

Upcycled container home offers luxury, sustainable living



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Seven shipping containers, two discarded movie props and one bold vision to upcycle a home in harmony with the nature surrounding it.

"It is the overwhelming sense that this home was a labour of love, from conceptualisation to completion, which sets it apart," - Jeanne Cowan, Pam Golding Properties agent for Glencairn

Who would have thought that a squash court, the figurehead of a pirate ship from a movie set and discarded flag poles could find a new lease on life in a contemporary container home that has become somewhat of an attraction in a South Peninsula suburb? Pam Golding Properties is marketing this inspirational home, in Glencairn Heights, for R5.175 million.

The aim of the construction of the home in Simon Close was to create a structure that was not only sensitive to the environment, but that was consciously made of repurposed and upcycled material, says Jeanne Cowan, Pam Golding Properties agent for the area.

Initially, the sight of containers perched precariously on the mountain slopes in Glencairn had neighbours intrigued, say the creators and current owners. There was disbelief that it would even be possible to create a sturdy structure from these unusual materials.

The terrain also did not lend itself to building innovation, with its uneven levels and rocky outcrops. But for the owners, who never gave up on their vision, the mountain would form an integral part of the design.

They did their homework – including extensive research of container home construction, both in SA and internationally - to ensure that it meets National Home Builders Registration Council standards and is fully compliant. Drone footage and 3-D modelling software allowed for a holistic understanding of the building site, and the construction requirements.

The result is nothing short of inspired.

The couple has produced a home that is, quite literally, the stuff of dreams. Seven shipping containers have been successfully welded together to create an elevated, double-volume structure with 180-degree views of the sea and mountain. Initially viewed with some skepticism, the home now attracts curious visitors who often stop to take photographs, or chat with the owners about how humble shipping containers can be repurposed into an architectural masterpiece. Containers are increasingly being accepted as a form of durable building material, and are seen as being on a par with brick for longevity.

Upcycling is evident throughout – from the Oregon pine floors reclaimed from a heritage property in Stellenbosch, to the woodchips used outside that were taken from stables in Noordhoek. Even a piece of graffiti on a rocky outcrop has been turned into an artistic focal point for the outside area. The stairs that curve upwards do so to accommodate a massive mountain boulder that unapologetically forms part of the interior décor. Fold-back glass doors allow for a seamless flow from outside to the main living area. An indigenous garden completes the symbiosis between the living space and surrounding landscape.

The clever use of reclaimed materials means that the home exudes a sense of understated luxury. A customized kitchen, with ample space for entertaining, has top-end finishes. Three of the four upstairs bedrooms boast panoramic sea and mountain views. Repurposed figureheads, taken from a film set, add a touch of dramatic glamour as the frames for bathroom mirrors.

But it is the breathtaking view, also visible from the freestanding bathtubs in both bathrooms, which steal the show. Large windows on both levels of the elevated home allow the magnificent sea and beach views to create an ever-changing natural backdrop throughout. This close proximity of the house to the beach, means that the music of the ocean – be it the crashing of the waves or the hypnotic sound of whales breathing during birthing season – serves as the soundtrack for this coastal gem. There's also no need to negotiate traffic, or look for parking, especially during season when the beach is packed with visitors.

In addition to the masterful use of upcycled materials – from the Beechwood floors to the recycled balustrades picked up at a local builders' yard – it is the overwhelming sense that this home was a labour of love, from conceptualisation to completion, which sets it apart, notes Cowan.

It will appeal to a buyer with the same sense of adventure and optimism; someone who sees that there's beauty beyond the conventional. Not to mention the added appeal of owning what has become a landmark property in Glencairn. "The South Peninsula appeals to buyers because of its coastal feel, enviable views and convenient location. This home offers all of this, and the added magic of being an iconic property that is eco-friendly," she adds.

For more information about this property, contact Jeanne Cowan, Pam Golding Properties agent for Simon's Town: 083 443 8108.

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