

# Key trends that will shape home design in 2019

There are a number of trends that will continue to shape home design in 2019 and beyond. For both home owners and architects there is a keen focus on sustainability, wellness, smart homes and the comforts of technology, indoor-outdoor living, artisanal features and, from a functional space perspective, laundry rooms.

By [Veruska De Vita](#) 25 Apr 2019



## Sustainability and wellness architecture

An important, fast-growing trend in the building industry as a whole is health - both of the planet, which is encompassed by sustainable practices, and of its occupants, which is termed wellness architecture. We are more connected to nature than we think. The sheer fact that we are part of the animal kingdom makes us inextricably linked to the plants, animals, air and water around us. We are healthier and happier when we have access to nature, be it a pot plant or a forest.

According to architect [Veronica Schreibeis Smith](#), this philosophy is influencing residential and commercial design, building products as well as real estate developments. Think of all the estates that have incorporated the natural surroundings into building plans, benefiting the longevity of biodiversity as well as the health of the residents.

"Sustainable materials have become a priority for professionals in the building industry and coupled to this there is a noticeable shift towards including healthy materials that don't cause harm to planet nor people. Materials that are toxin-free and have little or no impact on the environment are making their way into the house framework. In fact, Engel & Völkers Potchefstroom is busy with the construction of a 'green' house, which will serve as a prototype going forward," explains Grant Wheeler, director of business strategy, Engel & Völkers Southern Africa.



## Resilient design

According to Architrends, adding to the sustainability trend is a growing awareness towards resilient design. Resilient design is a response to climate change and encompasses the practice of insulating buildings for energy efficiency, fitting solar panels for generating electricity and adding filtration systems that conserve water.

“Weather patterns are changing with some areas experiencing severe drought while others experience high temperatures and humidity. This reality provides even more reason for home design to incorporate features that add to the efficiency and comfort of a house,” says Wheeler.

## Smart homes



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The automation of homes has fast become a trend and is high up on the must-have list of many individuals who are in the process of building a new house. A home automation system can control lighting, climate, entertainment systems, and appliances. It can also control home security such as cameras, access control and alarm systems.

“The inclusion of an automation system, where you can switch on the oven and disarm the alarm system remotely, while you’re driving home from work, is becoming an important element to consider when designing and building new homes,” says Wheeler.

## Indoor-outdoor living

The seamless movement between indoor and outdoor continues as a strong trend with design becoming more innovative and bolder to allow for greater comfort and enjoyment of this type of lifestyle. Think sliding glass panels that slide into the wall to completely opening the indoor living area to the patio and floor tiles that work both inside and out to create one continuous area. Outdoor kitchens are also becoming a desirable home feature.

“The indoor-outdoor residential lifestyle is a favourite amongst many South Africans and many prospective home buyers like for this type of home and will pay more for it. This type of design allows you to enjoy the great weather as well as the added square meterage when entertaining guests,” says Wheeler.

## **Incorporating artisanal fixtures and features**

Adding elements created by local artists and artisans are simple and effective ways of personalising a home. In 2019, the move towards incorporating natural materials such as stone, copper, concrete, granite and wood into a living space create a serene, organic balance. A stone slab used as a feature in an entrance hall, wooden slats separating two living areas, doors accentuated with sheets of copper - they're all features that bring warmth and individuality to a house.

## **Laundry rooms**



According to the latest What Home Buyers Really Want (2019 edition) survey from the National Association of Home Builders in the US, amongst the most wanted home features are energy saving elements such as insulation and whole house green certification and, in terms of space, laundry rooms.

People want the comfort and utilitarian ease of a separate laundry room. Not only to do the washing, but to store apparel that is out of season, hang tog bags and even have an area to wash the dog.

“A dedicated laundry area stems from the desire for a small room that is conveniently located near the kitchen or an entrance so that muddy rugby boots can be pulled off and rinsed and the crumbs from last night’s dinner party can be brushed off the table cloth before it goes into the washing machine. Every house needs a messy room where all sorts of washing up is done and the laundry room is it,” explains Wheeler.

The home owner's need for form, function, beauty, comfort and sustainability will continue to evolve, and with innovation in these areas, there are lots of new, exciting developments to look forward to.

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