

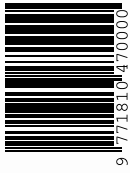
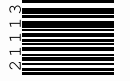
SA CREATIVES
CELEBRATED

THEMBA MBUYISA
CHRIS SOAL
ZIZIPHO POSWA
BONE STUDIO
EGG DESIGNS

MAISON
&OBJET
2021

INSPIRED
BY NATURE

SA R95
OTHER COUNTRIES
R82.61
EXCLUDING TAX



BAOBAB TREEHOUSE AT XIGERA LODGE



UXOLO VIBES
AFRO-MODERN
MICRO APARTMENTS

DECOR • DESIGN • ARCHITECTURE

APRIL / MAY 2021

Xigera

LUXE LODGE SHOWCASING AFRICAN DESIGN IN THE OKAVANGO DELTA

KRAAL COOL

A MODEST FARM DWELLING ON A PRIVATE RESERVE IN THE BOLAND IS

GENTLY COAXED INTO THE 21ST CENTURY - AND GIVEN A NEW LEASE OF LIFE.

visi | Kerala Estate Cottage

PHOTOS PARIS BRUMMER
PRODUCTION ANNEMARIE MEINTJES
WORDS BIDDI RORKE

Sensitivity to the original kraal structure has resulted in perfect symmetry and low-slung luxe.



The Wast FRACCS

OF PRIVATE LAND THAT FAN OUT FROM THE WITTE

and Bastiaanskloof rivers in the Bainskloof Valley are home to the elusive Cape leopard and impressive birdlife. This is the Kerala Estate and reserve, and being here is a nature-lover's ultimate escape – a chance to unplug while appreciating the fynbos-scented air and the thrill of bracing mountain-water swims.

Keri Paddock and husband Sam understand this appeal, and after purchasing their sweeping Bainskloof property in 2018, set about creating serene living spaces so their family and friends can fully benefit from the surrounds. In fact, their 800-hectare chunk of paradise forms part of the Boland Mountain Complex in the Cape Floral Region, one of nine areas in South Africa designated by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites.

With a clear idea in mind, the couple tasked architect Bridget George of KLG Architects with updating the existing buildings. They also contracted landscaping company Oasis Design to integrate the dwellings into the terrain, and to create unexpected garden spaces filled with fynbos and proteas.

The main villa, India House (featured previously in VISI 110), accommodates up to 10 guests, while the more modest Mapacha cottage ably handles the overflow. "Mapacha was a simple cottage beforehand, with just one bedroom and a mini kitchen," says Keri. "We loved its heritage, and gave it an authentic but thorough overhaul. The name Mapacha means 'twin' in Swahili – our twins, Violet and Fletcher, are an incredible example of how different twins can be. We wanted Mapacha to have a fresh, individual identity that complements but doesn't compete with the grander India House."

This humble kraal building was originally used to enclose cows when the farm was a cattle operation. The cottage was rebuilt from the ground up, but Bridget sensitively paid homage to the existing footprint by maintaining its original width while stretching the length of the building. This allows for two simple bedrooms and two bathrooms that lead out from the central living area. "Careful design transformed the cottage while honouring its character," she says. "Textured plaster and natural materials characterise the space, while simple forms with seamless glass openings give the design a contemporary edge."

An ornate carved wooden entrance door that Keri sourced during a trip to Lamu Island in Kenya is the only hint of grandeur in the deceptively modest, symmetrical front façade that belies Mapacha's generous interior. Two rescue donkeys, Buckle and Bella, make a further nod to Keri's affinity with Lamu; these beasts of burden still feature strongly on the well-preserved Indian Ocean island.

Thick walls and small, strategically placed windows on the front elevation ensure the interior remains cool during punishing summer days (and toasty during cold snaps), while polyurethane floors lend the space an air of laid-back simplicity. Timber features strongly – from the symmetrical outside shutters to the ceilings and shelving – and mimics the natural materials that lie beyond the vast sliding doors, which open up to an enclosed back garden. Here, a short path leads to a small, circular wood-fired hot tub – the ultimate spot for gazing up at the stars that litter the midnight Cape skies.

Mapacha's interiors are earthy, drawing on the natural hues of ochre, sand and stone that surround the building. "Where possible, we supported local artists and artisans, while a few of the bigger furniture pieces were carefully chosen from Saba Studios on Lamu Island," Keri explains. The result is an effortless pairing of the exotic and the simple – the way nature intended.

India House and Mapacha are available for hire as exclusive-use villas – complete with chef, nanny, butler and guide – for four weeks of the year. nikki@keralaestate.co.za | daniel@keralaestate.co.za

THIS HUMBLE KRAAL BUILDING WAS ORIGINALLY USED TO ENCLOSE COWS WHEN THE FARM WAS A CATTLE OPERATION.

