

The view to the upstairs bedroom which extends out to a private balcony designed to breathe in views of the valley beyond.

# Level Best

The dynamic City Beach home, complete with a roof bar, is high on style and big on entertainment.

ARCHITECTURE, INTERIORS + CONSTRUCTION HUMPHREY HOMES  
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As Humphrey Homes in-house architect Helen Marchesani put pencil to paper to design this sprawling City Beach home, her client delivered the ultimate challenge: "We want to live like we are always on holiday."

Responding with a minimal yet sumptuous design, focusing on materiality, functionality, and sweeping ocean views, the architect says it is not a typical white and bright beach house. "We designed this home like an international hotel with a rooftop bar, swimming pool, fire pit, luxurious master suite, and spaces that flow from inside to out for entertaining," she says. "It is a home with everything the family needs – and more."

But the property isn't just about fun and luxury. The couple has grown children and wanted a home that could be a vibrant, sociable space where the whole family could gather, yet be intimate for two once their visitors had left.

Built on a sloping site on one of City Beach's highest peaks, the three-level home finds an integration and balance between the indoors and its coastal location. The lower level includes a garage, gym, storage and lift; the main entrance is on the next level, accessed via large terrace steps interspersed with zen-like water features. It shares family-centric spaces (the kitchen, living area and dining room), a master suite, guest bedroom, study and theatre. Above is a bedroom wing for the couple's family, and the cherry on top – a sparkling rooftop bar taking in panoramic water views.

From the street, the modernist home appears as a series of stacked modules atop a stone-clad base tied together by a sinuous white rendered ribbon. Its dramatic gestures are tempered by greenery that, in time, will merge with the surrounding treetops. Timber-lined eaves wrap the exterior and continue inside.

"Wherever you see timber, it is connecting you from the outside to the interiors," says Helen. "The porches and terraces are timber-lined on the inside, and we have dragged that timber all the way through to the ceilings inside."

Blackwood panelling forms the home's central spine, from the passageway off the main entry to the main living area. Hidden within the panelling is a series of cleverly concealed doors leading to a powder room, lift, and laundry. "It's a seamless architectural feature that requires a huge amount of planning, detailing and craftsmanship," says Humphrey Homes owner and director Dean Humphrey. "These are the details we like to include that make every one of our homes bespoke."

Dean is passionate about the polished concrete floors that flow throughout the home. "I have carried out extensive research in America to learn a more in-depth method that sees a huge reduction of possible cracking," he says. "This home has the highest standard of concrete flooring and hydronic underfloor heating, making it cosy in winter."

The entire house, including the kitchen, living and dining areas, features floor-to-ceiling double glazing, allowing the elevated ocean view to be its backdrop. "We've implemented airtight principles, and combined with the double glazing it makes it easy to stabilise and control the indoor temperature. It also makes it a very quiet and comfortable home," says Dean.

The kitchen features vertical black timber panelling, Tuscan oak cabinetry and walnut-stained timber-lined ceilings. Dolomite stone-covered benchtops, island and splashback mesh with cabinetry that hides appliances, including double fridges, a freezer and a wine fridge. In the scullery is a large pantry with pocket doors, two dishwashers and another refrigerator. The dining and living area bound a pool terrace, blurring the lines indoors and out. An adjustable louvred pergola wraps around the back of the home and controls light levels inside.

The master bedroom, tucked away on the ground level, overlooks the garden and pool area and captures morning views over the ocean. A beautiful dark, timber-lined wall frames the bed. Its recessed ledge and custom-made bedhead provide high-end hotel vibes.

"To remain true to the home's architecture, it was »



«important to keep the interiors clean and contemporary,” says Humphrey Homes in-house interior designer Katie Bossong. The materials are minimal, modern and timeless, so a lovely balance between them creates a warm, welcoming feeling.”

Case in point: the suite’s boutique-like dressing room. Tuscan oak veneer hides spacious floor-to-ceiling storage alongside a sumptuous central island packed with more storage. Adjacent, a herringbone tile-lined ensuite includes a free-standing bathtub overlooking a courtyard garden, a walk-in shower room, and twin vanities.

A comfortable home relies on clever indoor-outdoor connections, so retractable floor-to-ceiling glass doors allow the living area to flow seamlessly into the outdoor terrace. Here, at the rear of the home, Helen designed two levels, placing the rooms together in a way that achieves the best aspects and views.

