

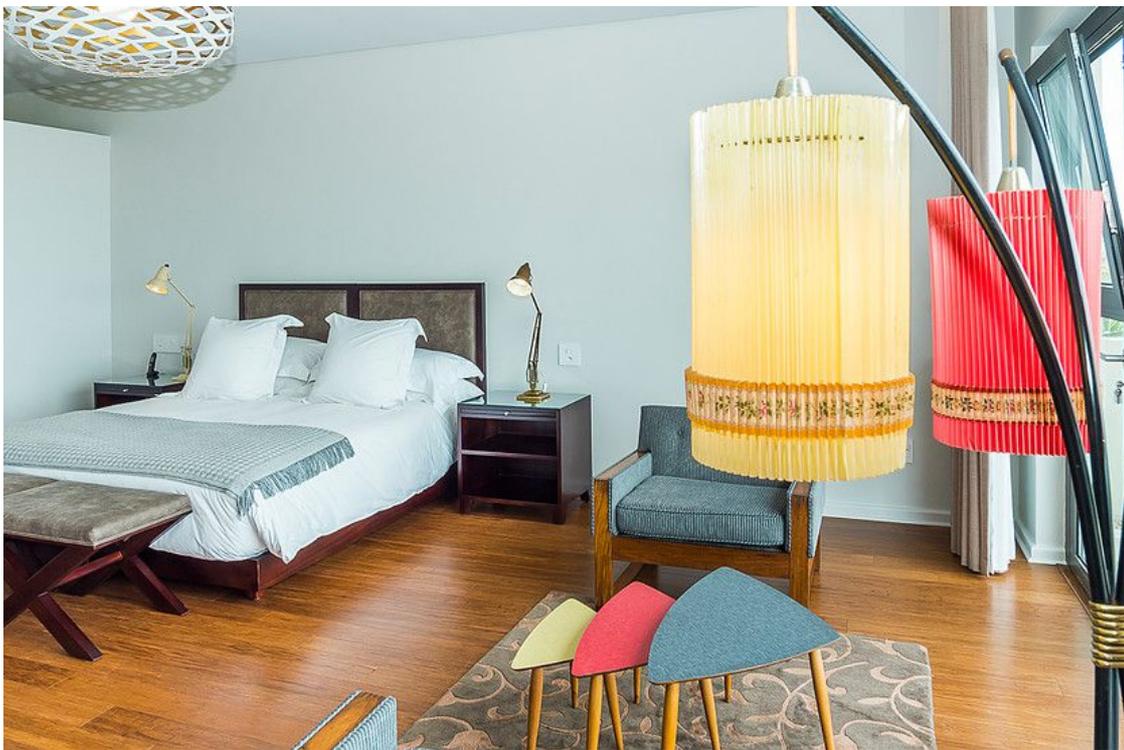
Schulphoek House in Hermanus introduces more eco-friendly features

By  Brian Berkman

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The five-star graded Schulphoek House, just three kilometres outside of Hermanus' CBD, has benefitted from a major 2017 upgrade which includes wonderful pieces of South African art and modern furniture. The biggest changes are, however, less visible but yet more essential and perhaps the main reason you should visit.

Taking a step closer to being off the grid entirely, this property now uses energy from the sun to power much of its operations and has developed a rain and grey water reticulation and purification system to work towards zero water waste.



The rooms also incorporate the latest “fresh-air” technology and, speaking of technology, key cards work effectively. Doors and windows are double glazed to vastly reduce noise pollution and to keep interiors at a comfortable temperature although each room is fitted with its own temperature control unit. During the day, excess energy from photovoltaic solar panels that cover the roofs powers an inverter, which heats or cools water – these are stored in a 1,000-litre cold water and two 1,500-litre hot water storage tanks for use when required. In essence, solar energy is stored which is something that not often happens.

The guest experience is so much improved by these largely invisible yet costly initiatives that the Gutstadt family, owners of [Schulphoek House](#) and the Culinary brand of kitchen equipment, need to be applauded.



As a light sleeper, I have to travel with earplugs as noise protection. Many newly built hotels provide little in the way of soundproofing and just the ding from the lift as it reaches your floor can seriously disrupt your stay. I speak from personal experience. The temple of quiet that is Schulphoek House is to be recommended on this score alone.

Environment friendly hospitality

Of course, there are many other reasons to visit this sea-front property: their location at Sand Bay is a magnet for the whale activity the region is so famous for. They are situated close to the Hemel & Aarde Road which is the gateway to the Walker Bay wineries and famed restaurants.



This property should be a shining light and example to the rest of the built environment. In their case, they'd be energy-efficient LED lights that are motion activated. The only time this isn't a wonderful thing is if you like to ruminate while on the

loo. On more than one occasion, I was plunged into darkness and had to wave my arms above my head to see again. While we are on the subject of the privy, theirs comes with these Japanese toilet seats with built-in bidet jets for maximum hygiene.

All of the 15 bedrooms are large, comfortable and beautifully appointed. I especially like the quality modern furniture, like a classic Le Corb chaise in the lounge area. There are nine sea facing rooms while six looks on to the garden. You will find that staff members are warm and eager to help and you can be assured of a quality meal where the focus is on local produce. There's loads of added value here (like an inclusive mini bar and generously sized Africology bathroom amenities) and later in the year, there will be a small spa on the premises too.



If you really care about your impact on the environment you can demonstrate this by supporting establishments such as Schulphoek House that make this a priority. This isn't just a selling point (although it is) - their commitment has been globally recognised. At Schulphoek House, you have the best of Hermanus and its environs without the hubbub of being in the middle of town. It may be one of the few places in the Western Cape where you can enjoy a bath or longer than 90-second shower knowing that they have minimised their drain on shared water resources.

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