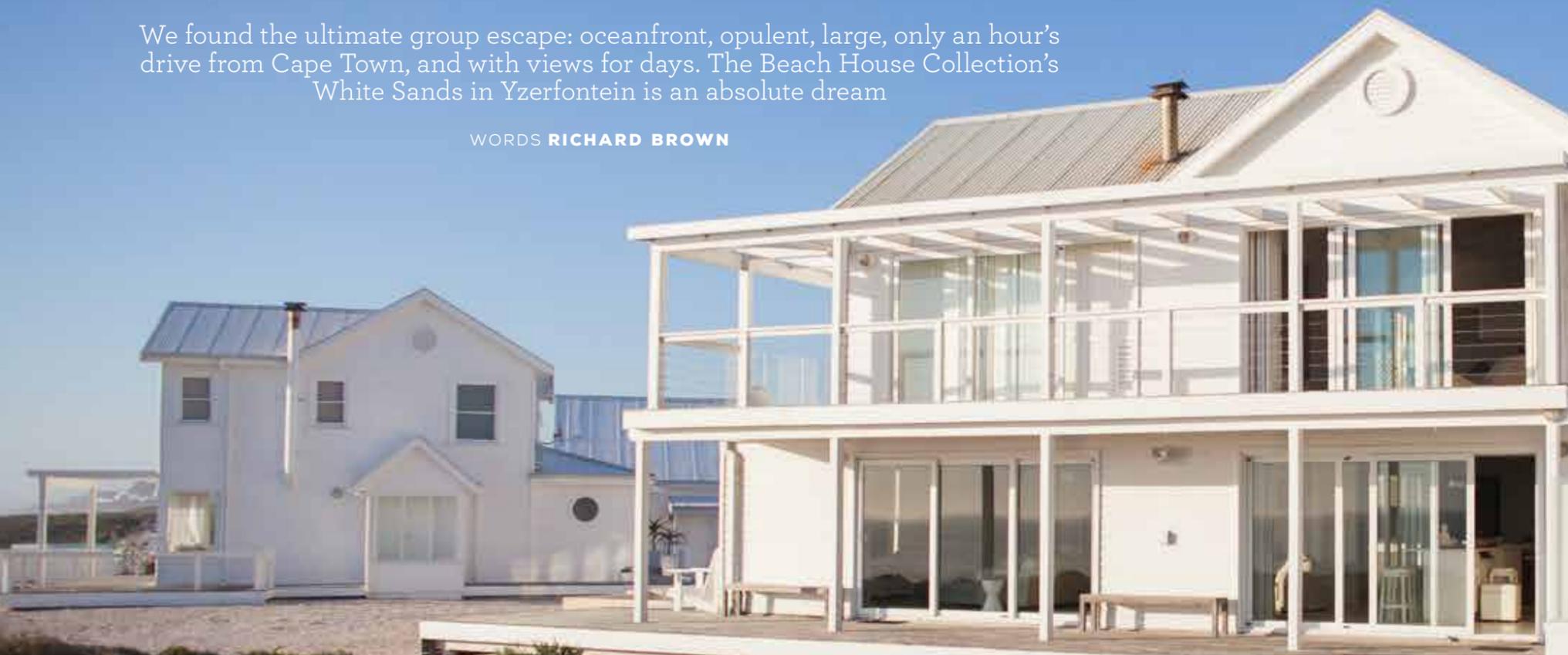


BEACH DAZE

We found the ultimate group escape: oceanfront, opulent, large, only an hour's drive from Cape Town, and with views for days. The Beach House Collection's White Sands in Yzerfontein is an absolute dream

WORDS RICHARD BROWN



Know this

- **Yzerfontein** is a mere 89 km north-west of Cape Town
- The **Beach House Collection** has three beach villas: Pearl Bay (four bedrooms), Thyme and Tide (seven bedrooms), and White Sands (five bedrooms).
- All are a stone's throw from the ocean with direct access to the beach and stunning views.
 - White Sands sleeps up to 10 people and is pet friendly
 - From R650 per person per night for 10 people
- Contact Denise Cowburn-Levy on 083 251 6282, email denise@ctprod.co.za or visit beachhousecollection.co.za

WE WERE A GROUP OF 10 FRIENDS, SET ON CELEBRATING ONE OF OUR NUMBER'S BIRTHDAY BY GOING

somewhere for the weekend. Undecided – and indecisive – the group dumped the task of finding suitable beachfront accommodation for a weekend on my plate because 'you're the travel writer, aren't you?'

