

City of Cape Town

KEYNOTE GARDEN AT THE SUNDAY TRIBUNE GARDEN & LEISURE SHOW, PIETERMARITZBURG, 2007

OUR EXHIBIT IS A MICROCOSM OF THE FAMILIAR LANDSCAPES AND LIFESTYLE OF THE POPULAR AREA OF HOUT BAY, WHICH IS A SNAPSHOT OF THE FLORA AND ENVIRONMENTS THAT CAN BE FOUND IN THE GREATER CAPE TOWN ENVIRONMENT.

Hout Bay is a buzzing seaside suburb, nestled amongst the mountainous silhouettes of Suikerbossie, Chapman's Peak and Constantia Neck, where it is possible to experience every type of outdoor activity associated with the sea, beach, and mountain.

A dramatic view of Orange Kloof places it in its Hout Bay context and highlights the beauty of our Cape mountains along this stretch of coastline. A mountain stream forms a focal point in the exhibit as it falls from a waterfall at the back and then flows through a series of small ponds and runs through fynbos, strandveld and dune vegetation bands to the beach.

At the front of our stand, a timber edge constrains a stretch of beach and dune vegetation typically found around the Cape Peninsula; the edge of the beach begins with stabilising grasses, and purple and white Osteospermums, Restios and grasses: small shrubs pattern the dunes behind. Restios, sedges, colourful bulbs and perennials form a strandveld band with outcrops of stone and larger boulders, where a hiker can be seen making his way into the start of the lower mountain fynbos.

On the left of the stand, a series of staggered timber decks, are reminiscent of familiar beachside boardwalks around the Cape Peninsula and Mariners Wharf at Hout Bay harbour. A young female kayaker assesses the weather from her recliner, before she heads out into the bay. Wire-framed gabions filled with washed river stones hug the back of the decked platform and provide retaining for the stand, while shrubs of Rhus, Thamnocortus and Euryops soften its edges.

Behind the gabions, the strandveld band disappears and lower mountain tree species of Curtisia, Podalyria and Olea exasperata poke out amongst a carpet of mountain fynbos where vibrant yellow Leucospermums and fiery Leucodendrons add familiar fynbos colour and texture along with a colourful selection of ericas, buchus, Berzelias and proteas.

The hiker's path twists through the fynbos and ends at a clear pond surrounded by river rocks and pebbles under the shade of the forest thicket where Podocarpus, Olinia and Curtisia frame the pond below and graceful tree ferns, mountain Blechnums and Rhumora decorate the edge. From the pond, the hiker looks up towards the mountains behind and a rock waterfall covered in small mountain ferns and mosses gushes from a rocky ledge in a cloud of mountain mist.

The edges of the stand are enclosed with natural styled latte and thatch fences that stand on top of staggered gabions filled with river stones, that give the sense of being amongst the rocks of the mountain backdrop above.

The exhibit exemplifies the youthful spirit of Cape Town's diverse habitats and population and the outdoor lifestyle of its inhabitants and its popularity as one of the most popular tourist destinations of the world.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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