

A Classy Home at the End of the World

Down at the end of the world, in a paradise called New Zealand, I found a house nestled in the serene Orinoco Valley. This house is rather special and has that quintessence of classy design. It is luxurious yet presented in a humble manner with great harmony. The house is known as Edenhouse.

STORY BY Erza S.T. PHOTO BY Edenhouse Doc.



THE CLASSY HOME AT THE END OF THE WORLD
CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

- The formal dining room area
- Edenhouse facade

To get to know more about this house, one has to first meet Peter and Bobbie Martin, the couple who owns the home. This excellent, gracious duo are the force behind the greatness of Edenhouse. They came back to New Zealand (Bobbie's native land) after living for 18 years in the United Kingdom. During that time, Bobbie went to study at the prestigious Inchbald School of Design, Belgravia and at the Chelsea Physic Garden.

After her studies, she then established her own interior and garden design company in Knightsbridge and West Sussex, which she ran for the next sixteen years.

When the couple found the land in Orinoco Valley, there was an 1860s cottage on the land, which required demolition. There was virtually no garden and the farmland had been seriously neglected. Nevertheless, enchanted by the beauty of the landscape

and stunning view, Bobbie decided to design a house. Thus Edenhouse was built in 2003 as a private residence.

Interesting enough when I visited Edenhouse, it is not only Peter and Bobbie's private residence, but has transformed into a luxurious lodge. They told me that it was not their initial intention to make this house into a lodge. "Firstly our overseas friends came to visit then it seemed to expand with people



we didn't even know being encouraged to make contact when visiting New Zealand! Edenhouse seemed destined to become a lodge so we accepted the challenge. The Edenhouse team right now consists of twelve local permanent staff."

The design of Edenhouse is something that you would expect to find more in the United Kingdom than in the Southern Hemisphere. Lying on 50 acres of land, Edenhouse's architecture is obviously influenced by early Georgian design. This two-story house features symmetric arrangements and pale color schemes with woodwork. The ambiance is airy

with plenty of natural light entering from surrounding windows.

Inside the main house are two luxurious suites for guest to stay, a formal dining room, gorgeous sitting room with a fireplace, artist's studio, den and library, kitchen or breakfast area, several courtyard areas and a private area for Peter, Bobbie and their staff. Adjacent to the main house is a private two-bedroom garden cottage that was a very old dilapidated barn in the past. This was "un-picked" by the builders and reconstructed as the garden cottage in 2002. The additional second bathroom with *ensuite* bathroom was added later in 2009.

The overall interior design is very subtle and fine. The Georgian design approach is repeated in the usage of delicate furniture, soft pastel colored backgrounds, wooden floors and printed floral motif curtains and upholstery, reading nook, to even the usage of Orient *bric-a-brac* as part of the décor. Though it might look classic and simple, one needs impeccable taste and a good pair of eyes to create such a perfect equilibrium and ambiance. Peter told me that Bobbie's style could be referred to as 'timeless English country'. She uses understated fabric of the highest quality and the best workrooms and craftsmen in order to get the look and



feel that she wants. Many great designers, including John Fowler, Nancy Lancaster and David Mlinaric, are her source of inspirations.

The impression of Edenhouse is lasting, even long after I left the country. To create a home that later transformed into a lodge, but still managed to keep all that homey ambiance is not something easy to create. Peter told me, "Edenhouse is not just a place to stay. It is in the midst of some of New Zealand's grandest scenery – from rugged wilderness to golden beaches. It is a magic land for the outdoors lover, the thrill-seeker, the gourmet, the oenophile, the artist, and anyone who might appreciate the region's famously laidback attitude to life lived against a divine backdrop. All these factors were taken into consideration when recreating Edenhouse as a lodge. Bobbie believes that seamlessly blending the interiors, garden, and extended landscape creates the magic that is Edenhouse." He is indeed correct to have said that. It is truly the quintessence of Edenhouse and that is why it is so unique. 📍



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CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE

- One of the guest suite on the main house
- The writer with Bobbie and Peter Martin
- The gorgeous sitting room with fireplace