So after a few abortive attempts of finding a big enough beach house at a reasonable price in Hermanus (we didn't want to have to drive too far from Cape Town), I gave up, and instead set my sights north to our wonderful West Coast. One of my colleagues informed me of the Beach House Collection's three sublime beach villas in Yzerfontein, and after a quick search, I knew I had found our weekend spot.

IT'S HUGE

We were welcomed to White Sands – one of three houses in the collection – by Tinashe, the wonderful manager of all three beachfront properties. He showed us around the five-bedroom colossus, and also made sure that we needed for nothing the whole weekend.

Naturally, having discovered this gem, my partner and I insisted on the upstairs master bedroom, which turned out to be larger than our entire apartment in Cape Town. With gorgeous wooden floors, voluminous ceilings and sumptuous and light decor, the main suite consists of a king-sized bed, en-suite bathroom with huge bath and shower, an entire private

TV lounge, and an ocean-facing wraparound deck. And that's just one room.

The rest of the house is no less ample. The other upstairs suite is also roomy and en-suite with equally unhindered sea views, deck, and a separate entrance. The other rooms are downstairs, one en-suite with access to the expansive patio, and the remaining two (one with bunk beds which can be converted to a king-sized bed) sharing a full-size bathroom. The massive and airy kitchen-cum-dining room and outside patio were indubitably designed for entertaining, while the cosy lounge is perfect for rainy days. As it happens, it was quite nippy when we arrived at White Sands, and we wasted no time in making a fire in the lounge's fireplace, which heated the space in no time.

The home's ocean-facing facade is unassuming white clapboard one would associate with California perhaps, but it blends seamlessly into its West Coast surrounds and complements the white bluff on which it's perched as well as the pristine beach that is literally a weak frisbee-toss away from its ubiquitous wraparound verandahs. The large windows and sliding doors fill the space with abundant light, and the small swimming pool in one corner of the patio also gets plenty of sun.

LET'S STAY HERE FOREVER

From the moment we stepped through the door, it didn't feel like a beach rental; it felt as though this place had been lived in and every detail had been carefully



TRIPS ON A TANKFUL

considered over time. From a kitchen that is so kitted out that you could throw several separate dinner parties at once, and a detached scullery that houses out-of-the-way fridges, freezers, basins and all the rest, to the French sliding doors built into practically every wall so that it could be converted into one giant space – if ever there was an entertainer's house, this is it. The easy-to-use alarm system, strong WiFi, and daily cleaning service didn't hurt either!

Not to mention the deft decorative touch: lavish without being overly elaborate, and light and minimalistic without compromising on its warmth. Rather than the unsentimental feeling of a rental, this felt like a home.

And we made ourselves at home... properly. Days were spent lolling in the splash pool, braaiing on the convenient built-in braai, strolling down to the beach and swimming in a surprisingly warm (compared to Cape Town) ocean, enjoying spectacular sunsets from the house's various vantage points, and playing raucous board games into the wee hours every morning.

For the rest, we had a succulent Portuguese lunch at Lulas (082 396 7643) in town one afternoon, and the boys enjoyed a few beers at Yzer Bru (082 413 3552), a homely little craft brewery which also serves delicious nachos and pizzas, while the girls had the house to themselves for a while.

It was a birthday well celebrated at a location we'll happily return to time and again. If you have a large group of friends or family undecided on where to escape to for a weekend – White Sands should make your mind up fairly quickly. ✈



Yzer to-do's

- Enjoy Yzerfontein's indigenous gardens and wild flowers during bloom season
- Visit the many arts and crafts studios in town
- Engage in a number of water sports including bodyboarding, surfing and kitesurfing
- Take a hike: The 2 km Schaap Island trail starts on the main beach and runs in a southerly direction towards the harbour. The 16 Mile Beach trail starts at the main beach and runs north along the beach to the West Coast National Park
- Go off-roading: the 4x4 trail on Blombosch Farm is about 7 km from Yzerfontein
- Eat out: Beaches Restaurant (022 451 2200), Kaijaiki Country Inn Restaurant (022 451 2858), Lulas Restaurant (082 396 7643), Yzervark Bistro (076 833 0074), Yzer Bru (082 413 3552), Meeurots Restaurant (022 451 2608), Chicory Cheese Café (076 975 6197) and Grootte Post Vineyards both in Darling (022 492 2825)