

SELAH

A nine-suite house hotel above the city — a 1960s Bo-Kaap house re-finished in chalk-white plaster, cream cement and brushed gold.

SELAH

Selah is a musical instruction to pause and let a phrase settle.

We applied it to a nine-bedroom house on a Bo-Kaap slope, and it decided almost every choice that followed. The house was never argued with: the pitched roof, the deep window reveals and the rhythm of the street elevation all remain as they were.

The work went inside and underneath. The garage now holds a spa and a cellar, the driveway has become a walled arrival court, and the garden terrace was cut back by a metre to carry a lap pool that runs out towards the bay. Materials were taken from the street itself — chalk-white lime plaster, cream micro-cement, honed travertine, pale oak and brushed gold that warms rather than glitters.

09
SUITES

14 m
LAP POOL

12
COVERS

2:1
STAFF TO GUEST

3
SUITE TIERS



THE NEW FASCIA

A designed street elevation

The footprint, roof pitch and street line remain. The elevation is re-finished in chalk-white lime plaster with brushed-gold reveals, a recessed portico and a boundary wall carrying the name in nothing louder than shadow.

SELAH

Court, front desk and deck

Guests are met at the gate and taken straight through; nobody is held at a counter.



The Arrival Court

The former driveway, re-laid in travertine sets and walled in white plaster, with olive trees and the bay beyond.



The Front Desk

A travertine desk staffed every hour of the day, backed by a pale-oak key cabinet and a gold fin screen.



The View Deck

The original balcony, widened and floored in travertine, with a slim gold balustrade over Table Bay.

The ground floor

Entrance hall, salon and library bar now read as one continuous room.



The Salon

The original living room opened to the full width of the house: one hearth, low ivory seating, a small honesty bar.



The Library Bar

Pale-oak shelving lined with Cape spirits and reference books. The bartender starts pouring at six.



WELLNESS

Fourteen metres, cut into the hill

The lower garden was excavated by a metre to carry the lap pool and its travertine deck, with the far edge sitting level against the working harbour below.

WELLNESS

Spa, sauna and studio

With nine suites in the house, the treatment room and sauna are booked by the hour rather than queued for.



The Treatment Room

One room, one therapist. Cream micro-cement, warm stone and candlelight in the old garage vault.



Sauna & Plunge

A cedar-lined sauna behind a slim gold frame, opening onto a cold plunge in the rock courtyard.



The Studio

A compact training room in pale oak and gold, with free weights, a rower and the hillside filling the window.

Twelve seats, one sitting

The kitchen faces the room. One menu is written each morning around what the markets have.



Kitchen & Bar

Twelve seats at a travertine counter, served in a single sitting and cooked in front of you.



The Long Table

Breakfast runs until eleven at a pale-oak table for ten, and nobody is asked to move on.



The Cellar

Four hundred Cape labels at a constant fourteen degrees, with eight seats for tastings.



THE SUITES

The Selah Suite

Sixty-two square metres under the original pitched roof, opened to the ridge, with a stone bath at the glazing, a full travertine bathroom along the gable wall and the harbour ahead.

THE SUITES

Three ultra suites

The largest rooms in the house. Each has a bath in the room, a separate walk-in shower and its own outlook.



The Selah Suite · 62 m²

Top floor, open to the ridge. Stone bath at the glazing, twin travertine vanity, walk-in rain shower and Signal Hill in the window.



The Terrace Suite · 55 m²

Gold-framed doors fold back to a walled terrace with an outdoor travertine shower and an olive tree.



The Bay Suite · 52 m²

A corner room glazed on two sides above the harbour, with a freestanding bath at the window and a fluted-glass shower room.

THE SUITES

Three executive suites

A workspace, a chair worth sitting in and a full ensuite in honed travertine.



Mountain Executive · 38 m²

North-facing and bright until midday, with an oak wardrobe wall, a desk at the window and a walk-in shower.



Harbour Executive · 36 m²

A deep bay window over the working harbour with a reading chair set into it, and a deep tub behind clear glazing.



Garden Executive · 35 m²

Sliding doors to a private courtyard, a low oak platform bed, a floating basin and a rain shower.

THE SUITES

Three signature rooms

Compact, quiet and complete, each with a private travertine shower room.



