml olive oil  
- 2 whole garlic bulbs, halved  
- oil for deep-frying  
- 80g fresh mint leaves, well-rinsed and patted dry  
- ready-made mint sauce

### STUFFING
- 125ml dried breadcrumbs  
- 125ml flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped  
- 125ml fresh basil, finely chopped  
- 60ml fresh mint leaves, finely chopped  
- 1 sprig rosemary, leaves stripped and finely chopped  
- 6 anchovy fillets, finely chopped  
- 60ml grated Parmesan  
- about 30ml lemon juice

1. Mix all the stuffing ingredients together and set aside.
2. Using a sharp knife, carefully butterfly the deboned part of the leg of lamb and spread the stuffing evenly over it. Roll up and tie with kitchen string to form a neat shape; place in a large roasting pan.
3. Preheat the oven. Boil the potatoes in salted water for 5 minutes, drain and arrange around the lamb. Drizzle the Worcestershire Sauce and olive oil over and season with salt and pepper to taste. Roast the lamb and potatoes for 1 hour.
4. Remove from the oven and lift out the potatoes. Baste the lamb, add the garlic and roast for a further 15 minutes or until cooked as desired. Remember to let the meat rest properly before carving. The lamb will now be pink and juicy. (If you prefer lamb well-done, roast it in a cooking bag in the oven for 10–12 hours or overnight at 100°C until the meat falls off the bone.)
5. Scrape the potatoes with a fork to open up their surface area and deep-fry in hot oil until golden-brown and crunchy. Once all the potatoes are done, gently deep-fry the mint leaves for a few seconds until glossy, transparent and crispy. This garnish not only looks fresh but it also adds texture.

Serve the succulent leg of lamb, garlic and potatoes with the crispy leaves and mint sauce.

**Tip** If you prepare the potatoes the day before and would like to deep-fry the potatoes just before serving, warm them up before immersing them in the oil for best results.

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### Roasted veggie salad

Roast 12 halved yellow *patti pans* and 12 halved *baby carrots* on a griddle pan until you get lovely char lines. Add 125ml roasted *sweet pepper* strips and their roasting juice and season with salt, pepper and a dash of quality olive oil. Spoon onto a bed of *baby salad leaves* and sprinkle toasted *pecan nuts* and *cranberries* on top. The olive oil and sweet pepper juice make a delicious dressing. >>
I’m happiest when big groups of us are together.  
The bigger the party, the better! – Kathy
Rainbow sambal

Halve about 200g rainbow cherry tomatoes and finely chop 1 small red onion. Thinly slice 4 plump radishes. Mix with about 30ml olive oil, 45ml red wine vinegar and a sprinkling of fresh basil and coriander leaves. Season with salt, pepper and a pinch of sugar. Leave for at least 30 minutes to allow the flavours to develop.

Caramel ice cream with preserved peaches

We’re not really big on dessert, besides traditional puddings like Jan Ellis and malva. I’m also very fond of preserved peaches, like my mother Ellen used to make, served with Ideal Milk or ice cream (we combined the two).

Ellen’s preserved clingstone peaches

Makes 2 large jars
Preparation time: about 30 minutes in total
Cooking time: 20 minutes, plus freezing time

- 60ml sugar
- 125ml water
- 2L ice cream, slightly softened
- 125ml Ideal Milk (reserve the rest of the tin for serving)
- 1 jar of preserved peaches
- mini meringues
- ginger biscuits (optional)

1 Add the sugar, water and cinnamon to a large saucepan and stir constantly over low heat until the sugar has dissolved. Simmer over low heat, without stirring, until a light syrup forms.
2 Add the peaches and cook until they are soft and the syrup thickens (about 20–30 minutes). Sterilise the jars in boiling water while the peaches cook. Skim off any foam that develops in the saucepan with a spoon. Remove the jars from the boiling water and pack the peaches evenly in the jars. Fill with the syrup. If any foam forms on top of the filled jars, skim it off. Seal the jars and allow to rest upside-down overnight.

Tip Add a pinch of saffron to your rice while it’s cooking to get the golden colour and garnish with toasted almonds and pomegranate rubies for a festive look.
Caramel ice cream with preserved peaches

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Plan B Vintage 082 491 3677, planbvintage.co.za
Streepsak 041 484 6215, streepsak.co.za

Find more Christmas menus on www.homemag.co.za
A couple with a vision transformed a Victorian home burdened with a disconnected layout and dark and poky rooms into a contemporary open-plan abode.

By Kim Arendse • Photographs Francois Oberholster • Styling Misi Overturf
Ceylan and Ian sanded several layers of paint off the original shutters, exposing the beautiful hardwood beneath. The exterior walls went from a dull yellow to a sophisticated light grey with a white trim.
The lounge went from dark and cramped to airy and sophisticated. The couple initially painted the walls a dark grey for a modern look but later changed it to a lighter shade to accentuate the new expanse.
For a family that loves walking and biking everywhere, so much so that they didn’t own a car until very recently, finding a property to purchase in the heart of Cape Town was top of their list when they began house-hunting in 2016.

It had to be a stone’s throw from where their daily activities take them and as they’re “big on the small house movement”, they were keen on a compact home – no problem in the middle of the Mother City!

The Thomsons also wanted an affordable space, a fixer-upper they could turn into their ultimate family home with their own unique, contemporary style. After a few months spent searching for just the right spot, Ian, an entrepreneur and CEO of TooMuchWifi, and Ceylan, managing partner of Craft+Graft at Dunkley Square, bought a Victorian home in Gardens. They fell in love with its view of Table Mountain, courtyard and period details such as 40cm-thick walls, 3.55m-tall ceilings and original wooden floors.

However, a 100-year-old home doesn’t come without old-age problems! “The layout of the interior was weird and each space felt disconnected from the next,” Ceylan says. “We didn’t like the narrow hallway with rooms hiding behind doors; it made everything feel dark.”

Many of the home’s beautiful hardwood floors had been replaced with unattractive grey tiles and the couple didn’t like that the kitchen was tucked away in a far corner of the house.

Over seven months, they demolished several interior walls, changing the layout of the house to suit their lifestyle which is largely centred on the kitchen and living areas. Thereafter, they began to decorate with a clear vision for each room. “Now the rooms flow into one another, there’s plenty of light and our home is filled with all the things we love,” Ceylan says. >>

Ian built the smaller coffee table using a base made by Classy Steel Classics and added a bronze tray the couple inherited.
The dining room, once small and dingy, now gets plenty of natural light from the courtyard on one side and large double doors facing the garden on the other. Rug from Herringbone; table from LIM; chairs from Chair Crazy; pendant from Arora Lights.

“We love how the black accents in this room create a striking visual impact.”

The original living room was converted into a “generous kitchen that’s perfect for entertaining” (right). The Thomsons removed all the doors connecting the rooms in the centre of the house, making it semi open-plan, and kept the ‘framework’ of each wall to define the various spaces and to pay their respects to the home’s original Victorian cottage style. Cupboards and island from Ismail Sambo Interiors, marble counter from Womag; chairs from @home.

“I wanted a kitchen with clean lines and few distractions, so we chose drawers and cabinets without handles. We didn’t want to clutter up the workspace, so there are only five appliances ‘on display’ and we use these daily,” Ceylan says.

Painting by Katharien de Villiers
At first, the couple planned to paint the walls in the main en-suite bathroom (below) black for a bit of drama, but in the end they decided to stick to the same light grey used throughout the house. “We’re glad we did as this shade makes the bathroom look bigger and friendlier than it otherwise would have,” Ceylan says. They did, however, create a striking focal wall in the shower with vertically-laid black tiles. Patterned Moroccan floor tiles add a touch of colour.

Brass shower and taps from John Brass Taps & Fittings; black shower tiles from Tiletoria; floor tiles from Moroccan Warehouse

Calm and contemporary

Inspired by nature, the Thomsons wanted an interior with muted, earthy colours and raw wood. They began by painting all the walls the same light grey to create a cohesive look.

Then, each space was decorated with careful consideration: every room had to have its own style while also subtly connecting with the rest of the home. This was achieved by repeating similar elements such as the patterned Moroccan tiles which feature in both bathrooms as well as around the fireplace and braai area.

The couple also shopped around for beautiful second-hand antique items to pay homage to the old Victorian property. “While we love keeping things simple, meaningful and striking, we also wanted to create a certain level of sophistication,” says Ceylan. “We achieved this with a few key features like the large marble top for the kitchen island and oversized pendants in the living areas. Smaller items such as lamps, rugs, art and décor were then chosen to complement these features.”
The courtyard was a major selling point for this sociable couple. They removed an extra bathroom to increase its size and the dining room and bedrooms now open up onto this area. Narrow wooden doors were replaced with metal-framed stacking doors for a modern touch and to make the most of natural light.

A large mirror in the en suite reflects the courtyard outside the main bedroom.

We love the big doors in our bedroom; in the afternoon, the sunshine hits the bed at the perfect angle. – Ceylan

Clever idea!
These nifty alcoves save on shelving space.

Bedding from IKEA; yellow pendant from Inhouse Furniture; Umbra coat rack from superbalist.com

Chairs from Outdoor Workz
The façade was previously a lacklustre yellow with dull grey trim. Many internal walls were knocked down, such as this wall between the old living room and hallway, to create larger, more airy rooms.

The kitchen was relocated to the middle of the house. This space is now the kids' bedroom and bathroom.

Bigger doors replaced small ones and security gates that blocked the view into the courtyard were removed.

The original family room became the open-plan kitchen.

**Q&A with Ceylan and Ian**

What are some of the biggest lessons you learnt during this renovation? It's extremely challenging to project manage a renovation yourself without previous experience, especially with two kids under the age of three!

What's your top cost-cutting tip? Combine a couple of high-impact pieces with more affordable ones for a good overall look.

Is there anything you'd do differently next time? We'd vet contractors more thoroughly and trust our gut feeling. 📈

**STOCKISTS**

@home 0860 576 576, home.co.za
Arora Lights 021 949 2520, aroralights.co.za
Aura Interiors 021 447 8808, auroninteriors.co.za
Chair Crazy 021 465 9991, chaircrazy.co.za
Classy Steel Classics 021 951 7705, classysteel.co.za
Exquisite Bathrooms 021 418 7626
Herringbone 021 418 0787, herringbone.co.za
Inhouse Furniture 061 589 0858
Ismail Sambo Interiors 021 703 9578/99, isambointeriors.co.za
John Brass Taps & Fittings 021 447 2807
LIM 021 423 1200, lim.co.za
Moroccan Warehouse 021 461 8318
Outdoor Workz 021 555 2742, outdoorworkz.co.za
Tiletoria 021 202 0160, tiletoria.co.za
Womag 021 447 6161, womag.co.za

December 2018 home 75
In black & white

Work that monochrome magic with these stunning décor buys!

