

Marrying luxury and sustainability at Blue Rock Village

 By [Cindy Peters](#)

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The R14bn [Blue Rock Village development](#), an upgrade of the well-known Blue Rock Resort situated on the slopes of the Helderberg Mountains, will comprise 1000 luxury residential apartments built on 40 hectares of land.

We interviewed Lukas Reichmuth, founder and director of Blue Rock Village, to find out more about the development. Reichmuth is also the director of Swisatec, the architectural and project management firm based in Cape Town that is set to build the eco-village.



How long has Swisatec been designing and developing property? Tell us a little about your background.

Reichmuth: Founded 17 year's ago, Swisatec has a highly experienced team. I've been in the building industry for over 30 years, and have a master's degree in engineering. Most of the developments that I have worked on are based in Switzerland. I take pride in the Swiss heritage and you will see that in our design and style. My motto of design is 'Environmentally Friendly, Green Building, European Style'.

Why was the Blue Rock Lake considered an ideal site for this development?

Reichmuth: Blue Rock Lake is the only existing lake in the Western Cape with superb water quality that is crystal clear and can reach up to 27°C. The site also has a beautiful 360° view of False Bay and Table Mountain. The unique setting is very

close to various beaches, wine estates and golf courses. The history and heritage of Blue Rock speaks for itself - many tourists see it as a must-see place in Cape Town.



What were the positive market indicators that motivated the property development?

Reichmuth: I believe that there are not enough luxury properties available in the Helderberg area. From 2013-2015 I have seen a great increase in property value in the area. Many people would also like to stay in a security estate rather than a standalone house. I have seen the demand for such an estate like ours and believe the Helderberg area is heading for a property boom. For us, being in the heart of Helderberg, we stand to benefit massively.

How does one marry luxury with sustainability in property development?

Reichmuth: That's a good question! This is where most "eco-friendly estates" fail in South Africa, mainly because they focus more on luxury yet claim to be sustainable. Currently, in South Africa, being sustainable is a luxury; quality is also a luxury. As part of our philosophy there needs to be a balance between the two. Here's an example of how we marry luxury and sustainability: our apartments will not have geysers, but will use an innovative central hot water heating system which will ensure that warm water is immediately available the second the faucet is opened rather than having to wait a good three minutes. This way you save water and you save energy.

This idea doesn't only look at water-saving - because the pipes run under the floor, this enables the apartment to have a natural temperature of 22°C. This eliminates the use of heaters, especially now in winter, and you will find no use of air conditioning in summer either. The residents have comfort and better well-being.

The design features might cost a little more upfront, but it also saves the property owners more in the long run. What more luxury is needed than having an ever-present feeling of well-being? This is what an eco-village is all about.



Who is the target market for the Blue Rock Village?

Reichmuth: The target market is both the international and local market, from middle to high income earners. The open spaces and the live-work-play concept speaks to all including retirees, as well as young and mature movers and shakers of industries. I believe in the village lifestyle which all can enjoy – from young to the elderly or mature.

Tell us about some of the unique design features to be included?

Reichmuth: The unique design features included are; water underfloor heating; double glazed, large windows of 2.4m; room heights at a minimum of 2.8m; central hot water heating systems; insulation for optimum temperature, solar power generation; and a one-ring road which is purely a living street.

For more info, go to www.bluerockvillage.co.za.

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