“This whole section is a machine that controls its environment,” she says. “The outdoor living areas, including deep verandas and porches, are tucked away, and louvres protect them from the wind and the western sun while allowing them to take in the view.”

The alfresco area includes a fully equipped kitchen with an integrated barbecue and fridge, and a timber-lined ceiling embedded with heating and music systems. A pergola wraps around the back of the home, providing extra shading in summer. Alongside the adjacent pool and spa, a sunken fire pit and conversation area allow the family to sit beneath water height so they feel as if they are surrounded by water while being warmed by the fire. Two bar seats are built into the pool, allowing for easy conversation across all areas, and the pool is fitted with a glass viewing window to enhance the connection between fire and water.

“This space is clever because no matter what you are doing, you are connected to everyone around you,” says Katie. Nearby, along the south side of the residence, is a three-hole putting green, and an outdoor shower is set into a stone-clad wall – perfect for rinsing off after a morning at the beach.

On the top floor, each bedroom has its own ensuite and a private balcony or an ocean view. While every room boasts an outlook, the rooftop bar claims the best – an uninterrupted view of the Indian Ocean. Its wow factor also comes in the form of custom navy-blue timber panelling, striking stone countertops, delicate bands of copper, and smoked glass that captures the glow of the setting sun.

“It is the owners’ favourite space,” says Katie, who looked to classic whisky bars for inspiration while ensuring its design was cohesive with the rest of the house.

For a home with it all, its generous spaces and clever design still allow it to feel warm and intimate. “It is a home for all seasons,” agrees the designer. “It’s sophisticated and adaptable and has everything they could ever need for entertaining – but most importantly, it’s for family.” ■



The front of the home appears as stacked modules, grounded by a stone-clad base which is softened with greenery.





OPPOSITE. The study is visible from the home's entry through a 3m-tall custom **pivot door** crafted from Accoya timber with a rich walnut stain and a **handle** from Architectural Door Hardware. The black **bench seat** is from GlobeWest.

RIGHT. At the top of the staircase is a **light fitting** by David Trubridge and **artwork** by landscape photographer Christian Fletcher. The black timber panelling conceals utilities, including a lift, powder room and laundry.





LEFT. The **island bench** is in Superwhite Dolomite by CDK, and the **integrated fridge wall** is clad in Tuscan Oak panelling. The **tapware** is by Zip Water, the kitchen **stools** are from GlobeWest, and the **vase and vessels** from a selection at Granite Lane.

BELOW. Polished concrete floors flow from the kitchen into a tucked-away scullery.







A dining table by TIDE Design from Loom, teamed with softly curved chairs from GlobeWest with a view of the swimming pool. An abstract pendant and Coco Republic floor rug define the space and curtains from Payton Place control the light. The ceramic on the table is from Granite Lane.