Nicola jug (18cm H) R199, knus.co

Clinton Friedman tray (37cm D), R429 yuppiechef.co.za

Umbrella (230cm H x 200cm W) R2 950, Pilgrimage Spaces

Leather-and-iron ball pendant R1050, K.Light

Joy dining chair R5 999, @home

Leaf canvas bucket (from 18 x 18cm) R180, shop.pleeko.co.za

Hanging planter (from 16 x 11cm) R285, Mia Mélange

Hand towel R150, Woolworths

Outdoor lantern (23.5 x 17cm) R250, Woolworths

Behind closed doors

Mirimyn cabinet (171.45cm W x 35.56cm D x 91.44cm H) R7 950, Ashley Furniture Homestore

76 home December 2018
Rug (1.2 x 1.8m) R1 299, Poetry

Dover server (1 130cm L x 340cm W x 960cm H) R6 995, Block & Chisel

Regency ribbed velvet bench (93cm L x 44cm W x 48cm H) R1 800, MRP Home

Shapes scatter cover (60 x 60cm) R320, zanaproducts.co.za

Modern geo print scatter (60 x 40cm) R330, Woolworths

Herringbone platter (33 x 24cm) R399, @home

Cement planter (13 x 14.5cm) R79.99, MRP Home

Column pot plant stand (55cm H) R850, knus.co

Jute laundry basket (35 x 65cm) R399, H&M Home

Rug (2 x 1.4m) R3 500, knus.co

Poetry
0860 555 529, poetrystores.co.za

Wallpaper Inn
087 359 1682, wallpaperinn.co.za

Woolworths
0860 022 002, woolworths.co.za

STOCKISTS @home 0860 576 576, home.co.za
Ashley Furniture Homestore 012 749 3100, ashleyfurniturehomestores.co.za
Block & Chisel 010 593 9308, blockandchisel.co.za
H&M Home 086 0690 707, hm.com/za
K.Light 021 552 4370, klighet.co.za
Mia Mélange 082 357 4044, miamelange.com
MRP Home 0800 212 535, mрhome.com
Pilgrimage Spaces 021 300 1925, pilgrimagespaces.co.za
Poetry 0860 555 529, poetystores.co.za
Wallpaper Inn 087 359 1682, wallpaperinn.co.za
Woolworths 0860 022 002, woolworths.co.za
TAKING IT outside

Stylish furniture is no longer reserved for inside – just look at these beautiful outdoor options!

By Beatrice Moore-Nöthnagel
Photographs Francois Oberholster, Elza Cooper, Henrique Wilding and supplied
Styling Marian van Wyk, Amanda van Wyngaardt, Kim Bougaardt and Suretha Jansen van Rensburg

Wicker chairs complement the Mediterranean aesthetic on this dreamy stoep and work well with the wooden table and bench.

Did you know?
Wicker is the product that results from the process of weaving and refers to both natural and synthetic materials.

Location Flawless Villa & Cottage (facebook.com/flawlesscottage/)
Wicker

Wicker is great for adding texture to an outdoor space. Traditionally, natural wicker is made of rattan, cane, reed or bamboo. Nowadays, artificial wicker made of polyethylene is specifically manufactured for outdoor use and has become popular because it is durable and requires little maintenance.

“Unfortunately, not all artificial wicker is the same,” explains Mia DeIpo of Patio Warehouse. “Cheaper brands will sometimes crack, break or fade, so it’s very important to buy a good quality product.”

**ADVANTAGES** Wicker is lightweight and suitable for both indoors and outdoors. It is also recyclable, UV-resistant and low-maintenance. Different styles suit different décor tastes.

**DRAWBACKS** Artificial wicker can be rather expensive as it is designed for maximum durability and because it is hand-woven. If you buy natural wicker, make sure it’s well-crafted with no weak spots that can unravel.

**MAINTENANCE** Brush your natural wicker weekly to keep it dust-free, thereby avoiding mildew and consequent deterioration. Consider a product such as Starbrite Artificial Wicker Cleaner/Protector to help maintain the look and longevity of your artificial wicker.

**TOP TIP**
Natural wicker can’t be left outside in the rain; only use it on undercover patios. Quality artificial wicker can be left outside in the sun and rain, but check guarantees as poor quality products will crack.

Metal

Metal – including iron, steel and aluminium – remains popular in the garden. Steel furniture is heavier than aluminium, but lighter than iron. Of these, aluminium is probably the most popular right now, says Mia of Patio Warehouse. “Aluminium offers the most advantages: it is lightweight, low-maintenance, durable and rust-free.”

**ADVANTAGES** Depending on the style, metal can create a classical ambience or a contemporary look.

**DRAWBACKS** Any type of metal can become quite hot in the sun and unpleasant to the touch; add cushions for comfort. Heavier metals, such as iron, are difficult to move around. And remember – iron and steel rust.

**MAINTENANCE** Make sure you don’t use abrasive cleaning products on aluminium to avoid scratching; otherwise, it’s practically maintenance-free. Steel and iron furniture can be restored with products such as Rust-Oleum Stops Rust Protective Enamel Spray or Textured Metallic. If you see signs of rust, treat it immediately! >>

Outdoor furniture made of hardwood used to come with a hefty price tag but these days it has become more commonplace while still offering the same durability, thanks to more affordable imports. Today, the big debate regarding hardwood is whether to leave it untreated to weather naturally and obtain a silvery-grey finish, or to protect it with oil or varnish to retain the reddish colour of the timber.

Most manufacturers advise that their products be treated with a suitable oil and used only on an undercover patio. Others, however, specialise in furniture that can be left outside in the sun and rain. Always check the guarantee.

“At Hope Garden Furniture we use either karri (Eucalyptus diversicolor), an alien timber grown and milled in Knysna, or jarrah (Eucalyptus marginata) imported from Australia,” says owner Adrian Hope. “Both of these wood types are highly regarded hardwoods. They can be used outdoors but we recommend seasonal washing with a plant oil soap to neutralise organisms that form in the cracks.”

ADVANTAGES
Hardwood can last a lifetime if it is maintained correctly.

DRAWBACKS
If you choose to oil or varnish your wood, it has to be done annually – which can be labour-intensive. Even wood types left to grey naturally need to be cleaned every year with suitable soap products from the manufacturer.

MAINTENANCE
Hardwood types can handle water well, which offers an easy cleaning solution. Follow the required treatment programme as per the manufacturer’s instructions.

LETS GO SHOPPING!

Marlboro three-seater teak bench R2 499, Decofurn

Park folding armchair with steel frame and jarrah wood slats from R3 343, Hope Garden Furniture

Holiday Side Chair with teak frame and sand-coloured fabric R1 486, Tradewinds

Jaipur mango wood dining bench (216 x 40 x 45.5cm) R3 500, MRP Home

Cascade six-seater Killarney ash wooden dining table (179 x 90 x 74cm) R4 650, Patio Warehouse

[TOP TIP]
If you prefer to keep your furniture ‘natural’ after it has turned grey, simply buff with sandpaper (120–240 grit) and follow up with an application of hardwood oil.

Besides being oiled and varnished, wood can also be painted any colour you like to give it an instant update; use exterior water-based enamel for best results.

Common wood types used for outdoor furniture in South Africa:
Rhodesian teak, Indonesian teak, karri, jarrah and keruing.
Wood remains a firm favourite for outdoor furniture as it can be left to weather naturally, oiled or painted for an updated look.

What about ‘softer’ wood types?

“Furniture made of so-called ‘soft timber’, such as South African pine, can confidently be used and left outdoors, provided it’s properly treated with a sealant that protects the wood from UV-radiation, makes it water-resistant and stabilises it dimensionally (so that it doesn’t split or warp),” says Frikkie Greeff of Woodoc. “Woodoc Water-Borne Deck Sealer together with Woodoc Plus Life Primer will protect wooden furniture and ensure that it remains in excellent condition for many years. As with any project, however, one must prepare the wood correctly and apply the products in the right way to get the best results. Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions carefully.”
Cement furniture has been around for many years but with the growth in popularity of cement floors and grey paint colours, it has made a trendy comeback in gardens. Styles range from traditional with curvy old-school designs to contemporary – and furniture even comes in polyconcrete (see box), which looks like cement but is more lightweight. “Cement is probably the only material to last a lifetime and it also looks better with age,” says Paolo Gosio of Ital Cement. “It’s virtually maintenance-free and even if you do decide to paint it, a touch-up every 3–5 years is sufficient.”

**ADVANTAGES** Depending on the style, cement furniture is inexpensive but extremely durable. It’s heavy which means it won’t blow away in strong winds and it’s difficult to steal – making it a popular choice for holiday homes!

**DRAWBACKS** Typically, cement is very heavy and difficult to move around. Some people may not like the look of cement furniture and it can be cold without cushions.

**MAINTENANCE** Cement requires no maintenance and can be cleaned as you would any type of surface. If you like the look of algae growing on cement, encourage it by applying natural yoghurt; leave it on for at least a few weeks. If you want to paint your cement, first use a concrete sealer followed by exterior water-based enamel.

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**LET’S GO SHOPPING!**

Avery patio stool  
R1 299, Coricraft

Square coffee table with painted wooden legs (800 x 800 x 430mm)  
R2 000, Grys

Concrete garden bench  
(1 200 x 400 x 420mm)  
R2 944, SmartStone

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**What is polyconcrete?**

Lightweight concrete-like products such as resin-based polyconcrete boast a mixture of polymer resin and a number of fillers that range from coarse sand to fine powders reinforced with glass fibre strands, explains Brit Youens from Igneous which specialises in this type of furniture, pots and planters. “This mix varies according to the weight and complexity of the mouldings and can be pigmented to any colour. Once moulded, the product is then covered with a polyester topcoat that is pigment-matched to the core material.”

Each item in the resin-based polyconcrete range is approximately half the weight of a comparable piece made from traditional cementitious concrete,” says Brit. “Items made from glass fibre reinforced polyconcrete are between two-thirds and three-quarters lighter than traditional cementitious concrete. This has significant implications for application where there are load-bearing structures. That said, the items are still weighty and are, therefore, also highly tolerant of strong winds.”

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Resin-based polyconcrete organic ottoman with curved top (350 x 540 x 605mm) R5 270, Igneous

Specialised Constantia Seat  
(R10 415) and Courtyard table  
(R2 554), Old World Concretes

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**Recycle!**

Outdoor furniture made from recycled materials is often seen in public parks and has now become just as desirable at home. Devon Durham of NewLife Plastics says: “Not only are these products environmentally friendly as they’re made from 100% recycled plastic packaging, but they will also last a lifetime as they’re exceptionally durable and can withstand extreme weather conditions.”