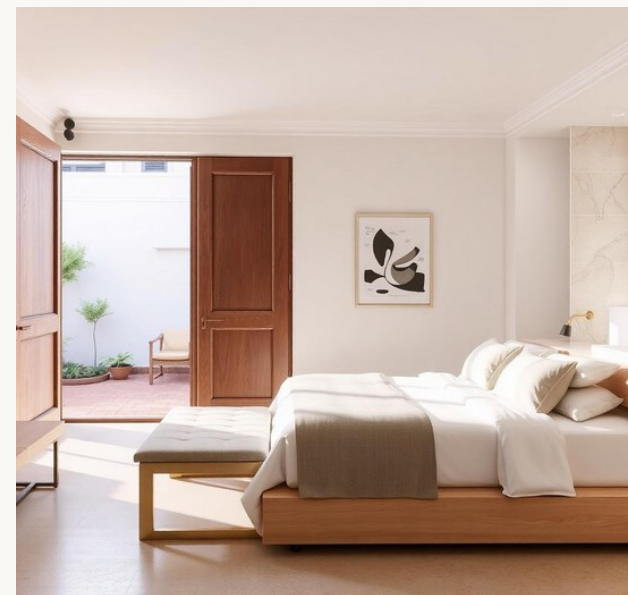
Hill Room · 30 m²

The quietest room in the house, turned to the slope, with the shower set behind the bedhead wall.



City Room · 30 m²

Built-in oak desk and wardrobe, a window over the Bo-Kaap roofs, pale stone and gold fittings.



Courtyard Room · 28 m²

Opens straight onto the green courtyard, with a stone vanity along the wall and a glazed rain shower.

DETAIL

Bathing and the blue hour



Suite Bathing

Every suite bathes in honed travertine and cream cement, with a deep tub or rain shower and underfloor heating.



The Upper Terrace

Lion's Head from the top of the house at dusk, with candles on travertine and the city lights coming up.

DETAIL

Six structural moves

Each intervention adds programme without disturbing the structure. The envelope, roof and street elevation remain essentially as found.

0 1

Gold arrival portico

The entrance is recessed into an existing bay and canopied in brushed gold. Overhead services are buried and the street edge replanted.

0 2

Garage to cellar and spa

The double garage becomes the wellness floor: treatment room, sauna, plunge court and cellar. Parking moves off site to a valet.

0 3

Terrace excavation

The lower garden is cut back by a metre to seat the fourteen-metre pool and its travertine deck. The house footprint is unchanged.

0 4

Salon opened up

Two non-structural walls come out on the ground floor, linking the entrance hall, salon and library bar into one continuous room.

0 5

Kitchen turned outward

The domestic kitchen is turned outward into an open pass, serving both the twelve-seat counter and the breakfast table.

0 6

Roof volume opened

The attic is opened to the ridge to form the Selah Suite. One new dormer is glazed to the north; the street front is untouched.

Everything else, arranged

A house of nine suites can run the way a private residence does, with a desk that never closes.

01

Inclusive luxury mobility

Every stay includes the house fleet and its drivers: airport transfers in a chauffeured electric saloon, a car on call through the day, step-free arrival, a lift to every floor and two fully accessible suites.

03

A front desk that never closes

The travertine desk in the entrance hall is staffed every hour of the day: two receptionists by day, one on the desk overnight, with a night porter for late arrivals and deliveries.

02

On-demand healthcare

A City Bowl practice holds a standing arrangement with the house. A doctor is in the room within the hour, day or night, with nursing visits, physiotherapy and prescriptions handled privately.

04

Concierge, around the clock

One named host covers the stay from the first call to the last. Tables, tastings, helicopter transfers and Winelands days are arranged in advance; the kitchen opens for late flights.

PROFILE

Project particulars

LOCATION

10 Ella Street, Bo-Kaap, Cape Town

BASE BUILDING

Nine-bedroom house over three levels on a hillside plot

KEYS

9 en-suite: 3 ultra 52–62 m², 3 executive 35–38 m², 3 signature 28–30 m²

COVERS

12 at the counter, 8 in the cellar

WELLNESS

Treatment room, cedar sauna, cold plunge, studio, 14 m lap pool

SERVICE

24-hour front desk and concierge, house fleet, doctor on call

STAFF RATIO

Two staff per guest, live-out

STRUCTURAL CHANGE

One dormer and two internal walls

MATERIALS

Chalk-white lime plaster, cream micro-cement, honed travertine, pale oak, brushed gold

STATUS

Concept and design study, 2026



Below, the city gets on with its evening.

THE SELAH · ELLA STREET · BO-KAAP · CAPE TOWN

Concept and design study for a nine-suite conversion, 2026.