OPPOSITE The ornately carved front door is the perfect foil to the simplicity within.



THIS PAGE An industrial locker from Popstrukt offsets the wooden bookcase left by the previous owner. The hooks are repurposed from Private Collections door frames. **OPPOSITE** Interior designer and friend Catherine Bowen helped owner Keri Paddock create the earthy spaces, drawing on natural hues of ochre, sand and stone.





THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Timber accents throughout the dwellings result in continuity and warmth; a rustic bench by The Wood Chef; in the bedroom, a headboard sourced at Saba Studios in Lamu, Kenya lives alongside ceramic pendants from Wiid Design; both bathrooms open out onto the veld beyond, creating unity with nature. **OPPOSITE** Clean, elegant lines ensure the en-suite bathroom retains a sense of pared-down functionality.



THIS PAGE Charcoal rattan wing-backs add a note of drama near the firepit. **OPPOSITE, FROM TOP** The stone-walled indigenous garden, created by landscape designer Nick Hampton of Oasis Design, focuses on fragrant and medicinal plants; the family enjoys alfresco meals on the back patio whenever temperatures allow.





visi | Hout Bay Home

PHOTOS PARIS BRUMMER

WHERE THE HEART IS

THIS HOUT BAY HOME MERGES SEAMLESSLY WITH ITS

SURROUNDINGS. WHILE BOTH PAYING HOMAGE TO THE PAST AND PAVING THE WAY FORWARD FOR A CLOSE KNOT FAMILY.

PRODUCTION ANNEMARIE MEINTJES

WORDS

ELLENSTE JACOBS

Homeowners Sean and Sharyn describe their house as being both spacious and intimate.

WALKING DOWN

BELOW Architect Jan-Dirk van der Walt stands in the doorway, with Sean's childhood home framed in the background. **OPPOSITE** Vast yet close-knit spaces leave room for breathing and connection from the moment you enter.



the driveway towards the house, two things are immediately evident: the striking design – a large, dark-wooded, cabin-like box floating above the green lawn – and the considered attention to detail. Built on the same property as the owners' childhood home, one of those details was deciding where to place the new construction relative to the existing structure.

And Jan-Dirk van der Walt of SALT Architects got it just right, with window placements that frame both childhood memories and spectacular views of the mountains. The resulting light that floods the home was carefully considered too, with the architects conducting light studies as an integral part of the design process: despite being naturally well-lit, it avoids being overly harsh or hot. The bedrooms and living areas are, for example, north-facing, while overhangs above windows allow in just the right amount of direct sunlight.

The other trump card SALT played is the timber that clads the upper storey. Not only does it trick the eye into suspending the building above the earth, but it also softens the design's modern linearity. "We first explored charring it using *shou sugi ban*," says Jan-Dirk, explaining its dark colouring. "But this traditional Japanese curing method is quite expensive. The wood was eventually treated in a similar way through a thermal process, and sealed with Rubio Monocoat."