Another bonus is that this type of furniture is now available in different colours and requires no maintenance. The only drawback is that it can be quite heavy, but this will also deter thieves. >>

**Additional sources** wayfair.com, thespruce.com

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**STOCKISTS**

Biggie Best 021 534 8662, biggiebestwebshop.co.za  
Block & Chisel 021 691 0878, blockandchisel.co.za  
Coricraft 011 611 8700, coricraft.co.za  
Decofurn 087 740 1800, decofurnsa.co.za  
Grys 060 551 3122  
Hertex 021 914 3390, hertex.co.za  
Hope Garden Furniture 021 448 7485, hopegf.com  
Igneous 011 827 7425, igneous.co.za  
Ital Cement 021 510 8181, italcement.com  
MØN Exteriors 0861 866 766, monexteriors.com  
MRP Home 0800 212 535, mrphome.com  
NewLife Plastics 083 647 6767, newlifeplastics.co.za  
Old World Concretes 011 626 2510, oldworld.co.za  
Patio Warehouse 087 825 1120, patiowarehouse.co.za  
Ressource Décor 083 635 9192  
SmartStone 011 310 1161, smartstone.co.za  
Tradewinds 021 691 0456, tradewinds.co.za  
Velvet Products 021 797 0289, velvetproducts.co.za  
Woodoc 0800 411 200, woodoc.com
Built-in cement benches combined with custom-made mattresses and cushions are great for patios and garden areas.

[REMEMBER!]
Not all outdoor furniture can stand outside in the wind and rain. Some pieces should be kept under a roof, while others will cope with being in the garden. Check out the warranty for specific products and decide where your furniture will be positioned.
Add a softer touch...

Outdoor fabric

Whether wood or metal, most outdoor furniture will be more comfortable with a few cushions. With an ever-growing demand for outdoor fabrics, fully upholstered outdoor furniture takes ‘fresh air living’ to the next level. “From outdoor velvets, faux leathers and chenilles to jacquards and prints in a huge variety of designs from traditional to contemporary, there are plenty of options available,” says June da Silva of Hertex.

ADVANTAGES Fabric creates a luxurious look and feel and some outdoor fabrics offer a stain-resistant finish, making it ideal for full sun exposure. It is also water-repellent with best colour fastness. International brand Sunbrella Fabrics is your best bet, as this is what is used on boats – but it is costly!

DRAWBACKS Even though the fabric is designed for outdoor use, cushions should be brought under cover when not in use. Outdoor prints do not enjoy greater light fastness and are not recommended for constant exposure to direct sunlight.

MAINTENANCE Regular washing and vacuuming is recommended as mildew can grow on the dust that sits on the fabric, even if the fabric has an anti-mildew finish.

REMEMBER When it comes to upholstered furniture, also consider the foam used for inners, says Mia of Patio Warehouse. “Thanks to new technology, extra-large open cells permit maximum water drainage and air circulation so that water can seep through quicker, allowing upholstered furniture to dry faster. Look for the label ‘quick dry foam’.”

[TOP TIP] Remember that water will still penetrate fabric suitable for outdoor use and the inners can rot or get mouldy, so try not to leave cushions outdoors in the rain to prolong their lifespan.

LET'S GO SHOPPING!

Cozy two-seater sofa with aluminium frame and outdoor foam and fabric R13 280, Patio Warehouse

Beanbag covered in outdoor parasol solution-dyed polyester fabric R750–R1 500, Tradewinds

Marbella Sofa Set with aluminium and hardwood base and premium-grade outdoor cushions R13 990, MØN Exteriors

1 Home Sand 1047/92 (150cm) R414/m, Velvet Products
2 Script oil cloth (140cm) R197/m, Biggie Best
3 Promenade Mediterranean (140cm) R713/m, Hertex
4 U&G Fabrics Mona 01 (140cm) R639/m, fabricsuperstore.co.za
5 Sunbrella Mosaic Glacier (140cm) R1 518/m, fabricsuperstore.co.za

Tiara chair with aluminium frame upholstered in UV-resistant Sunbrella fabric R7 900, Patio Warehouse

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5 Sunbrella Mosaic Glacier (140cm) R1 518/m, fabricsuperstore.co.za

Tiara chair with aluminium frame upholstered in UV-resistant Sunbrella fabric R7 900, Patio Warehouse
Tiara Lounge Set

Africa’s Largest Selection of Patio Furniture & Accessories

Branches

- Centurion 012 657 9400
- Randburg 011 801 0820
- Canal Walk 021 526 7240
- Somerset West 021 840 4160
- Umhlanga 031 566 8550

Bite Lounge Set

www.patiowarehouse.co.za
Two ‘ladders’ with shelves and a curtain rod in-between them provide extra hanging and storage space.

Shoes and scarf from Woolworths; side tables, pendants and rug from Haus; Linwood Tango wallpaper in the design Pagoda LW70/I Sherbet from Hertex.
**QUICK PROJECT GUIDE**

- **Hard labour**: 4/10
- **Skill level**: 4/10
- **Time needed**: 1–2 hours

**Do it yourself** for less than R1 100: wood and screws R1 050, sandpaper and wood filler R30 (not including paint)

**You will need**

**SHOPPING LIST**

- 44 x 44mm planed pine, cut to:
  - two lengths of 470mm
  - two lengths of 425mm
  - two lengths of 382mm
  - two lengths of 338mm and two lengths of 260mm (rungs)
  - four lengths of 1 800mm (legs)
- 22 x 220mm planed pine, cut to:
  - two lengths of 850mm (shelves)
- 22 x 44mm planed pine, cut to:
  - two lengths of 1 100mm (crosspieces)
- one packet 6mm x 50mm screws
- one curtain rod (30mm thick)
- wood filler • sandpaper
- masking tape
- Tjhoko Paint in the colours Pebble Blue, Nade, Jane’s Jade and Comfort’s Blue

**TOOLS**

- cordless drill and 3mm drill bit
- pencil
- tape measure
- wood clamps
- tenon saw
- wood chisel
- hammer
- paintbrush

**Project notes**

- Remember to drill pilot holes.
- Sand your wood beforehand.

**Get started with the rack...**

1. Cut the ends of all the 44 x 44mm rungs at an angle of about 3˚ (in opposite directions). Place two 1 800mm legs side by side and make marks at 300mm, 600mm, 900mm and 1 200mm from one end. Also make a mark 44mm from the other end. Place the rungs between the legs as follows: one 470mm rung at the 300mm mark, one 425mm rung at 600mm, one 382mm rung at 900mm and one 338mm rung at the 1 200mm mark. Place a 260mm rung on the other end at the 44mm mark. Glue and screw the rungs to the legs. Repeat the process with the other rungs and legs. **Tip** Wood clamps will simplify your task.

2. Place the two ‘ladders’ next to each other and screw the 22 x 220mm shelves to the bottom two rungs (one at the front and one at the back). Screw the curtain rod to the top of the uppermost rungs. Make sure the ladders are parallel. >>

**Materials supplied by BUCO**
3 Place one of the 22 x 44mm crosspieces diagonally across the back of the rack, level with the lowest and third rung, and clamp in position. Place the other crosspiece across the first one and mark where the two intersect. Use the tenon saw and chisel to remove half of the thickness of each crosspiece (11mm) so they will interlock where they cross. Glue and screw the crosspieces firmly in place to make the rack sturdy, then saw off the excess wood. Fill all screw holes with wood filler and allow to dry completely before sanding.

...and now to decorate

4 Mask off stripes on the legs with masking tape, making sure that it is stuck down properly so the paint doesn’t seep through. Paint over the tape (we used Jane’s Jade). Wait for the paint to dry, then pull off the tape carefully. Repeat with all four feet or paint two in a solid colour, like we did.

5 For your geometric pattern, mask off three triangles and a quadrangle on one of the shelves (see above). Paint the centre triangle and quadrangle in the two lightest colours (in our case, Pebble Blue and Nade). Important You may need to apply two coats of paint. Wait until the paint is dry, then remove the tape carefully.

6 Mask off another triangle that overlaps the painted rectangle. Mask off and paint the apex in the darkest colour (in our case, Comfort’s Blue) and allow to dry.

7 Mask off the bottom of the triangle you’ve just painted and paint the apex that overlaps the rectangle in a slightly lighter colour than the previous one (Jane’s Jade). Once the paint is dry, remove the tape.

CONTACTS AND STOCKISTS BUCO 021 927 5000, buco.co.za Deon de Goede 084 589 5026, deon@diydeon.co.za Haus 0860 437 839, hertexhaus.co.za Tjhoko Paint tjhoko.co.za Woolworths 0860 022 002, woolworths.co.za
You will need:

- tree rounds (stepping stones), available at nurseries
- a stencil in the design of your choice
- Stencil of Paris
- paint scraper (50mm wide)
- Tjhoko Paint (we used the colours Jane’s Jade, Simon Says and Cloud White)
- paintbrush (50mm wide)
- Antique Brown Glaze
- mutton cloth the size of a tea towel

Visit tjhokopaint.co.za to view Tjhoko Paint’s exciting range of stencils and to locate your nearest stockist.

Get started

1. Place the stencil on top of the tree round. Apply some of the Stencil of Paris evenly over the stencil with the paint scraper. Remove the stencil while the paste is still wet (take care not to smudge the paste) and rinse the stencil with water.

2. Wait about 2 hours for the Stencil of Paris to dry completely, then paint it with the Tjhoko Paint colour of your choice. We painted some of the tree rounds with Jane’s Jade and others with Simon Says. Allow at least four hours to dry.

3. Stir the Antique Brown Glaze well and pour 100ml into another container; dilute with 30ml water. Carefully apply the glaze over the paint with a paintbrush. Wipe off immediately with a damp cloth until you’re satisfied with the weathered effect.

4. Wait about 30 minutes then apply Cloud White paint over the Antique Brown Glaze. Use a dry brush (wet just the tip of the brush with a tiny bit of paint) to brush lightly over the glaze.

The cushions were also jazzed up with Tjhoko Paint in the colours Jane’s Jade and Simon Says.

Visit tjhokopaint.co.za to view Tjhoko Paint’s exciting range of stencils and to locate your nearest stockist.

Decorative wooden placemats, glass jars filled with treats, and comfy cushions – you’re all set for fun with friends and family in your favourite outdoor spot! Nadine Vosloo of Tjhoko Paint shows you how to decorate festive placemats with colour and texture!
Make this footstool with a recycled tyre and handmade pompoms.

By Shelly Bergh • Photographs Francois Oberholster

You will need

SHOPPING LIST
• second-hand tyre (we used a small Vespa tyre, but you could use a bigger one for a bigger stool)
• offcut timber
• six 4 x 35mm cut screws
• Rust-Oleum Chalked spray paint in the colour Serenity Blue
• three mid-century oak legs (20cm)
• yarn in different colours (we used ballet pink, charcoal, turquoise, and duck egg)

TOOLS
• steel ruler
• compass
• G-clamps
• jigsaw
• drill/screwdriver
• scissors
• measuring tape
• pencil
• glue gun

Quick Project Guide
Hard labour 1/10
Skill level 1/10
Time needed 2 hours, excluding time to make the pompoms
Do it yourself for R725
(wooden legs R525; spray paint R100; yarn R100)
GET STARTED

1 Measure the diameter of the inside of your tyre at the highest point. Use the compass to draw a circle with this measurement on the timber.

2 Secure the timber to your work surface with G-clamps and cut the circle out with the jigsaw. Trace another circle on the timber and cut it out.

