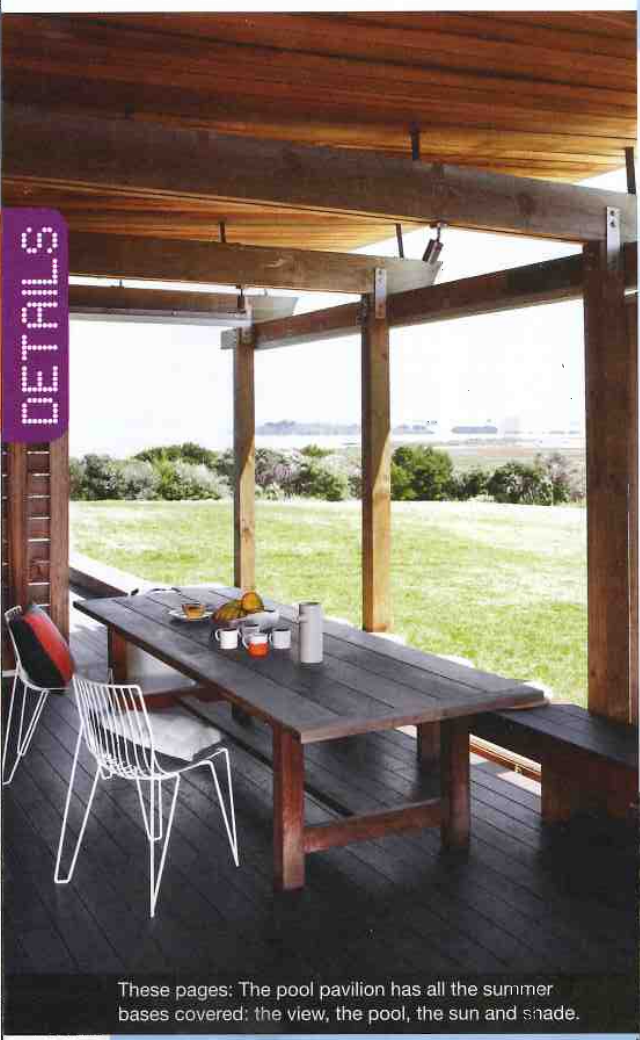




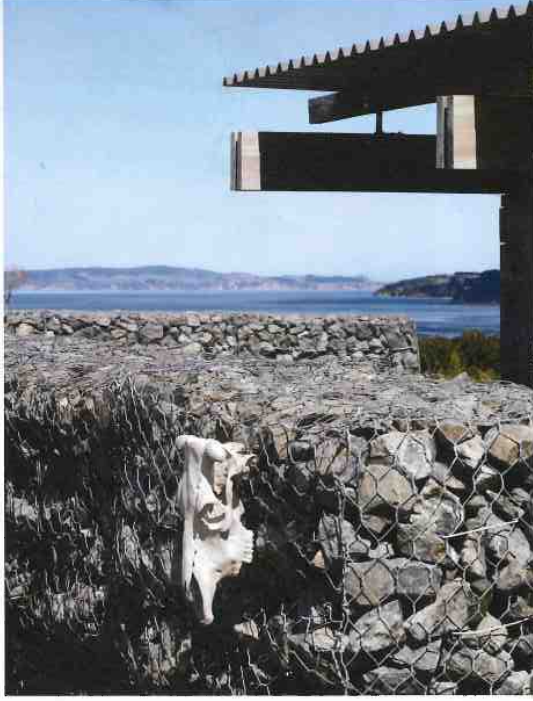
A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER



These pages: The pool pavilion has all the summer bases covered: the view, the pool, the sun and shade.

# the bare essentials

Overlooking the mangroves of the Kaipara Harbour, a pool pavilion by Herbst Architects caters to every holiday need.



## BIO

### ARCHITECT

Lance and Nicola Herbst of Herbst Architects.

### ABOUT

Originally from Cape Town, South Africa, Lance and Nicola Herbst have twice been nominated for the *HOME New Zealand* magazine Home of the Year, taking out the top prize in 2012 for a stunningly restrained weekend home on Auckland's rugged west coast. They also design commercial buildings.

What constitutes the bare essentials of summer? It's a question Lance and Nicola Herbst of Herbst Architects have been contemplating ever since they arrived in New Zealand from South Africa 15 years ago. They have designed everything from ethereal, rather glamorous beachside homes (such as the house at Piha that won *HOME New Zealand's* Home of the Year award in 2012) to structures that strip notions of shelter right back to basics, such as their own off-grid bach on Great Barrier Island.

The building on these pages, a pool pavilion on the shores of the Kaipara Harbour, achieves the unusual feat of simultaneously feeling like a pure indulgence and a pared-back holiday essential. Sure, its owners don't yet have a proper house on the site (another building project in Auckland has delayed further development here on the Kaipara), but

they've found that in the meantime, the pool pavilion allows them to enjoy their extraordinarily private site more than any bach could.

This part of the Kaipara is mostly mud flats and mangroves, rendering swimming nearly impossible except at high tide. But now it's possible to take a dip in the pool, sit around the table and cook over an open fire as the sun sinks. If that's not essential holiday living, what is?

Owners David and Lynette Serjeant bought the property about seven years ago and quickly established what they intended to be temporary quarters, a rudimentary bedroom attached to a kitset garage a short walk from the pool. They asked the Herbsts to design a structure that would allow them to fully enjoy the property, and where they could entertain visitors and family members who came to visit for the day (the site is just over an hour's drive from central Auckland). "We wanted to





Above: The idea was to "tease the building out into the landscape". Below: The setting sun throws shadow across the pavilion.

be able to sit here and watch the sun set," David says.

They host family lunches there every Christmas and at other times, and have found the structure is usable about eight months of the year. The couple's visits are not restricted to weekends, as a wireless internet connection allows them to work from their laptops here. David calls it "the best office in the region".

The Herbsts began work with a minimal budget and the pool dimensions already set. They established a strong gabion-wall backbone to shelter the pool from prevailing southwesterly winds. Then they worked to "tease the building out into the landscape as much as possible so it had a bit of stature," Nicola says.

The pool and the deck surrounding it occupy one end, while at the other is a post-and-beam enclosure in rough-cut pine with a gently pitched roof sheltering a table, a sink, kitchen cabinetry, a steel wok that operates as a barbecue, and sliding screens of cedar slats that minimise the wind. A "solar cove", with six solar panels on three posts, heats the pool and powers the pump. The water in the pool comes from tanks on site.

Anyone with a pool knows that the wrong fencing solution can compromise it. Here, the Herbsts have deftly navigated these obstacles. You enter the pavilion through a lockable gate between the gabion wall and the shelter. Because the structure is cleverly located at a point where the terrain drops away, the front can be left open because it is just high enough off the ground to comply with regulations. A wall at the end of the kitchen enclosure prevents access from the eastern side. At sunset, the warm evening light floods the enclosure and the green hills behind it.

What bliss for David and Lynette now – and for Lance



and Nicola as they designed it – to be free of any concerns about weather-tightness, services and other mundane practicalities. "So many concerns were swept away. It could become whimsical on so many levels," Lance says. "It's a pure good-time experience."

"It's there for delight and enjoying life," Nicola adds. "I think any architect would find that a rather pleasant challenge."

STORY JEREMY HANSEN  
PHOTOGRAPHY JACKIE MEIRING

## HOME.

*HOME New Zealand* is the country's leading home design magazine. Every issue showcases amazing homes by New Zealand's best architects.