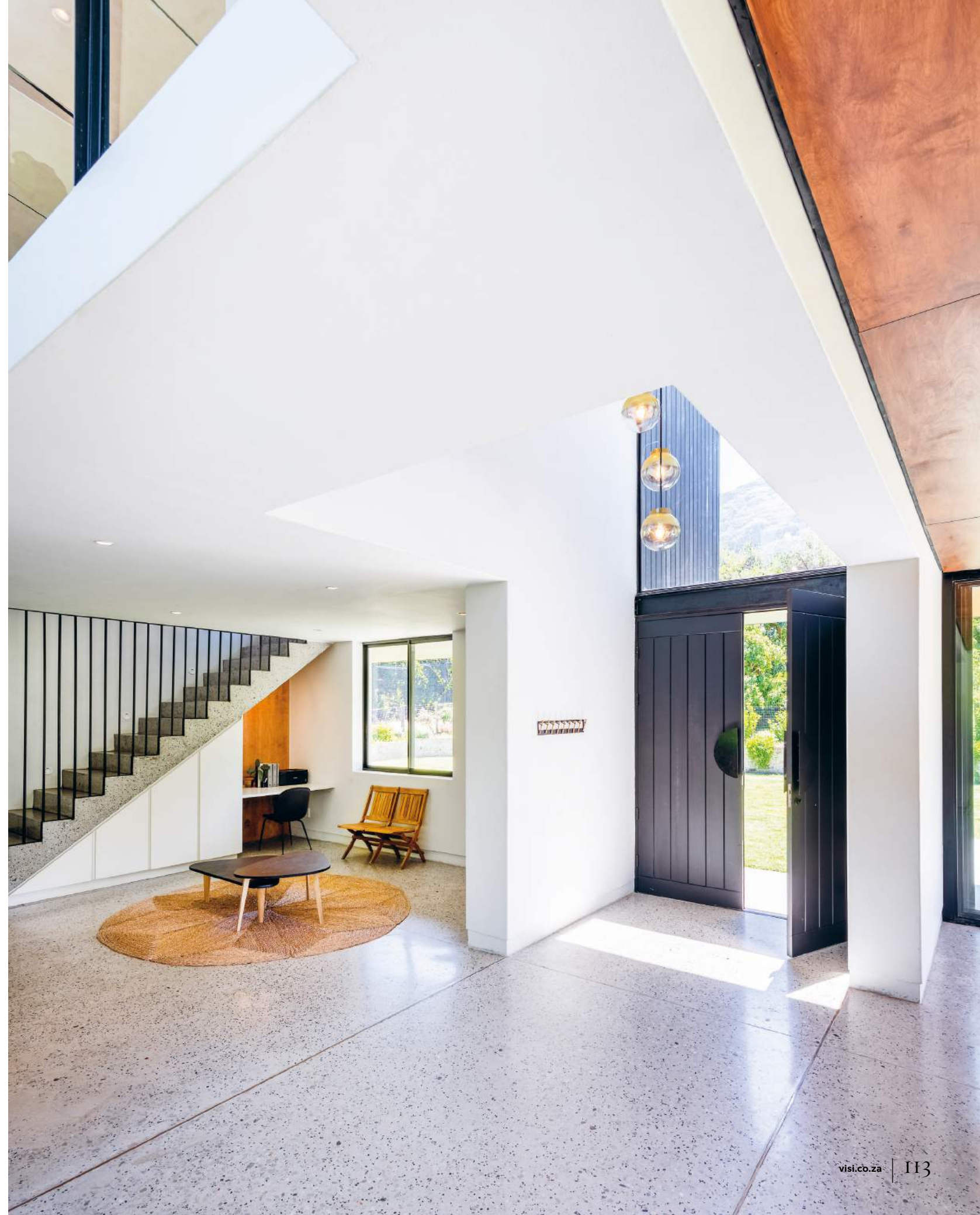
Up close, the contrast between the white and black exterior is striking – but if you take a step or two back to observe the house in the context of its surroundings, the colour scheme seems to merge with the mountains.

There was plenty of input from owners Sharyn and Sean in the design process too, and in a truly collaborative sense, the home was built one WhatsApp at a time. In the months leading up to its completion, the couple and Jan-Dirk played a tournament of text tennis, sharing ideas to turn collective thoughts into their reality.

Sharyn – an interior designer with her own business, Conscious Spaces – expertly threaded her personal style into the home. You can see her love for the colour green dappled throughout, and combining with finishes that are a tactile treat. It's almost impossible not to run your hands over cool granite kitchen counters, or feel your feet firmly rooted to the ground in the shower. From the concrete floors with speckled terrazzo detail to the vertically stacked stone walls in the bathrooms, the surfaces add a beautiful visual contrast to the plain white walls.

While there's a strong and welcoming sense of open space inside the home, it's one of contained vastness: it's expansive, but without a sense of disconnect. Sharyn and Sean quip that it's great to be able to hear their kids, even when they're not in plain sight. There's a wonderful connection here – and the windows that frame happy memories of a childhood home, and the laughter and play of a new generation that fill the new space, are all gentle reminders that life is handed to us moment by moment. saltarchitects.co.za

▶ WHILE THERE'S A STRONG AND WELCOMING SENSE OF OPEN SPACE INSIDE THE HOME, IT'S ONE OF CONTAINED VASTNESS.



THIS PAGE Birch plywood planks set in a staggered layout with shadowline profiles warm the ceilings of the open-plan living area. OPPOSITE, FROM TOP The floors here are polished concrete with exposed aggregate by Innova Worx, offering the family an easy-care solution; the custom-designed kitchen combines cabinetry by Joos Joiners with quartzite and marble countertops by Artmar.





THIS IMAGE The owners wanted their home to make sense in the context of its surroundings, and celebrate nature as much as possible. **RIGHT, FROM TOP** A balcony protected from the elements offers both visual interest and functionality; the overhangs were informed by time studies to make the most of both light and shade; thermally treated and sealed with Rubio Monocoat, the wood cladding pays homage to the colours of the mountains.

→ THE DARK WOOD CLADDING TRICKS THE EYE INTO SUSPENDING THE BUILDING ABOVE THE SOIL.



THIS PAGE The play area - the centre of the home - is supported by smart storage solutions that make the most of the space under the staircase. **OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** Well-lit spaces create a welcoming atmosphere; the steel basin pedestal was designed by Sharyn; in the family bathroom, granite floors are complemented by slate tilework from Mazista Tiles, and offset by Meir taps and mixers from Flush Bathrooms; clever design allows Sean and Sharyn to enjoy nature at every turn.