3 Then attach the timber circles to either side of the tyre with the screws.

4 Spray-paint the tyre and timber seat with two coats of Rust-Oleum on all sides.

5 Measure the circumference of the timber circle and mark every third. Place the legs on these marks and screw in place.

6 Make the pompoms

Wind yarn around three fingers to form a thick ball. Keep a length of yarn in the palm of your hand when you start.

7 Once the ball is thick, slip one finger out. Knot the beginning and end of the yarn together.

8 Slip your other two fingers out and make a tighter knot. Repeat the knot on the other side of the ball.

9 Cut the loops of the yarn – and you have a pompom!

10 To finish Attach the handmade pompoms to the seat of your footstool with hot glue. Cover the stool with as many pompoms as desired.
Ask the experts

Keen to find out how to treat your wooden kitchen countertops or design an open-plan living area to best effect? You ask – we’ll find the answers.

Treat it right

Maryna Olivier of Joubertina writes
My husband and I want to build our kitchen cupboard countertops from genuine blackwood; how must we treat the wood to ensure that it is heat- and water-resistant?

Frikkie Greeff, managing director of Woodoc, replies
We suggest you use clear Woodoc Water-Borne Floor sealer. It is available in a matte and gloss finish. Because it’s a floor sealer, Woodoc Water-Borne Floor is highly scratch-resistant so your countertops will be able to withstand moderate heat (as long as it’s not so hot that it will scorch the wood), water and alcohol, among others.

It’s vital that you prepare the wood properly for the best results. Make sure the wood is completely dry, with no dust or oil on the surface, then sand well; the smoother the wood is, the better the finish will be. Wipe off with a cloth moistened with methylated spirits. Allow the surface to dry completely – all the methylated spirits must evaporate. Wipe again with spirits then with a dry cloth. Repeat the process twice more.

CONTACT
woodoc.com
In the dark

Lucia Roberts of Vereeniging writes We have a courtyard that we’d love to make use of at night but there’s no lighting in that area and short of carrying candles or lamps out every time, we have no other options. We’d like something permanent and since the area is open to the elements, the lighting has to be able to cope with rain, sun and wind. Have you got any good ideas for us?

Eben Kruger, marketing manager of Eurolux, replies

Outdoor areas require practical and robust lighting applications. Bulkhead lights are your best option, because they are commonly made from aluminium and are tough enough to withstand dust, water and sunlight. While bulkhead lighting is known for its functionality, there’s a wide variety of designs on the market (see right) to suit any home’s exterior design aesthetic. >>

CONTACT eurolux.co.za

1 Bulkhead grid, die-cast aluminium, glass lens (270mm H x 180mm W x 130mm D)
2 Small oval bulkhead with eyelid, die-cast aluminium, frosted glass lens (105mm H x 210mm W x 95mm D)
3 Bulkhead (large) with cross, die-cast aluminium, frosted glass lens (325mm H x 325mm W x 170mm D)
4 Fumagalli Danzi oval bulkhead with grid, UV-stabilised shockproof resin, opal UV-stabilised acrylic glass lens (338mm H x 245mm H x 90mm D)
Prices on request

Email your queries to experts@homemag.co.za.
Sally Smith of Plumstead writes We recently moved from a small apartment into a fairly large home. The kitchen, which we plan to renovate, is separated from the living area by two walls, which we want to remove. Our concern is that an open-plan layout will create an expansive area, which we’re not used to, and we’re unsure of how to design the space to get the best flow. Any suggestions?

Hanno de Swardt of Onnah Design suggests

Demolishing not only the kitchen walls but also those of the study will maximise the space and create a much-improved flow.

1. Create a ‘pyjama lounge’ where the current kitchen is located, using a built-in bookshelf as a divider. A pyjama lounge is a space that’s separate from the rest of the living area; here, thanks to sliding doors on either side, it can be opened up to become more integrated with the kitchen and main lounge. This is the perfect spot for the TV.

2. Move the kitchen closer to the current study – convert the latter into a scullery. The scullery will be out of sight and offers the ideal spot for less attractive appliances such as the washing machine and tumble dryer.

3. Position the kitchen diagonally across from the lounge. Integrate the island with the dining table, partly as a space-saving mechanism but also as a strong contemporary design element. This also means the dining table is situated near the fireplace. The hob and eye-level oven are in close proximity to the fridge, built-in microwave and prep bowl.

4. Transform the awkward space leading to the passage into a small bar.

Suggested colour scheme

Plascon Antique Petal
Plascon Ewa
Plascon Crete Shore

This layout pushes open-plan living to the extreme, so it might not suit everyone’s lifestyle. I call it honest living as everything is out in the open. – Hanno
**Mpho Vackier of DesignPeo suggests** Use the additional space gained by the removal of the two walls to add a large island and create well-defined living room spaces around it.

1. Extend the kitchen with a long island that has plenty of storage – a perfect addition to replace the cupboard storage lost when the kitchen walls are removed. A large island also allows for more than one person to prepare food and makes for a great gathering area when entertaining. The simple and practical layout creates straight lines of movement between the stove, fridge and sink.

2. Position the dining room table close to the kitchen to create ease of movement between the two zones. While less formal family dinners can be had at the island bar, the layout allows you to accommodate a large table nearby with enough space for bigger gatherings.

3. With the lounge close to the fireplace, it’s the ideal spot for relaxing after dinner.

4. Transform the existing study into a playroom. This allows you to be in the kitchen but engage with what is happening in other areas of the open-plan space – a huge advantage, especially if you have kids.

**This layout shows off the beauty and ease of an open-plan living area.**

– Mpho

**Suggested colour scheme**

- Dulux Golden Umber 2
- Dulux Nectar Jewels 3
- Dulux Caribbean Dawn 4
- Dulux Indian Ivy 1

**[TIPS FOR FINISHES]**

- Demarcate various functions within the open-plan space by using rugs – they can visually break the room up into manageable areas and make the entire space feel inviting.
- Colour can also be used to tie the space together. Coat all the walls with one neutral colour but use unique décor to demarcate each zone.
- Add drama with lighting in the form of large glass pendant lights over the island, a medium cluster of modern minimalist lights over the dining table, dimmable downlights and floor lamps in the rest of the space.
- For countertops, use dark synthetic quartz next to the sink (with matching dark cupboard doors), a lighter hue for the island and a solid timber slab for the eating area with barstools to add contrast and texture.

**CONTACT** designpeo.co.za

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**Weekend project**

You will need
- offcut wood and artificial grass
- Alcolin Artificial Grass Adhesive
- saw • carpet knife • notched trowel

1. Draw the outline of a tree on the wood and cut it out, then place the wood on the artificial grass and cut out the same shape.

2. Spread Alcolin Artificial Grass Adhesive on the wood only, using a grooved trowel (if you don’t have one, use a fork from your kitchen).

3. Place the artificial grass in the wet adhesive (don’t wait until it’s tacky) and position neatly. Screw a plank to the bottom of the tree to create a base.

**Make a mini Christmas tree with artificial grass!**
Quick questions

Q: What is the wall colour on page 72 of your August 2018 issue? – Linda Lubbe, Gariep Dam
A: The homeowners painted their kitchen with Plascon Double Velvet in the colour Artist Canvas.

Q: Where can I buy the embellishments on page 81 of your August 2018 issue? – Marinda van Wyk, Johannesburg
A: The embellishments are from Tjhoko Paint; go to tjhokopaint.co.za to order, or for a list of stockists in your area.

Q: What is the wall colour on page 72 of your August 2018 issue? – Linda Lubbe, Gariep Dam
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A: The embellishments are from Tjhoko Paint; go to tjhokopaint.co.za to order, or for a list of stockists in your area.

Q: What kind of epoxy was used on the floor on page 38 of your August 2018 issue? – Chris Bester, Cape Town
A: The floor was coated with off-white Earthcote (a Paintsmiths product); visit paintsmiths.co.za.

Q: I love the wall-mounted rabbit above the doorway on page 30 of your February 2018 issue! Where can I buy one? – Erica Mouton, Johannesburg
A: You can order it from the homeowner’s business; check out rufflesandrust.co.za.
Bench beauty
Leana Kleynhans of eMalahleni writes We’ve had this riempie bench in our family for decades. Can you give me any information on its origins and value?

Sophie-Louise Fröhlich of Stephan Welz & Co. replies This is an example of a Regency-style bench. It’s from the Eastern Cape. The Cape Regency period spans the years 1820–1900; style and elegance were the hallmarks of this era. Often, dark and light woods were combined; this style of bench features stinkwood throughout. Some Regency pieces included inlays or reeding.
CIRCA mid-19th century
VALUE R8 000 – R10 000 at auction
CONTACT ct@stephanwelzandco.co.za

Creeping fig
Eric Smith writes We have this climbing plant (right) growing on our boundary wall; what is it?
JJ replies This is a tickey creeper (Ficus pumila); as you can see, its fruit resembles a fig. It is an aggressive grower, so keep it away from house foundations as it may cause problems.

Stash it or trash it?
JJ’s corner
RSG
Animal antics

Merry Christmas!

Pick me, pick me!
Santa’s little helpers are ready for action.
– Liesl Swanepoel, Lephalale

Wining ’n dining
Mischa and Cody kick off the festivities.
– Natasha van Rheede, George

The perfect gift
Grande dame 12-year-old Roxanne Chloë has claimed the Christmas drinks crate for herself.
– Jayne Hewison, Sandton

A real cool cat
Ragdoll Alexander is all kitted out for a formal affair.
– Elisha le Roux, Witbank
Finding a pet-sitter

Louise Fick of Bellville writes: We’re going away for three weeks in December and I don’t want to send my dogs to kennels; they’re indoor pets and used to one-on-one attention. We’re considering hiring a pet-sitter, but I’m concerned about finding the right person as I’ve heard some awful stories. Any advice?

Leigh de Wet of Pet Sitters Cape Town replies:

On-site pet-sitting has become a popular alternative to kennel care and offers many advantages for both pets and their humans:
- Pets are happier and experience less stress at home in a familiar environment.
- Diet and exercise routines are uninterrupted.
- Travel trauma is eliminated.
- Pet’s exposure to illness is minimised.

In addition to caring for your animals, a pet-sitter is likely to deter burglars who may otherwise take advantage of an empty house. Routine activities such as putting out the bin, bringing in the post and rotating lights indicate that the house is occupied.

However, it’s important to ask questions before making use of a pet-sitting service:
- Is your pet-sitter accountable to a professional licensed body such as Pet Sitters International (PSI)?
- Has your pet-sitter completed any formal training in animal behaviour or first aid?
- Is your pet-sitter contactable 24/7 in case of an emergency? Can you get assistance if your pet-sitter goes missing or isn’t contactable?
- Does your pet-sitter have public liability insurance in case of an accident?
- Does your pet-sitter have back-up if they’re unable to care for your pets due to personal illness or an accident?

Cheap pet-sitting services often don’t have adequate internal structures in place for when an emergency arises – so make sure you use a reputable service, even if it costs a bit more.

We offer one, two or three daily visits, or a personal stay-over service to take care of your indoor pets (pricing starts at R119 per day).

