



The imported Assirelli (assirellicom.com) Italian kitchen includes clean functional lines, white cabinets, glass, and stainless steel finishes. The blocked wooden bar-stools and panelling add texture and warmth. Large windows provide city and mountain views

NATURAL HIGH

Inner-city living is fast becoming an international trend but few urban hubs can offer a vibrant city experience against the backdrop of Cape Town's natural beauty, like this CBD penthouse

TEXT Lauren Groenewald **PHOTOGRAPHS** Melanie Cleary, iStock by Getty Images and supplied

Exit the lift from this penthouse's private lobby and you are greeted by Cape Town's most famous host, Table Mountain. It's the main feature, whether you are relaxing in the apartment's expansive open-plan living area or the en-suite main bedroom with its open fireplace and private dressing room. Step out onto the wooden deck with its 11m-long marble pool, bar, firepit and braai area, and the formidable view is all-encompassing.

It's difficult to believe that the 440m² space was originally a rusty steel framework, one that took nearly six years to complete, with many challenges along the way, such as load factor. Architect Greg Wright suggested a specialised material with reduced weight to decrease the load on the building. Although costs almost doubled in the process, which made raising funds tricky, the knowledge that the Cape Town CBD is one of Africa's best commercial and residential investments made the challenge worth it.

Various design elements were also introduced, such as an imported Assirelli kitchen from Italy, glass and steel features, and reclaimed wood to lend a natural, textured feel to the property. The mountain-facing rooms are framed by floor-

to-ceiling windows so that, even when you are inside, the outside dominates.

The Urban Development Zone (UDZ) tax incentive makes the investment more attractive. Introduced in 2003, the UDZ break aims to revitalise inner-city areas by attracting capital investments in commercial and residential property through a tax rebate.

Developers have worked with the city to clean up the streets, plant trees and build walkways, all adding value to the CBD and creating a safer environment.

Upmarket residential office developments are also becoming more common. In urban centres such as London and Sydney, moving to the inner city has become a trend, with Cape Town following suit. There has been a marked increase of interest in the CBD over the last five years, with a surge in prices, according to Richard Hardie, Knight Frank's manager for the Atlantic Seaboard, City Bowl and Hout Bay. The CBD is clearly defined and there are a limited number of opportunities for luxury rooftop living, which guarantees a sustainable investment.

It makes sense, then, that this particular property is doing incredibly well as an Airbnb rental. Seen by the owners as a long-term investment from the start, they had no intention of living here, yet it remains close to their hearts. After all, when they entertain or spend weekends here they often have to drag their families away – it really does feel like you are on top of the world standing outside and looking at the mountain.

SHOW HOUSE



“THE PENTHOUSE WAS FIRST USED AS AN EVENTS VENUE BEFORE BEING CONVERTED INTO A LUXURY RESIDENTIAL SPACE”

ROY INGLE, INTERIOR DESIGNER

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

The study nook in the main bedroom has a masculine feel with its aviator-style aluminium swivel chair and wing office desk; the 11m-long marble pool is set into a wooden deck from where stunning vistas can be enjoyed day and night. The pool area, with its corner bar, braai and firepit, is fully equipped for entertainment. Textured elements such as wooden loungers echo the natural features of the mountain surrounds; large wooden shutters can be closed for a more intimate feel; wooden floors add warmth and character to the space, and unifies the expansive open-plan area with its kitchen, dining room and lounge



Splashes of primary colours are combined with neutrals and repeated in the dining and lounge area. Mid-century chairs, with their quilt-like motif, add interest and colour when set against the heavy wooden-based table. The Nguni carpet picks up on stylish African inspiration found throughout the apartment

SHOW HOUSE

The distressed blue carpet in the lounge resonates with the tones in the dining area. Geometric terrariums with bonsai and cacti add a minimalist yet sophisticated feel and bring an element of nature inside



CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT The en-suite marble bathroom, with its adjoining walk-in dressing room, includes mountain and deck views; all three en-suite bedrooms feature minimal African-inspired decor and black and white prints of wildlife. Nguni horns above the king-size bed add a dramatic feel, offsetting the luxurious throws and leather chairs



DID YOU KNOW?

Property developers and owners can earn significant tax savings through the Urban Development Zone tax rebate by erecting, extending or improving an entire building or purchasing a building or part thereof directly from a developer, according to Cape Town Partnership. capetownpartnership.co.za

FOR SALE This R29 million property is on the market through Knight Frank (knightfrank.co.za). For more details, phone Richard Hardie on 076 252 7254 or email richard.hardie@res.za.knightfrank.com

Q&A INTERIOR DESIGNER ROY INGLE

WHAT PERSONAL TOUCHES DID YOU ADD? The penthouse was first used as an events venue before being converted into a luxury residential space. So, while it was open, the clean, strong white lines dominated everything. I added natural, tactile texture wherever possible using repurposed wood, leather and wooden floors.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE WITH THE SPACE? I want it to resonate with as wide an audience as possible. The original spatial sign was heading towards a hard, white, clinical feel, which has limited appeal.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE DESIGN ELEMENT? The repurposed wooden cladding, salvaged from the original East London Fruit and Veg Market circa 1924. It softens the dividing wall in the lounge and breaks the tiles in the kitchen.

WHAT DO YOU WANT PEOPLE TO FEEL WHEN THEY ARE HERE? I want visitors to immerse themselves in the luxury while feeling nature in the textures and the overwhelming views of Table Mountain and Signal Hill. roy@made.co.za