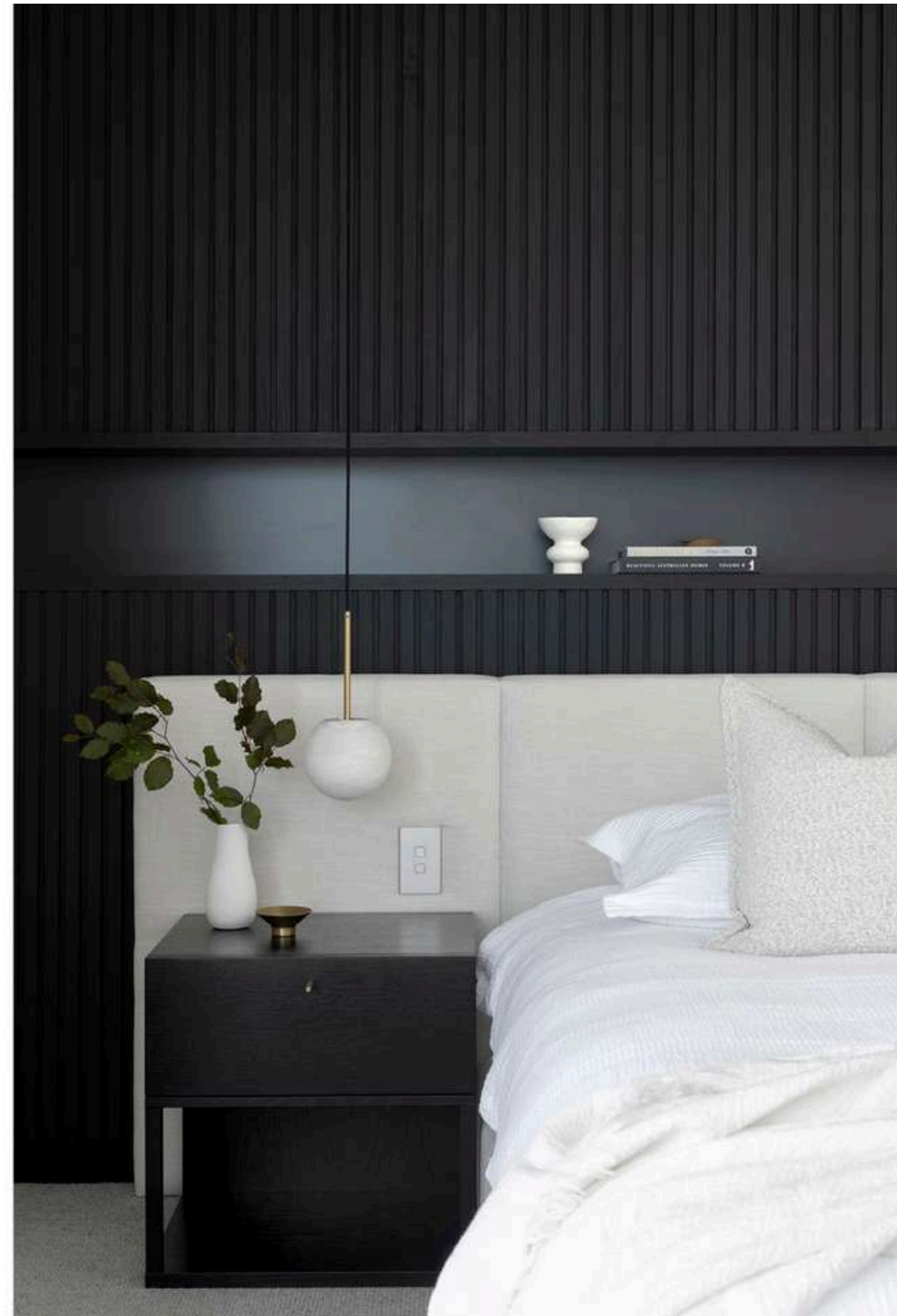


The informal lounge is made comfy with a modular King Living sofa, French-style-inspired chairs by Coco Republic, and a marble-topped coffee table from GlobeWest in the middle. The floor rug is from Coco Republic, and the floor lamp from Living By Design.



LEFT. A characterful tweed-covered occasional **chair** bathed in sunlight in the master suite.

OPPOSITE. The **custom bed** with upholstered bedhead, inky black cladding and recess make the master bedroom feel like a hotel suite. The **bedside table** is by Grazia&Co from Loam, and the **pendant light** above it is a great find from Beacon Lighting.







OPPOSITE. Luxurious pendant lighting, **cabinetry** crafted in Tuscan Oak, and matte platinum white porcelain benchtops make the bathroom a sumptuous space. The **tapware** is by Phoenix.

ABOVE. Wall-to-wall **cabinetry** wrapped in Evenex Tuscan Oak veneer makes the walk-in robe feel extra luxurious. The central **pendant lights** are by Lightingales Lighting Store.





LEFT. The upstairs bar takes in uninterrupted ocean views. The **bar table** and **stools** are by King Living.

OPPOSITE. The rooftop bar revolves around a curvaceous bar clad in 2PAC **cabinetry** with a stone **benchtap** by CDK Stone. The **bar stools** are from GlobeWest, and the custom **ceiling lights** from HS Reflections.







LEFT A fully equipped outdoor kitchen is accompanied by timber furnishings from Eco Outdoor that provide plenty of space for family and friends.

BELOW Finch Freeform stone walling from Eco Outdoors adds a rustic feel to the outdoor shower area.





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The rear of the home features a wraparound pergola with operable roof louvres for sun control. A sunken firepit adjoins the glass-walled swimming pool.