Available from leading vet and pet shops, the Car Seat Hammock features hard-wearing, waterproof canvas on top with rubberised, waterproof fabric at the bottom to prevent sliding. In-between is a layer of padding for comfort and seat protection. The Deluxe version also has zip-up sides to protect your door panels. The comfy Cosy Cup comes in two sizes, perfect for cats and smaller dog breeds.

WIN!

Each owner whose pet is featured here wins a Medium Cosy Cup for cats or a Deluxe Car Seat Hammock for dogs from Wagworld (wagworld.co.za).

Send your pics (at least 2MB each) and contact details to pets@homemag.co.za – you could be a winner too! See competition rules on page 129.

Proudly South African!
crossword #121 Compiled by Gerda Engelbrecht

Are you a crossword fanatic? Look out for these special issues from our sister publications Go! and Fairlady – they’re packed with crosswords and other puzzles! On sale at retailers countrywide.

A Penguin Random House book hamper worth R1 500!

This month’s selection is sure to keep you busy over the festive season! It includes a full-throttle thriller, The Chestnut Man by Søren Sveistrup; an enticing page-turner, Nine Perfect Strangers by Liane Moriarty; the terrifying The Rains by Gregg Hurwitz and fantasy adventure The Train to Impossible Places by PG Bell. Your little ones will love The Big Book of Fairy Tales by Saviour Pirotta and you’ll be inspired to rise to the occasion at home and in the workplace after reading Dare to Lead by Brené Brown. The reader who sends in the first correctly completed crossword drawn will win a Penguin Random House book hamper worth R1 500.

Send the completed crossword, and your details, to Home Crossword #121, PO Box 1802, Cape Town, 8000 or scan in your completed crossword and email it to competition@homemag.co.za to reach us by 31 December 2018. See our competition rules on page 129.

Name ............................................................................. Address ..........................................................................................................................
Postal code .................. Cell .............................................. Tel. (w) ............................................. Email .........................................................
Trying to lose weight during the holidays is tricky, but maintaining it after fighting off the winter bulge doesn’t have to be!

Contrary to popular belief, a healthy lifestyle isn’t necessarily restrictive – you should be able to enjoy the foods you love without feeling guilty! After all, the festive season is all about celebrating and feasting with family and friends. The Philips Avance Collection XXL Airfryer is designed to let you do just that.

Advanced fat-removal technology makes it the most powerful Airfryer ever made, helping you to prepare delicious yet healthy festive fare at home. Twin TurboStar technology means that hot air in the Philips Avance Collection XXL Airfryer swirls like a tornado throughout the cooking basket, extracting the fat from the food while still sealing in the juices and flavour. It’s the healthiest way to fry food!

The Philips Avance Collection XXL Airfryer boasts a 40% larger reflective surface for even cooking and an efficient grill element that ensures impeccable browning, so whether you’re frying, baking, grilling or roasting, you can enjoy mouthwatering meals every time!

The Philips Avance Collection XXL Airfryer is available from Hirsch’s, Takealot, Dion Wired and leading independent outlets.

Philips, inspiring home cooked goodness.

For more information, go to philips.co.za.

WIN

Ten lucky readers will each get a Philips XXL Airfryer valued at R4 999!*
Garden diary

With other holiday commitments, concentrate on essential chores such as watering, mowing and keeping the garden neat.

Compiled by Gillian Eva • Photographs: Francois Oberholster and supplied

Your garden in December

By Kay Montgomery

African summer

This month we celebrate all that is bright and beautiful in summer in the countryside and in our gardens.

The wealth of colour can be seen in the curly pink-spotted maroon petals of the Cape chestnut (*Calodendrum capense*) and in the starry pink flower clusters of the pompon tree (*Daisy cotinifolia*); in cone bushes (*Leucadendron*), pincushions, pelargoniums and in groundcovering daisies like *Ursinia* that grow on hillsides.

Grasslands are dotted with river crinum (*Crinum macowanii*), *Orchid* species, mauve fairy bells (*Dierama*) and *Watsonia* spires, the white pendant bells of the summer hyacinth (*Ornithogalum candicans*), *Eucomis autumnalis* with their curious pineapple 'topknots' and blue agapanthus.

Scarlet river lily (*Hesperanthe coccinea*), orange and yellow red-hot poker (*Kniphofia*) and the wild tibouchina (*Dissotis canescens*) with magenta flowers can be found on the edges of streams and in damp places.

We have borrowed from nature and introduced many of these beautiful wild flowers to colour our summer gardens, including blue plumbago and *Felicia*, orange gazania and *Bauhinia galpinii*, nectar-rich Cape honeysuckle (*Tecomaria capensis*), pink river indigo (*Indigofera*) and mallow (*Anisodontea*).
Let's go shopping!

This month…
• Fill bare spots in containers and flowerbeds with ‘instant’ pots of flowering annuals from your local garden centre.
• Mulch shrubs with bark chips or nuggets so that they will need less watering and weeding and to prevent topsoil from blowing away.
• Destroy or bury fallen fruit as this can harbour the larvae of fruit fly, and support heavily-laden branches.
• Do not allow the root area of azaleas and camellias to dry out, as this is the time when they develop next season’s buds.
• Cut back chrysanthemums to encourage bushiness and more flowers.
• Make sure there is always fresh water in birdbaths for birds, bees and butterflies, and that there is plenty of fresh drinking water for family pets.

Gift suggestions for green fingers
Don’t forget Christmas gifts for the avid gardeners in your family! These will all go down well:
• A subscription to Home magazine (see page 125 for details), plus a gardening book or two.
• Birdbaths, bird feeders and bird tables for the bird enthusiast.
• A rain gauge to accurately measure rainfall.
• Trays of flowering seedlings and a bag of compost.

Holiday traditions
Instead of choosing a conventional tree, choose an indigenous tree such as a yellowwood (Podocarpus henkelii) with glossy drooping foliage, white gardenia (Gardenia thunbergia) with rigid branches and glossy green leaves, or wild olive (Olea europaea subsp. africana) with silver-grey foliage. Decorate your ecofriendly tree with seedpods, small pine cones and locally crafted wire- and beadwork. For something different, use the dry flower heads of candelabra (Brunsvigia) and adorn them with your favourite festive décor.

Did you know?
The tradition of Christmas trees can be traced back to 16th century Germany.

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• Make sure there is always fresh water in birdbaths for birds, bees and butterflies, and that there is plenty of fresh drinking water for family pets. >>
Few plants can rival vinca (*Catharanthus roseus*) for its ability to thrive in hot and dry weather. Now, this trusty plant has had a makeover. The vinca ‘Tattoo’ series features noticeably different ‘black-eyed’ flowers in shades of black-cherry, raspberry, papaya and tangerine.

The overlapping petals give the flowers a different shape, and each petal looks like it is inked or airbrushed with soft strokes of black. Plants are bushy and well-branched, resulting in more flowers, and grow to a height of 25–36cm. Plant in full sun to bring out the intensity of the flower colours. The hotter it gets, the better the black eye and colour swirls show up. Plants need well-drained soil and regular watering in the early growing stages. Once established, watering once a week in summer is sufficient.

**Note** Although *Catharanthus roseus* is listed as an invasive plant, sterile cultivars or hybrids like this are not listed.

**CONTACT** ballstraathof.co.za

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**Rosemary**

*Rosemary (Rosmarinus officinalis)* is a waterwise Mediterranean herb with aromatic, grey-green, needle-like foliage and white, pale blue or dark blue flowers. The leaves are used sparingly to flavour poultry and meat dishes. Twigs can be placed among clothes to discourage moths and you can use them to scent bath and hair-rinsing water.

Upright rosemary is excellent for pots, in a herb garden, and in the vegetable garden as a companion plant with beans, carrots and cabbage. It can be grown as a topiary or clipped hedge. Trailing rosemary makes an excellent spreading groundcover or as a feature plant for spilling out of raised beds.

Grow all rosemary plants in full sun and well-drained soil. Pinch back to keep plants bushy, and prune after flowering; take care not to cut back into old wood.

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**Potato creeper (*Solanum seaforthianum*)**

Also known as Brazilian nightshade or climbing nightshade, this slender climber grows 2–3m tall and has bright green leaves. It bears showy blue to purple flowers in long drooping clusters from December to March, followed by small, shiny berries that turn from green to red. The fruits are relished by birds, which then spread the seeds in their droppings.

**Invasive status**

Category 1b invasive plant, which means that it must be removed from your property to avoid prosecution.

**Why is it a problem?**

This plant is a particular problem in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Gauteng and Limpopo where it overtops and smothers other species. The fruits, leaves and stems are all poisonous. Indigenous birds are also known to neglect the dispersal of indigenous plants as a consequence of their preference for the fruits of this alien species.

**CONTACT** invasives.org.za

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**New in nurseries!**

Photographs Lukas Otto

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**Waterwise plant of the month**

**Rosemary**

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**CONTACT** invasives.org.za

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**New in nurseries!**

Photographs Lukas Otto
Visit ludwigroses.co.za and send queries to gardens@homemag.co.za.

**Ludwig’s rose corner**
*Rose guru Ludwig Taschner offers expert advice...*

**Q: I have installed an archway between two sections of the garden and would like to train a climbing rose over it. Which varieties would you recommend?**

I always advise choosing varieties that flower repeatedly in great profusion and, most importantly, have a vigour that compares with the height and width of the arch. Midinettes or miniature climbers are ideal for a 2m-tall and 2m-wide arch, as are large flowering types such as ‘Blossom Time’, ‘Edgar Degas’, ‘Royal Gold’, and ‘Don Juan’. For a much taller and wider arch, choose ‘Compassion’, ‘Crème Caramel’, ‘Pink Cloud’, ‘Iceberg’, ‘Cherry Garland’, ‘Nahema’ and ‘Gülilah’.

**Q: I mulched around my newly-planted ‘Free and Loyal’ roses but the stems seem to have burnt. This is not the result I expected; what went wrong?**

If mulch consisting of fresh organic material is heaped up too high on the young stems, it heats up and kills the tissue beneath the bark. When mulching, make sure the material is slightly away from the base of the stems. It could also be that the rose was planted too deep. The soil level in the container should be the same as that of the bed when planting.

**Regional rose tasks for December**

**Summer rainfall** Water deeply twice a week and spray every two weeks with a cocktail of Chronos and Ludwig’s Insect Spray to control black spot and pests. Pick off larger beetles and drown by dropping in a bucket of water. Fertilise with Vigorosa. If you are going on holiday, pinch off all the buds that are likely to flower while you are away; this reduces the uptake of water by the rose.

**Winter rainfall** Mulch rose beds, and in very hot weather water two or three times a week early in the morning to keep the roses cool. To save water, alternate grey water with municipal water or borehole water. Spray with a cocktail of Ludwig’s Insect Spray and Chronos or alternate with Rose Protector (also a cocktail mix) to control pests and diseases. Treat red spider by drenching the underside of leaves with a double dose of Ludwig’s Insect Spray. Fertilise with Vigorosa towards the end of December and water well afterwards.

