

PRESS RELEASE

Windows on the world

There's no denying the trend of bringing the outdoors inside, and we wouldn't want it any other way. Architecture the world over is striving to create a seamless indoor-outdoor flow, with it's primary instrument being fenestration and doors. Dylan Miller, from South Africa's leading door and window manufacturer, Swartland, talks us through how to incorporate this hot design trend into our homes.

17 October 2014, Johannesburg: As summer approaches, we tend to turn our attention outside. Whether it's going for nature hikes, reading a book on the beach, or simply eating Sunday lunch on the patio, most of us just can't help ensuring that we get some sun on our skin at the first sign of warmer weather. But if you're stuck indoors most of the day, your chances of getting a piece of the outside world is limited. That's when windows and doors play a major role in bringing the outside into your space so as to maximise your exposure to the splendour of nature. "The world of design is continuously striving to blur the distinction between indoors and out, and with technological developments in fenestration and doors, the possibilities are endless," explains Dylan.

Bring the outdoors into every room

Dylan notes: "The use of expansive windows and doors to bring the beauty of the outdoors into your home is a growing trend that not only frames the attractiveness of the outside world as if it were an artwork and lets an abundance of light into your home, but also adds to the serenity of the space as a whole."

In the lounge: The lounge is the first place most people choose to open up and make the most of their surroundings, whether it's just a small little garden, a city or sea view, or a more dramatic landscape. "Large windows and patio doors are excellent for maximising sunlight and your views, whilst stack-away fold-a-side doors connect indoor and outdoors spaces seamlessly and create an illusion of more space when they're open. The trick with stacking doors, as with any fenestration, is to ensure that they are correctly sealed so as to ensure adequate insulation from the elements. Luckily Swartland makes this easy with their Fold-a-Side Doors, complete with composite gaskets to ensure wind, water, dust and insects stay put outside," nods Dylan.

In the kitchen: "The fact that we spend so much time in the kitchen makes for a perfectly reasonable argument to install large windows and doors to make the experience a more pleasurable one and emphasise any natural light," says Dylan. Kitchens traditionally have a back door and a window above the sink, but there's no reason why this can't be amplified. Think long horizontal gliding windows that run the length of your countertops to shine natural light onto your work surfaces, or glass

paneled French doors leading out onto a kitchen garden, rather than just the conventional standard solid back door that blocks light out of the room.

In the bathroom: The bathroom is the one place in the home that tends to get neglected when it comes to large openings to the outside world due to issues of privacy. But this can be easily solved with sandblasting the glass, planting a mass of vegetation in front of the windows and doors, or simply hanging sheer curtains. “If anything, the bathroom needs ventilation the most due to its high humidity levels,” says Dylan, who suggests opting for Swartlands pre-sealed and pre-glazed Ready-2-Fit range, since it has been pre-treated with Maxicare water-based sealant that boasts excellent water-resistant and anti-fungal properties, making it ready to install as is, without any extra work required.

Consider glazing

Apart from its transparency and its ability to bring outdoor views and natural light into our home, glass can offer many other desirable qualities as well. Dylan shares his industry knowledge on the different types of glazing available:

- **Double-glazing:** Double-glazing is the glazing process in which a window is made with two panes of glass with a space between them. In many cases, air is trapped between the panes and forms a layer of insulation. Before the unit is sealed, a drying agent is added to ensure that no moisture is present inside the finished glass unit. Double glazed windows, such as those from Swartland for example, boast excellent energy and sound insulation qualities.
- **Low E glazing:** Direct solar energy transmission and conducted heat gain and loss can be combatted with a range of glass products that incorporate things like heat-absorbing tints, tinted PVB interlayers, Low-E and solar control coatings, screen-printed designs and double-glazing.
- **Sound control:** Glass has a relatively low resistance to noise, often allowing the transmission of unwanted sound into a home or building. However, special glazing designed to enhance acoustic insulation can be used, such a double-glazing for example.
- **UV-protection:** Goods exposed to Ultra Violet light through windows will become cracked and faded over time. To negate this issue, you can install laminate glass, with PVB interlayers, in your home, which is virtually opaque to UV radiation and provides optimum protection against potentially damaging sunlight.

Warm and cosy

Today, it is possible to install expansive windows and doors throughout your home in order to benefit from the beautiful outdoor views, whilst also ensuring that your home remains well insulated. Says Dylan: “By selecting well-insulated windows, you can go a long way to reducing this energy loss. In recent years, windows have undergone a technical revolution – the energy-efficient windows of today facilitate lower heat loss, less air leakage and warmer window surfaces for

improved comfort and minimal condensation. Double-glazed windows, such as Swartland's double-glazed wooden windows for example, can greatly reduce the amount of energy you need to warm up and cool down your home by as much as 50%."

Adhere to the law

According to the SANS 10400-XA building regulations, by law, all fenestration in any new build or newly renovated home must boast windows that are compliant with these regulations. Dylan explains: "Even though the SANS 10400-XA regulations have been in force for quite some time, there are unfortunately still a multitude of non-compliant windows readily available on the market. This is extremely alarming, as simply put; a new build without compliant windows will not pass the building regulations and will be deemed unfit and hence, illegal."

He says that Swartland for example, continuously tests its products to ensure that they are compliant with the National Building Regulations. In order to ensure that its windows are compliant with the SANS 613 and 204 (Fenestration Products) Mechanical Performance Criteria, its Ready-2-Fit range of windows are tested for deflection, structural strength, water-resistance, air-tightness, operating forces, and the best possible energy efficiency. As a result, they have unique mechanical property values, from A1 to A4, assigned to them.

ENDS

Released on behalf of Swartland (www.swartland.co.za) by The Line Communications (www.theline.co.za, ant@theline.co.za).