

# THE PERFECT BLEND

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## AXIENT ARCHITECTS 010 203 9379

Nicholas Mallandain, principal architect at Axient Architects, was responsible for the design of this contemporary home, which is as functional as it is aesthetically pleasing. The innovative design incorporates green building principles and caters for modern living, while harmoniously blending in with the natural surroundings of the country-estate.

## BOBTONS CONSTRUCTION 011 234 0526

The owners wanted a home suited to a relaxed South African lifestyle, while also featuring a European twist. Bobtons Construction, which specialises in high-end residential and commercial construction, was responsible for managing the entire project, from the build to the property's finishes. The company ensured that the home is well insulated, to save energy, with other eco-friendly measures including water-based underfloor heating and PV solar panels. Wood, steel and exposed bricks have been used for both the exterior and interior of the house, linking the outdoors with the inside, and providing a contemporary feel that melds with the country estate location.



EASYLIFE KITCHENS MORNINGSIDE 011 262 5896

A home for family living was a priority for the owners of this house situated on a country estate outside Johannesburg – that, and an eco-friendly design that would reflect their European roots within a South African setting.

“The aim was to create a home with sufficient outdoor space for our kids, while making optimum use of the position of the sun,” says the owner.

The architect designed the house in an L-shape, positioning the building to take advantage of the sunlight during the day. In this way, solar power can be used resourcefully, especially during load-shedding, and with the double-glazed windows and insulated floors, walls and roof, the house retains heat during winter, which saves energy.

By placing the house at the front of the stand, there’s a large garden at the back, complete with a swimming pool and a hammock, for the family to enjoy.

Inside, there’s plenty of living space, too. The downstairs area is open plan, with the kitchen separated from the dining



**ABOVE:** In the kitchen, veneer and gloss materials, combined with red accents, create a modern, yet warm, ambience, which is ideal for family living. EasyLife Kitchens Morningside designed the space, and supplied and installed all of the cabinetry and surfaces. French oak has been used for flooring and seating, and features throughout the house, providing a natural element that complements the contemporary aspects of the home. To illuminate the area, LED lighting paired with a pendant fixture is both functional and aesthetically interesting.

space by a double-sided gas fireplace, which keeps things cosy in cold weather. "The dining room is the central place of the house. In the morning and during dinnertime, it is very lively, and a lot of stories get shared around the table," says the owner.

From here, steps lead down to the lounge and a playroom, with the outdoors easily accessible through stacking doors. The result is a seamless flow between the indoor and outside areas, which is particularly of use in summer.

Upstairs hosts the main bedroom, with a large en suite bathroom and balcony, and the children's rooms and bathrooms.

As the owners are originally from the Netherlands, there's a strong European influence in the home, but this has been blended with African elements. Take the front entrance, for example: open the beaded knobkierie door handle and go through a typical North European mud room to the rest of the house.

The art in the home echoes this transcontinental sentiment. The Dutch tulip is a motif, but "the majority of the artwork has been collected during our stay in Africa", says the owner. Two of their favourite items are in the living room – a



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**LEFT:** For the kitchen cabinetry, EasyLife Kitchens Morningside supplied Duco gloss panels and doors in white and red. To keep storage streamlined, the company used Blum concealed hinges and runner systems for the cupboards and drawers. It also installed the black countertops, which are made of Neolith, a compact sintered surface that is durable and easy to clean. The end result is a sleek space that is practical and modern, and makes preparing family meals a pleasurable experience.

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flamingo painting and wooden lounger, both from Kenya, where the owners lived for several years.

Throughout the house, the decor is understated, combining natural materials such as wooden flooring, exposed brick and bright accents. The overall effect is warm and inviting.

"We feel very proud of what we achieved with this house," says the owner. "We went to a lot of effort to build an energy-efficient home that would comfortably accommodate our family."

Their advice for others: "Decide what the most important aspects are for you, and don't deviate from these during the design and building process. Build the house for yourself, not the possible next owner." 🏡

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