**Lowveld and KwaZulu-Natal coast** Water at least twice a week and fertilise towards the end of December. Keep on cutting off spent blooms to encourage new stems to sprout. Spray with a cocktail of Ludwig’s Insect Spray, Chronos and a sticker (Picanta) to prevent diseases and pests. Eradicate large beetles by spraying with Plant Care or drowning the beetles in a bucket of water.

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**Eggplant ‘Gretel’**
Eggplant ‘Gretel’ is as pretty as any flowering patio plant, with its mauve flowers and clusters of glossy, pure-white, elongated tear-drop shaped fruit. The plant is petite, having been developed for container cultivation, and the mini fruits (10–15cm long) mature within 55 days. For maximum fruit set, harvest the clusters of eggplants regularly. Plants should be grown in large containers in a spot that gets morning sun and afternoon shade. Water daily in summer and apply a liquid fertiliser (at half strength) twice a month.

**CONTACT** ballstraathof.co.za

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**‘Nomzamo’**
‘Nomzamo’ is a new locally-bred shrub rose that produces an endless supply of densely-petalled rosette-shaped blooms with a light fragrance. The colour is a warm salmon-apricot. Group three plants as a focal point in the garden, or plant as a hedge to enhance a wall or enclose a section of the garden. The rose has been named after television actress Nomzamo Mbatha who dedicates much of her time to promoting awareness of the plight of refugees through global UNHCR programmes. Plants are available through all Ludwig’s Roses outlets.

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**Patio plant of the month**

**Eggplant ‘Gretel’**

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**‘Free and Loyal’**
Seasonal BEAUTY

Oak-leaved hydrangeas will add impact to both your summer and autumn garden with their showy blooms and gorgeous foliage.

By Marié Esterhuysen
Photographs François Oberholster

**Plant guide**

- **Common name**: Oak-leaved hydrangea
- **Botanical name**: *Hydrangea quercifolia*
- **Full sun to semi-shade**
- **Frost hardy**
- **Needs lots of water**
- **Deciduous**
- **Grows 1–1.5m tall and 1.5–2.5m wide**
- **Good cut flower**
Oak-leaved hydrangeas (*Hydrangea quercifolia*) provide double the joy in your garden – in summer they bear lovely showy blooms and in autumn the foliage boasts the most beautiful hues.

This shrub’s blooms are just like the well-known mophead hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*), with a cluster of small flowers forming one large bloom. This species, however, carries its flowers in a conical creamy-white cluster. In autumn the leaves turn a gorgeous shade of bronze. Plant a few of these shrubs together for added impact.

Oak-leaved hydrangeas like moist but well-drained, fertile soil. Prepare the planting hole well by adding plenty of compost, a handful of bonemeal and fertiliser such as Atlantic Fertilisers Bio Ganic All Purpose.

This shrub also makes a good hedge plant and does equally well in sun and semi-shade, although its leaves may scorch in full sun.

In the hot summer months, it needs plenty of water; drench the soil at least three times a week and add mulch around the stem.

In winter, when it is dormant, water less frequently. Oak-leaved hydrangeas are fairly disease-resistant.

This plant doesn’t need much pruning. Once it is established, cut back the old wood by about one-third down to soil level in autumn or early winter after it has flowered; it will reshoot. If you want to tidy up the shrub, lightly trim the rest of the stems. The more you cut back, the bigger the leaves will be the following growing season.

Oak-leaved hydrangeas make excellent cut flowers; choose mature flower clusters on which most of the little blooms are already open, as younger flowers wilt sooner. Don’t trim off the dead blooms after the flowering season; as the flowers age, they turn brown and paper-like, adding to the plant’s appeal for a few more months.

Take hardwood cuttings in winter, or softwood cuttings from the new season’s growth in late spring; plant in pots in compost-rich soil and transplant when they have sufficient roots. Older stems touching the ground will also form roots; chop off these stems with a spade in winter and plant them elsewhere in the garden.

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**Did you know?**

The Latin name *quercifolia* means the plant has leaves that resemble those of oak trees (*Quercus*), hence the common name oak-leaved *hydrangea*. The foliage of *Hydrangea quercifolia*, though, is much bigger than that of the oak.

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**Sources**  
*Reader’s Digest A South African Garden for All Seasons* with chief contributor Jennifer Godbold-Simpson; [rhs.org.uk](http://rhs.org.uk)
A BOUNTY OF **roses and hydrangeas**

Adele van Staden’s summer garden truly is a sight to behold.

*By Marié Esterhuysen*  
*Photographs Elza Cooper*
Few plants bloom as profusely over the festive season as hydrangeas, and this spacious garden in Johannesburg boasts an abundance of these shade-loving plants. Together with a wide variety of roses – Adele’s other great love – the hydrangeas create a spectacle of colour in her garden in the height of summer.

“I’m so lucky to have plenty of space in my garden – in sun and shade,” says Adele.

However, neither the roses nor the hydrangeas featured in the garden when the Van Stadens bought the property 11 years ago. “When we moved here it mainly consisted of large trees, shrubs and agapanthus. The house was originally built in 1893 and the two beautiful jacarandas, an Australian frangipani (Hymenosporum flavum) and two Robinia pseudoacacia ‘Frisia’ trees are thought to have been here from the very beginning.

“We started off by dividing part of the property into plots and selling those and then I developed the beds in the remaining section from scratch,” recalls Adele.

Tracey Goodwin, a landscaper who’s since retired, helped me with the initial layout of the garden. She planted my first roses – the ‘Icebergs’ next to the tennis court – as well as more agapanthus and some hellebores; the latter are a highlight of my winter garden. Many of the Abellas, which have such lovely foliage in different shades of green, are also thanks to her.”

From 2010, Adele and her right-hand man Satyere Gondwe got stuck into the garden themselves. Adele drew rough plans and Satyere laid out the new beds with rope to give them an idea of what they would look like. Then Adele decided on the colour schemes and plant selection for each bed.
My garden is a balm for my soul. It makes me feel human again. – Adele
Trimmed hedges and shrubs

Adele uses topiaries to create focal points in the garden and neatly clipped hedges to clearly demarcate and frame the beds. While she plants favourites such as roses, salvias, delphiniums and irises to give beds a more informal look, the clipped hedges give the garden a more structured, neater appearance.

“Many of my hedges and topiaries come from existing plants that have multiplied on their own or germinated from seed dispersed by birds. Eventually, so many Australian brush-cherry (Syzygium paniculatum) plants came up that I gave up pulling them out and decided to rather do something with them. I transplanted some to form a tall hedge and trained others into topiaries. These shrubs grow quickly and don’t need much water.”

Adele also used a hedge to divide one of her borders: the rear section is shady and the front area gets more sun. The hedge allows her to grow different plants in both parts of the bed – roses in the sun and hydrangeas in the shade – without it looking muddled.

“Hedges and topiaries initially need a lot of attention and should be pruned every two months,” she explains. “But once they're established, they need less maintenance. We only prune the established hedges and topiaries every three months and never between April and August. In other words, only three times a year. In winter, the top of the plants sometimes get damaged by heavy frost. At the end of August, once the danger of frost is over, we trim off those damaged parts and the plants look as good as new.”
The multitude of *Hydrangea macrophylla* shrubs provide Adele with a profusion of flowers every year. She offers advice for getting these plants to bloom prolifically:

- Plant hydrangeas under trees – they grow well in dappled sunlight.
- They need plenty of water, especially in the hot summer months; I water my hydrangeas every second day in the early morning. And although hydrangeas are dormant in winter, they still get water. In the cold months I water them three times a week before the sun rises; the water rinses the frost off the leaves, thus preventing the sun from scorching them later in the day.
- Once the shrubs are three years old, they are pruned every year in late July. If you only cut off the dead flowers, you’ll get a shrub with many blooms, but the flower heads will be small. If you trim off all the branches down to the third bud in the pruning season, you’ll be rewarded with blooms the size of soup bowls in summer!
- In August, we sprinkle a thick layer of compost around the plants and give them fertiliser in September and late November. Thereafter, we only apply fertiliser if we see the flowers are beginning to lose their colour. Wonder Shake ‘n Grow Pink Hydrangea and Shake ‘n Grow Blue Hydrangea is applied respectively for shrubs with pink and blue blooms. Or sprinkle a handful of agricultural lime around the pink hydrangeas and acidic compost around the blue ones.
- I love picking hydrangeas for indoors. This is best done early in the morning. Place the flowers in clean ice water and change the water every second day to ensure long-lasting blooms. Make sure there are no leaves in the water as this makes the water smelly and the flowers will wilt sooner.

Throughout the flowering season, we deadhead regularly to encourage the shrubs to bloom more. – Adele
Adele plants her roses according to colour and fragrance. She shares her favourites:

- **My favourite red rose is 'Mister Lincoln';** it has beautiful large, fragrant flowers that are an incredible colour. I like to combine 'Mister Lincoln' roses with dark purple irises and blue agapanthus.
- **I adore Antico Moderno roses in pastel colours, such as 'Dermalogica Passion', 'Una van der Spuy', 'Lyn Keppler' and 'Roberto Capucci', because they look like old-fashioned roses but have the characteristics of modern roses. They bloom repeatedly throughout the season and most have a wonderful fragrance! I like planting artichokes and pastel roses with dark purple irises as their colours complement each other so well.
- **Otto de Jager** is a beautiful cerise rose that flowers forever. There are sometimes up to 20 blooms on one plant with flower heads as big as saucers.
- **Roses with petals in more than one colour are so gorgeous. Among others, I have 'Rosa Roedean', a pink rose with white stripes, 'Candy Stripe' with dark and light pink stripes, and purple 'Burning Sky' with bright pink on the edge of the petals.

- In the beds next to our bedrooms I’ve planted fragrant roses such as ‘People’s Princess’, ‘Porcelain’, ‘Memoire’, ‘New Zealand’ and ‘Graaf-Reinet’ – three of each. They are at their most fragrant just as the sun sets.
- **Roses such as ‘Salmon Panarosa’ and ‘Edgar Degas’ are ideal for arches. I also have red climbing roses such as ‘Archbishop Desmond Tutu’, ‘Don Juan’ and ‘Crimson Glory’ covering a row of arches leading to the topiary garden.
- Other favourites include ‘Rosemary Ladlau’, ‘Rina Hugo’, ‘Garden Queen’, ‘Oklahoma’ and ‘Double Delight’. >>
Australian brush-cherries clipped into cone shapes add interest to this border of white 'Iceberg' standard roses and pink roses such as 'Granny Dearest', 'Granny's Delight', 'Rina Hugo' and 'Tuis'.

The row of 'Iceberg' roses next to the tennis court is one of Adele's favourite features in the garden; she loves the way the white highlights this area!
This jacaranda is one of the trees that has been growing on the property since the early days; it’s covered in a blaze of purple flowers in October.

[PRUNING TIME]

In August, the roses get their usual winter pruning and by mid- to late September they are given a light finger-pruning to ensure that each bush produces more flowers. All that is needed for finger-pruning is to pinch off the upper tip of about a third of those stems that are forming flower buds. This pruning is essential for hybrid tea roses.