THIS PAGE The master bathroom is a celebration of textures - and Sharyn's love for green accents. **OPPOSITE** The statement ceilings combine effortlessly with the clean lines in the en-suite bathroom to create a tranquil space.

→ PLACE OF PEACE

visi | Cape Town Apartments

UXOLO

PHOTOS PARIS

SRUMMER

PRODUCTION ANNEMARIE

REINTJES

WORDS

ELLESTE JACOBS

IS A NEW DEVELOPMENT BY **TWOFIVEFIVE ARCHITECTS** THAT OFFERS ITS RESIDENTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENJOY BRILLIANTLY DESIGNED MICRO LIVING IN THE HEART OF THE CAPE TOWN CBD.



Uxolo is the new eye-catching development in the heart of Cape Town's CBD.

UXOLO'S BEAUTIFUL.

tapestry-inspired exterior has been drawing admiring glances from design-savvy denizens of the Mother City for some months now. Its clever combination of materials and colours is meticulously executed, making this one of those new builds that feels a bit like a work of street art from the get-go. And inside, it only gets better.

We spent some time with architect Theo Kruger – who, together with André Krige, is TwoFiveFive Architects, the creators of the building – to find out more about the project's ins and outs. This is the first local development we've seen to really make the most of the concept of living in a genuinely small apartment. To put it in perspective, the majority of the apartments in Uxolo are about 24m² – which, to many South Africans, is an absolutely tiny space.

Theo has been living in the building himself for the last couple of months, and says he will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. It's not often that architects live in buildings they've designed – but when they do, they leave room for even more consideration of detail. "The initial concept was more towards short stays, with some long-term tenants. With Covid-19, that shifted towards a long-term focus," says Theo. "Personally, I like the mix of long-term and short-term tenants – it encourages people to take ownership of the building, and improves building maintenance."

Uxolo means "peace" in isiXhosa, and the building is located on Vredenburg Lane – another nod to peace. Walk into any part of it, and your attention will immediately be grabbed by pops of wild colour against neutral flooring and wall finishes. This combination of bold and understated tones seems just right, reflecting the kind of contrast that occurs when you blend the dynamism of inner-city living with the need for domestic tranquillity. Uxolo embodies this duality.

Micro-living probably isn't everyone's first choice, but there's no denying that TwoFiveFive Architects thought of everything here. Entering one of the studios, the impression is that it's compact, but not cramped. There's plenty of breathing room, and the flow makes it easy to imagine how this could be someone's sanctuary. The bathrooms are beautiful and kitted with all the necessary fixtures, which have been perfectly placed for convenience and ease of use.

And then there's the kitchen: each drawer contains custom-made, laser-cut steel dividers to simplify storage, for example. These burgundy details are by Kink – another of Theo and André's projects – and were made in Joburg and fitted here by their team. "It's all part of our range," says Theo. "All of the kitchens, every single steel piece you'll find in Uxolo, from the storage drawers to the Murphy bed – we designed and made ourselves."

There's also a desk tucked into the cupboard – all you have to do is slide it out and set up your workstation.

It's beyond nifty, and such a pleasant surprise – particularly during a time when work and home life are so intertwined, but domestic spaces haven't had much of a chance to adapt yet. Finally, there's the matter of rest, for which the neatly stowed Murphy bed reveals itself. Move into an Uxolo apartment, and the only things you'll need to bring are a mattress, cooking and eating essentials, your clothes – and a love for considered details.

"I've been telling André that the joinery and the Murphy bed, and where your clothes, the kitchen and oven are situated – it all works perfectly," says Theo.

"I was quite surprised..." So were we: Uxolo demonstrates precisely how micro-living spaces should be created, enabling design and functionality to live in a union of peaceful harmony.

twofivefive.co.za

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT The building's tapestry-inspired exterior is brought to life at night; architect Theo Kruger sits on the stairs of a seventh-storey loft apartment; bright pops of colour contrast and balance subtle neutrals wherever you look at this new addition to Cape Town's skyline.

UXOLO DEMONSTRATES PRECISELY HOW MICRO-LIVING SPACES SHOULD BE CREATED.





THIS PAGE The view from the kitchen in a fourth-floor studio apartment.
OPPOSITE Carefully considered design creates plenty of breathing room.





THIS PAGE The studios are equipped to transform from day to night with a well-crafted Murphy bed.
OPPOSITE All bathroom fixtures are by Kink, another one of Theo's projects with TwoFiveFive partner André Krige.



visi | Cape Town Apartments



THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Light flows freely from the balcony into the living area in the loft apartment; the Nuage chair by Roberto Tapinassi and Maurizio Manzoni and the Cisterna lamp are both from Roche Bobois; bold striped floors create a mesmerising optical illusion; simplicity and functionality reign supreme in the bathrooms. **OPPOSITE** The kitchen nook is spacious enough for a dining area, with plenty of potential to feel at home in the city.

