

Jared Ruttenberg

With summer far from over, travel journalist Jared Ruttenberg took a group of friends to enjoy three coastal stays near Cape Town – all private villas, and ideal for exclusive friend or family escapes.

BENGUELA COVE

In July this year, celebrations resounded from Walker Bay, as relative newcomer Benguela Cove, graced the World's Best Vineyards Top 100 list for 2023.

After a short 60 minute drive from Cape Town, myself and six friends arrived with a heady sense of anticipation. Off the bat of the recent good news, we immediately hopped aboard an open vehicle for a vineyard tour, led by our friendly guide, Mica.

The two-hour experience gave us a great introduction to Benguela Cove, and it includes five interactive tasting stops en route.

The adventure through the vineyards also take in a string of beautiful homes that dot the ridges and shoreline of the estate. One of these, Ocean's Away, was to be our 10-sleeper home for the next three days.

The villa features expansive glass windows, offering uninterrupted views of the Benguela Cove landscape: lagoon, ocean, mountain and vineyard all shine.

Two fireplaces, a sauna, a garden courtyard and a large pool deck offer ample space for relaxation and entertaining.

We lapped up the luxury of our villa taking turns to cook up a storm, but on our second evening, the lure of Benguela Cove's Moody Lagoon Restaurant was too strong, and we had to submit. Languishing beside the huge fireplace, we devoured burgers, risotto and vegan dishes, sipping the wine we tasted the day before.

Speaking of wine... the Benguela Cove Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are as delectable as those in the nearby Hemel-en-aarde region. The former has recently been awarded a very impressive 97/100 from the Trophy Wine Show 2023. Even the entry-level Lighthouse Sauvignon Blanc has a depth and generous mouth feel worth more than its value of R120 a bottle.

The winner in my estimation was the Joie de Vivre Cap Classique with an impressive 36 months on the lees developing an impressive flavour profile.

For keen winos, the cellar tour offers an in-depth look at the estate's wine production or you can opt to join one of the wine blending sessions and take home your own bottle as a keepsake from what proved to be a very dazzling destination. benguelacove.co.za

CORAL VILLA, PATERNOSTER

Shifting to the West Coast, Paternoster has a relative newcomer to her shores. Coral Villa, which forms part of the collection of Gonana Guest House offerings, has



Coral Villa



Benguela Cove



Coral Villa

three bedrooms (two upstairs) and a large central living area ideal for friends or family gatherings. Coral Villa exudes homeliness, with original furniture adding to the laid-back feel.

The back garden sports a hot tub for winter, sun loungers and outdoor showers. The front porch opens onto the street adding to the sense of village bonhomie – and has ocean views along with the

HYPNOTIC BEACH HOUSE

Lastly, a little further along the West Coast, one of its lesser-known gems is Britannia Bay. Cool, gentle waters await, along with a seven-kilometre stretch of beach, and a procession of homes built



Coral Villa

Heavenly seaside havens

Vineyards, lagoons, marine life to see

BENGUELA COVE, BRITANNIA BAY, PATERNOSTER



Hypnotic Beach House

directly onto the shoreline. Except for a short walk to the tuck shop for bare necessities, Britannia Bay has no stores or restaurants. This is where you come to put away the car keys and soak in the ocean therapy – the reason why I return to the village every year to celebrate my birthday. Hypnotic Beach House was this



Benguela Cove



Hypnotic Beach House

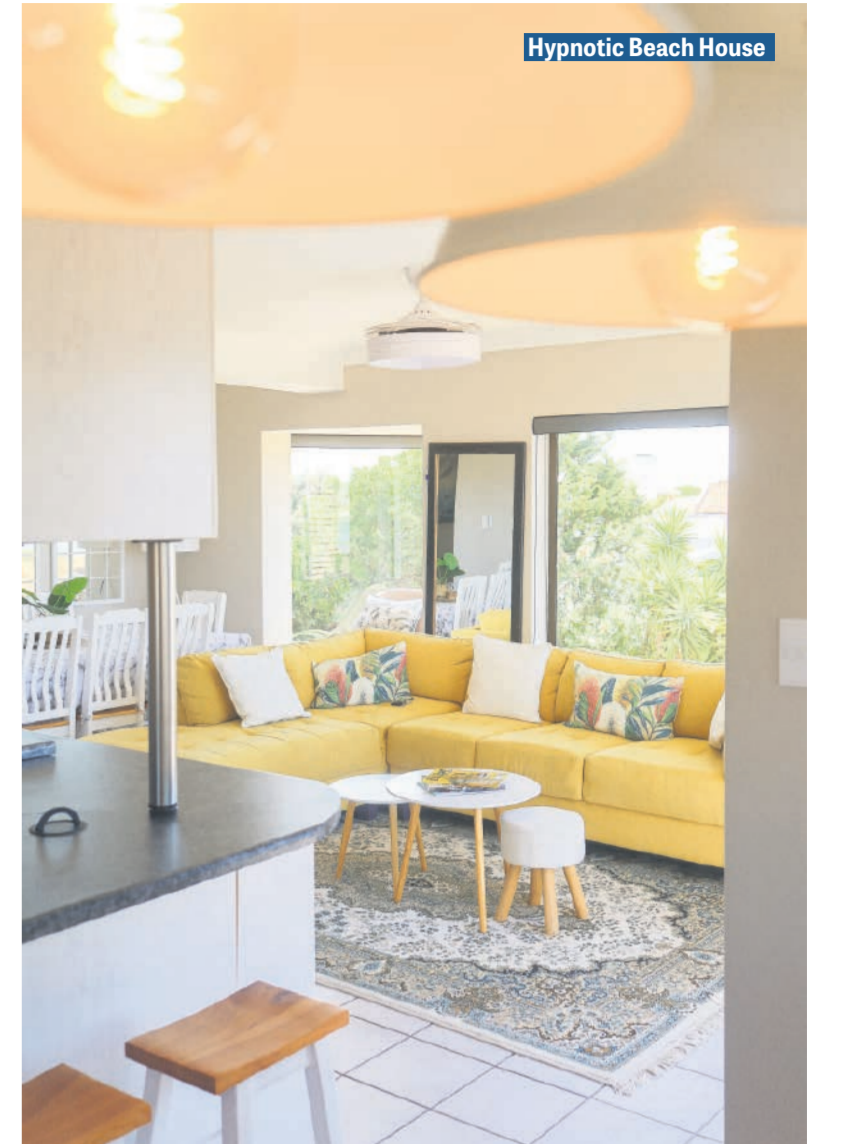
horizon. An intense pull made me envision a home here, a space where family bonds would grow stronger amid the backdrop of nature's splendour.

From every window, the azure blue tones of the West Coast waters were in full frontal view, and stepping out onto the veranda, a vista that money simply cannot buy.

Hypnotic has four bedrooms downstairs (one as a separate cottage), and an open plan lounge, dining space and kitchen upstairs, including a garden and outdoor braai. With the never-ending

beach being a major attraction, look out in the early mornings for the common dolphins that are usually spotted racing along the building waves. They'll often stop for a little playtime, and you'll be able to observe them safely from in the water or paddle out for a closer look.

Elaine reminded me that for anyone wanting a longer but ever-so-scenic walk "Hypnotic Beach House serves as a gateway to a mesmerising 20km walk to Paternoster, inviting anyone to explore the coastline's charm at their own pace". Available on booking.com



Hypnotic Beach House



Benguela Cove



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