“By doing this, I get so many more flowers on each bush, even though the stems are a little shorter,” explains Adele. “In summer, I pick lots of flowers for the house and for friends. This is also a form of pruning, which stimulates the formation of new blooms.”

Throughout the flowering season, Adele deadheads spent blooms as soon as possible because once the bushes start to form rose hips, they use their energy for producing seeds instead of new flowers.

“We hardly ever prune our climbing roses – we simply neat them up as needed.” >>
Other favourites

“I prefer plants that last for years because gardening is an expensive exercise. Many of my favourites just get better over time, and I love plants that multiply on their own or those that can be used for taking cuttings,” says Adele.

• Bearded irises (Iris spp.) bloom in early spring; I love their foliage shape and different colours.
• Lavender, especially Lavandula x intermedia var. ‘Margaret Roberts’.
• Salvia spp., especially purple and blue salvias. They look lovely with roses.
• Camellias and azaleas because they flower in winter and early spring.
• Zantedeschia aethiopica ‘Green Goddess’. I grow them in the shade with my hydrangeas. They also look good in pots and flower for weeks on end.
• Star jasmine (Trachelospermum jasminoides); it smells divine in the stone planters by the steps.
• Chinese wisteria (Wisteria sinensis) for its amazing fragrance.
• My favourite tree is pride-of-India (Lagerstroemia indica). It has something to offer in all four seasons: in summer it has beautiful pink or purple flowers, in autumn the leaves turn a gorgeous russet colour, in winter its trunk is attractive and in spring its new leaves look lovely.
Besides gardening, Adele’s other hobby is sculpture. The bronze figurine of the woman praying (left) and the lady with the roses in her hair (inset below) – a tribute to Frida Kahlo – are both her handiwork. The male head (below left) is by Daniel Nell. Adele commissioned Malcolm Barnfield of Sundials to make the sundial for her husband’s 50th birthday.

STOCKIST Sundials 072 345 5300, sundials.co.za

Many of the plants in the garden have been grown from cuttings or plants that Adele has divided. Most of her Inca lilies were propagated in this way.

[GENERAL GARDENING TIPS]

• Stroll through your garden regularly; this allows you to pick up problems timeously and to check on the watering needs of the plants. Satiyere and I like to walk around the garden together to see what needs to be done.

• Soil preparation is the most important part of gardening. If you make an effort with your soil, your plants will reward you with good growth and lots of flowers. In August, we give the entire garden a thick layer of compost.

• All the leaves of the oak trees that fall in the beds are left to form a natural mulch that decomposes over time.

• Keep a lookout for pests and diseases; they can do a lot of damage in a short time. Do something about them straight away. Also make sure that the plants you buy at a nursery are healthy.

• Water plants less frequently every week but when you do, give them a good soaking; it is vital that the water reaches the roots. When we get our summer rain, I don’t water at all. After good rainfall I turn off the irrigation system for up to five days. I also check the moisture level in the soil with my hands. It’s a good idea to buy a soil moisture meter to test whether the soil is dry; applying water unnecessarily is wasteful.
Butternut and grain salad
Under R125 • Serves 4 as a main course
Preparation time: 25 minutes • Oven temperature: 220°C
Cooking time: 25 minutes

- 1 medium butternut, peeled
- 1 small red onion, sliced into rings
- 30ml sun-dried tomato pesto
- 30ml olive oil
- 125ml pumpkin seeds, toasted
- 3 feta rounds, crumbled
- 80g wild rocket
- 60ml grated Parmesan
- 60ml pomegranate rubies
- 250g cooked grains (brown and wild rice, bulgur, spelt, rye, lentils and quinoa are all delicious)

1 Preheat the oven. Using a sharp knife, thinly slice the butternut. For a festive touch, cut a star shape out of each slice with a cookie cutter. Mix the sliced onion, pesto and oil and spread out on a baking tray. Roast for about 20 minutes. Keep an eye on it and turn the slices as needed to make sure they are cooked through. Grill for a further 5 minutes to brown them nicely.

2 Mix the cooked vegetables, salt and pepper, and a little extra olive oil through the grains and spoon onto a serving platter. Add the pumpkin seeds, feta and rocket; mix through. Lastly, sprinkle the Parmesan and pomegranate rubies on top.

Cabbage and carrot salad with peanut sauce
Under R90 • Serves 6 as a side dish • Preparation time: 40 minutes

- 60ml castor sugar
- 10ml sesame seeds
- 1 small cabbage, thinly sliced
- 3 medium-sized carrots, peeled and cut into thin ribbons or grated
- ½ cucumber, peeled and cut into thin ribbons or grated
- 3 stalks celery, cut into ribbons
- 125ml white bean sprouts
- 80g Asian salad leaves
- 4 spring onions, chopped

DRESSING
- 30ml smooth peanut butter
- 15ml soy sauce
- 15ml fish sauce
- 15ml lime or lemon juice
- 30ml boiling water

1 Beat all the dressing ingredients, except the boiling water, together. Dilute with the water until you get a runny, but not watery, consistency. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

2 Dissolve the castor sugar in 100ml boiling water and bring to the boil. Boil rapidly, without stirring, until it becomes a light caramel colour. Stir in the sesame seeds and carefully pour the mixture onto a piece of baking paper. Allow the caramel to cool completely (it will become very hard) and break into shards. We made star shapes before ours set.

3 Mix the remaining salad ingredients together. Drizzle with the dressing and sprinkle the caramel shards on top; this makes for a wonderful sweet surprise in the salad!
**Strawberry, tomato and avocado salad**

Under R115 • Serves 4 as a side dish • Preparation time: 30 minutes

- about 12 cherry tomatoes
- about 8 medium-sized strawberries
- 30ml olive oil
- 15ml lemon juice
- 150g smoked mozzarella
- 2 large ripe avocados
- a handful of baby spinach leaves
- 30ml balsamic reduction

1. Thinly slice the tomatoes and strawberries; season generously with salt and pepper and mix with the olive oil and lemon juice.
2. Cut the cheese into thin slices (use a star-shaped cookie cutter if desired).
3. Halve, peel and pit the avos. Place each half, cut side down, on a cutting board and slice thinly, but keep them together in the half-avo shape. Arrange the tomato, strawberry and cheese slices randomly between the slices of each avocado half; it looks great and helps to marry the flavours. Carefully place on a bed of spinach with extra tomato, strawberry and cheese slices and drizzle generously with the balsamic reduction.

**Quinoa, broccoli and bacon salad**

Under R135 • Makes 4 generous servings as a main course • Preparation time: 40 minutes • Cooking time: 35 minutes

- 250ml streaky bacon, chopped
- 125ml mixed red and white quinoa
- 250ml chicken stock
- about 120g snap peas
- about 120g tender-stemmed broccoli
- 125ml creamy mayonnaise
- 15ml sugar
- 45ml apple cider vinegar
- 1 bunch chives, chopped
- 125ml pecan nuts, toasted and chopped
- 2 heads cos or other crispy lettuce

1. Fry the bacon in a pot with a tight-fitting lid until crispy, without adding any oil. Remove the bacon, but reserve the fat in the pot. Stir in the quinoa. Add the stock and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer gently for about 20 minutes or until done.
2. Blanch the peas and broccoli by immersing them in boiling water for a minute or two and then in ice water. You can also steam them if you prefer them less crunchy. Whisk the mayonnaise, sugar and vinegar, and season with salt and pepper.
3. To assemble, mix the vegetables with the quinoa and mayonnaise; sprinkle the bacon, chives and nuts on top. Break the lettuce into separate leaves and rinse well, then pat dry. Spoon the salad into the lettuce leaves or simply mix through. Serve immediately before the leaves wilt.
THE MORE THE MERRIER

This Christmas, cook up a showstopper (or two) with succulent and versatile South African pork.

**BREAD WREATH WITH HAM, BACON AND MUSTARD**

Makes one 30cm wreath
Preparation time: 20 minutes for rolling and folding, plus resting time
Baking time: 30 minutes
Oven temperature: 180°C

• 250g streaky bacon, chopped
• about 1kg risen bread dough (homemade or store-bought)
• about 45ml Dijonnaise or your favourite mustard
• about 12 slices smoked ham
• 12 slices mozzarella

1 Fry the bacon in a pan until the fat has rendered and the bacon is crispy. Cool.
2 Add the crispy bacon (and fat, if desired) to the dough and fold it in, using your hands; this step also knocks down the dough. It may be a bit difficult to knead in the bacon, so use a folding action to spread the bacon and to form flavoursome layers in the dough.
3 Using a rolling pin, flatten the dough into a large rectangle. Use a palette knife to lift the dough up from the worktop. Roll out again if the dough shrinks too much, making sure it doesn’t stick.
4 Spread the Dijonnaise over the dough. Using a large round cutter, cut the dough into circles about 12cm in diameter. Working with one circle at a time, place a slice of ham followed by a slice of cheese on the dough and fold it into a half-moon shape over the filling. Bring the two ends of the half-moon together and place this with the open side up against the edge of a greased ring pan or on a baking tray that’s well greased with non-stick spray. Repeat with all the dough circles and arrange the folded dough snugly in a circle to form a wreath. Cover with cling film or a tea towel and allow to rise until it has doubled in volume.
5 Preheat the oven. Bake the loaf wreath for about 30 minutes or until cooked and risen. Serve hot or at room temperature.

The smoky flavour of the crispy bacon combined with creamy mozzarella and thinly-sliced ham makes this loaf a festive crowd-pleaser!
RIB-EYE PORK ROAST WITH CRISPY CRACKLING

The secret to a delicious rib-eye cut from the pork shoulder is to cook it low and slow.

Serves a crowd if you carve thin slices • Preparation time: 30 minutes • Cooking time: about 5 hours • Oven temperature: 220°C and 160°C

1 Preheat the grill. Prepare the filling by mixing the breadcrumbs, fresh herbs and oil; roast under the grill until the breadcrumbs are crunchy. Mix with the pork banger meat and cranberries. Reduce the oven temperature to 220°C.
2 Place the pork roast on your work surface, fat side down, and butterfly the meat slightly. Season with salt and pepper then spread the filling over the entire surface in an even layer. Wrap the meat carefully over the filling to form a neat roll and place it in an ovenproof dish, fat side up.
3 Using a sharp craft knife, score the skin in a diamond pattern or make lines (we made a festive star shape). Pat dry with kitchen towel and rub the skin with the salt and spices. Roast for about 30 minutes at 220°C to get the crackling going.
4 Turn the temperature down to 160°C, add the ginger beer, vinegar and onion, and cover the dish with a double layer of foil. Roast for 4–5 hours until the meat is melt-in-your-mouth tender and succulent. Be aware that the balsamic vinegar will make the crackling darker.
5 Check whether the crackling is crispy enough; if not, place under the grill to add crunch. Place the meat on a pretty serving platter; roasted carrots, sweet potato and apple rings add the final flourish to this tasty dish. Skim off the fat from the pan juices and serve this delicious gravy with the meal.

