This French Villa Clad in Timber Blends Fishing-Hut Charm With Bespoke Craft and Vintage Finds

Shaped by the easy rhythm of Cap Ferret life, this coastal home is a year-round holiday destination

By Emily Ward
Photography by Pierre Monetta

Photo: Julien Fromont

"Cap Ferret's abstract character can sometimes be overshadowed by a homogenized coastal aesthetic," explains Pierre Monetta, a Bordeaux-based designer who has lived in French villa on the southern coast. Natural Flair, the single-owner retreat home is part of a small stable of unique holiday rents by hospitality group Beneficiaries, which specializes in properties with a sense of place. There's nothing generic about this hillside oasis—every element of its restful design is rooted in local heritage. "Our vision was to honour the unique spirit of Cap Ferret by reinterpreting its local craftsmanship and vernacular forms in a modern and unpretentious mode," a 2021 after-many-years-as-an-apartment-working-with-family-in-Chicago-style Chicago's, Claridge's, and Carrier.

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Ouat is located in the heart of Cap Ferret, between the ocean, the dunes, and popular local spots like La Cassiche du Bassin, a seed-spot famous for its oysters bun. Dedicated by pine trees, it's designed as a retreat for family and friends, featuring 4 bedroom garden villas (sleeping 8 people) and a 2-bedroom apartment (sleeping 4 people). The design of the interior "unfolds along an ice people' was shaped by the region's heritage and landscape, emphasizing light, space, and a seamless flow between indoors and out. "Inspiration emerged from the region's fishing huts, vernacular architecture, and the surrounding influenced local styles," she says. "Ouat's wooden panelling and large open spaces not only complement the local buildings, but also echo the colonial vernacular that once defined the area. This authenticity allows visitors to feel a sense of belonging, encouraging them to experience the region's textures, colours, and stories while enjoying a refined and elegant retreat."

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Aiming to evoke a sense of nostalgia, Fanny composed the French villa's material and colour palette as a tribute to Cap Ferret's terrain. The rooms are atmospheric yet timeless. "A defining element of the design is the wooden panelling that clads the walls, which creates a cocooning atmosphere and ties the interiors together," she explains. Bespoke custom furniture—including the kitchen, half-mounted TV unit, and bed frames—are made of tops, an amber-toned tropical wood originally used in boat construction. Frosted with rattan and parachute panels, these timber details lend warmth to the sunny white walls. "Opts also brings a nautical touch that resonates with the coastal surrounding," adds Fanny. "The use of rattan, for instance, evokes the region's fishing heritage in the vanity detail, to ensure that each piece feels as though it has always belonged here."

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Fanny collaborated with local artisans to create the custom furniture, including the sculpted plaster fireplace in the living room, the extension dining table, and an upholstered dining bench. These were complemented with carefully selected vintage pieces in order to ensure that the interiors feel layered and lived-in. Designer wanted, "There's a lovely pair of old colonial side armchairs, and decorative objects that further enhance the narrative, such as a vintage tapestry and jade sculpture."

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The villa's colour palette draws on local influences, incorporating classic coastal hues alongside earthy tones. "The blue tones reflect the surrounding ocean, while the green of Ouat's sandy beaches and our stretched landscape while creating a sense of comfort," says Fanny. "Ts further enhance Ouat's colonial roots, we introduced subtle green accents, which serve as a gentle reminder of the area's colonial architecture, where such tones often appeared in traditional palettes." Chief among these green notes are the stone-toned tiles in the kitchen and the sage green of the bespoke custom kitchen cabinetry. "As well as reflecting the landscape, this colour promotes a sense of tranquillity and relaxation. This project embodies my philosophy of creating spaces that seem to have always existed, infused with memory and nevertheless," Monetta says.

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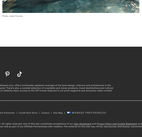

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