Be patient with the amount of time it takes to cook – it’s worth the wait!

• 3kg deboned rib-eye pork roast, skin on, at room temperature
• 15ml sea salt flakes
• a pinch each of coriander, fennel, cumin and cayenne pepper
• 250ml ginger beer
• 30ml balsamic vinegar
• 1 onion, sliced

FILLING
• 1 ciabatta roll, crumbed
• 1 sprig rosemary, leaves stripped and finely chopped
• 15ml olive oil
• 500g fresh sage-flavoured pork bangers, casings removed
• 30ml dried cranberries

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FESTIVE fudge

It’s the holidays – treat yourself.

In association with Huletts
Marshmallow fudge

We made this easy fudge in the microwave – and whether it contains marshmallows or not, it always hits the sweet spot! If you don’t like using a microwave, you can also make the fudge on the stove; remember to stir continuously so it doesn’t burn.

Enough for one 18 x 18 cm pan
Preparation time: 20 minutes
Cooking time: 12–14 minutes

1 Melt the butter, condensed milk, milk, icing sugar and brown sugar in a deep microwave-safe bowl in the microwave for 2–3 minutes on high. (The fudge will bubble up, so if the bowl is too shallow, it will boil over.) Remove from the microwave and stir well.

2 Cook for 10–12 minutes on high, stirring well after every two minutes. The colour will darken gradually and the mixture will thicken. The colour indicates when the fudge is done. The strength of your microwave will influence the cooking time.

3 Add the vanilla and salt, and beat the fudge briskly with a wooden spoon for a few minutes. This step is vital, otherwise the fudge won’t set properly. The fudge should lose its shine and pull away from the sides of the bowl. Stir about a third of the marshmallows into the fudge, sprinkle a third on the bottom of a square pan lined with baking paper and keep the rest to sprinkle on top.

4 Pour the fudge into the prepared pan and smooth it out. Sprinkle the remaining marshmallows on top and leave to cool; some of the marshmallows will melt, giving the fudge a lovely texture.

5 Using a sharp knife, cut the fudge into squares. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator – these treats make the perfect gift for that special someone.

Ingredients:
- 125g butter
- 1 tin (385g) condensed milk
- 60ml milk
- 250ml Huletts Icing Sugar
- 250ml Huletts SunSweet Brown Sugar
- 5ml vanilla essence
- a pinch of salt
- a large handful of mini marshmallows
The art of glass

Every year, Belgian beer company Duvel selects an international artist to contribute an artwork that will grace a limited edition of their signature glass. This year, Duvel is celebrating the ‘Art of Glass’ and its first collaboration with an African artist! A striking artwork by Lizette Chirrime dubbed ‘Madonna’ illustrates the multiple facets and layered complexity of the female form. This new Duvel glass will be available at select bars and restaurants in Cape Town and Johannesburg, with a limited quantity available for the beer-loving public to purchase. To find out more, go to belgianbeercompany.co.za.

Let me entertain you!

Set a Table (R380, Jacana Media) is restauranteur Karen Dudley’s third offering, following in the footsteps of her much-loved A Week in the Kitchen cookbooks. Hosting a dinner party – whether for strangers, acquaintances, family or friends – is a big deal and, according to Karen, when we set the table, we reveal ourselves in an intimate way. With this collection of mouthwatering tried-and-tested recipes, Karen explores the ritual of entertaining and creating memorable experiences.

IN FULL BLOOM

Van Loveren Family Vineyards in Robertson has dedicated its first Perlé-styled Pinot Grigio Rosé to the late Retief matriarch Jean, who was well-known for her love of gardening and the lush garden she and her husband Hennie established at the estate in 1939. This passion is reflected in the label design of the Perlé de Jean Pinot Grigio 2018 (R69.99,thewinehub.membernet.co.za). Beautiful!

For the love of chocolate

Make Christmas even more special with iconic 100g Lindt teddies (R54.95)! If you purchase two and enter the unique codes on their microsite, Lindt will donate a schoolbag to a child from the SOS Children’s Villages South Africa. This offer is available until 25 December 2018; for details, go to lindt.co.za. >>

Santa milk jug R59 99, mrphome.com

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Set a Table

Karen Dudley

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This dry, slightly-sparkling wine is a pure expression of summer and will partner very well with pork chops and grilled peaches, summer salads, sushi, grilled vegetables and fresh berries.

– Johline Barnardt, Perlé de Jean brand manager

Santa milk jug R59 99, mrphome.com

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The finishing touch
Round off your festive meal with this limited-edition range of sweet treats (Checkers and Checkers Hyper Stores); it includes pastéis de nata, luxury trifle, triple chocolate dessert, blueberry mince pies and, of course, Christmas cake.

Accessorise your festive feast with whimsical Le Creuset Stoneware. The Christmas Tree Cookie Plate (R790) is finished in the same pearlised lustre found on their new Metallics Collection (Metallic Cerise, Metallic Kale and Metallic White); check out lecreuset.co.za.

WIN! Three lucky readers will each win a Le Creuset Christmas Tree Cookie Plate in the colour of their choice. To enter, SMS the keyword LECREUSETCOOKIE followed by your full name, postal address and email address to 33406 by 31 December 2018 (each SMS costs R1.50); see competition rules on page 129.

A CHRISTMAS TREAT
Treat yourself and a loved one to a festive meal at one of the two restaurants at the Four Seasons hotel, The Westcliff in Jo’burg. The family-style Christmas Eve dinner at open-air barbecue-based Flames (R1 200 per person) includes festive classics with entertainment by the Soweto Gospel Choir, while the Christmas Day lunch at avant-garde flagship View (R1 600 per person) consists of a five-course menu. To book, email Natalie.harrison@fourseasons.com or Bianca.andersen@fourseasons.com.

Pair up for summer
Helderberg winery Idiom is offering a macaron and wine-pairing experience until the end of February 2019. The experience goes from light and airy with a Prosecco called Romeo and Juliet to dark and intense with Idiom Imperium Black Gold Hailstorm and macarons to match. Tickets cost R150 per person and booking is essential; go to idiom.co.za.

The vibrant salmon-pink Lourensford MCC Brut Rosé 2014 (R255, lourensford.co.za) is the ultimate aperitif this festive season. Pair it with good company, seafood-based canapés or your favourite chicken dish.

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WIN!

IN THE PINK

LEADER OF THE PACK
Get your hands on Scottish Leader’s limited-edition festive season gift packs! They feature the trendsetting I See A Different You creative collective from Soweto, comprising Innocent Mukhele and Vuyo Mpantsha. There are three gift packs to choose from, one for each of the Scottish Leader blended whisky variants – including Original (R180), Signature (R220) and 12-year-old (R320) – and each one comes with two complimentary whisky glasses. Characterised by a taste profile that’s slightly smoky, sweet, rich and smooth, they make the perfect gift – or buy all three sets to complete your collection!
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THE GROWN-UP’S GUIDE TO MIDLIFE

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THE 6 MOST REQUESTED BEAUTY PROCEDURES from mild to mega

ON BECOMING INVISIBLE

12 GREAT WOMEN WHO ONLY HIT THEIR STRIDE IN THEIR 40s

THE 3AM DREADS
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DRUGS
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WHAT, WHEN & WHERE

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Solution to Crossword #119

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Competition Rules
1. Competitions are open to anyone in South Africa except the employees of Media24, the competition sponsors, their subsidiaries, promotional and advertising agencies and immediate family members.
2. Prizes will be awarded to the first correct entries drawn and winners will be notified telephonically or via email.
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NOTE: Because of variations occurring in the printing process, paint colours shown in the magazine may not be 100% accurate.
In the Bible, theft is more or less equated with murder and similar sins. Too true, says Karin Brynard, but what if sometimes, maybe just now and then, it’s an act of reverse-love?

A man with two life-sized cement flamingos in his trolley was standing ahead of me in the queue at our local garden centre. There was also a cement frog sporting an umbrella and a roguish garden gnome with excessively large nostrils.

The man saw the look on my face. I tried to look away, but the dwarf’s nostrils had hypnotised me.

“Ja-nee,” he said, “this is what happens when the whole damn country’s copper wire is all gone.”

Excuse me?

“Cable theft. There’s nothing left to steal, so the thieves are switching to this kind of stuff.” He pointed with his chin to the cement creations in his trolley. “You cannot bloody believe it.”

“Eish,” was all I could offer. But I knew exactly what he meant. People steal for all sorts of reasons, ranging from genuine hunger to greed or just plain wickedness. But sometimes people simply get their wires crossed... as often happens when we age.

The latter is the cross I bear. I looked at the contents of my own trolley: six *Echeverias*, two aloes, one large grapevine, two giant butterfly orchids. This was penance for another’s theft – a gentle old lady of 93, sadly short of some of her marbles: my Mom.

In her dotage, she’s changed from model member of the old age home to thief. She steals mainly plants. From the garden, from verandas, from hallways. She once was unofficial gardener at the home, forever collecting and nursing cuttings, planting and watering them by hand. She visited the sick and welcomed new arrivals with flowers, prayers and tea.

But lately the lines between giving and taking have started to blur; she’s turned from household saint to benign old grey-crowned house crow.

One day I arrived there to a bit of a commotion. A giant grapevine that had sprawled up two storeys was lying on the ground. Dismayed residents and staff were standing around perplexed (think Humpty Dumpty and the king’s geriatric brigade).

I spotted my mother’s stooped figure, scuttling away with a grapevine twig in the basket of her walking frame.

Sister Joan, the health manager, looked at me with wide eyes.

“Good grief,” she said. “Your mom has turned into a regular Samson! What’s next – Tarzan?”

I thought it was hilarious but noticed no one was laughing. Thus far, her ‘damage’ had been limited to plump succulents, the odd rosebush or a few hen-and-chickens, here and there. And she’d been tolerated good-naturedly because they adore her. But Tannie Tarzan may have been ‘a bridge too far’.

I marched after my mother. She was in her flatlet busy arranging the grapevine twig in an old empty coffee jar with some yanked off clivias and a few torn-off fern fronds. Happy as a lark.

“Mont!”

Cheerfully she looked up, not a hint of guilt or shame.

“Did you pull down the vine?”

“Me? I just plucked off a sprig.”

“Tore it down, more like it.”

“Silly child. If it’s down, it must have jumped off by itself.” She held up the quirky arrangement. “Lovely, isn’t it?”

I took the jar from her and kissed her. Then went to appease Sister Joan and promised that I’d pay the handyman to fix the grapevine and also buy two new ones.

Once Sister Joan caught her with a freshly-planted spekboom in the basket of her walker. “It jumped in there by itself,” was her cheerful explanation.

Huffily he’d stormed into my mother’s flat, only to reappear as docile as a lamb. He had been welcomed like the Messiah and left not only with his phone, but also with a coffee-stained Bible bookmark and an orange. And a hug.

Twilight is catching up with her. My trolley at the garden centre no longer brims with guilt-offerings and a kind of impending sorrow has crept into my soul. Because the day will come, I know full well, when I will sorely miss this dear old thief.
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