

# scape

SA'S HOME OF DESIGN, BUILD AND MAINTENANCE



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**THE RECREATION**

# SOOTHE AND SETTLE

Recreating Wellness at Babylonstoren's Hot Spa

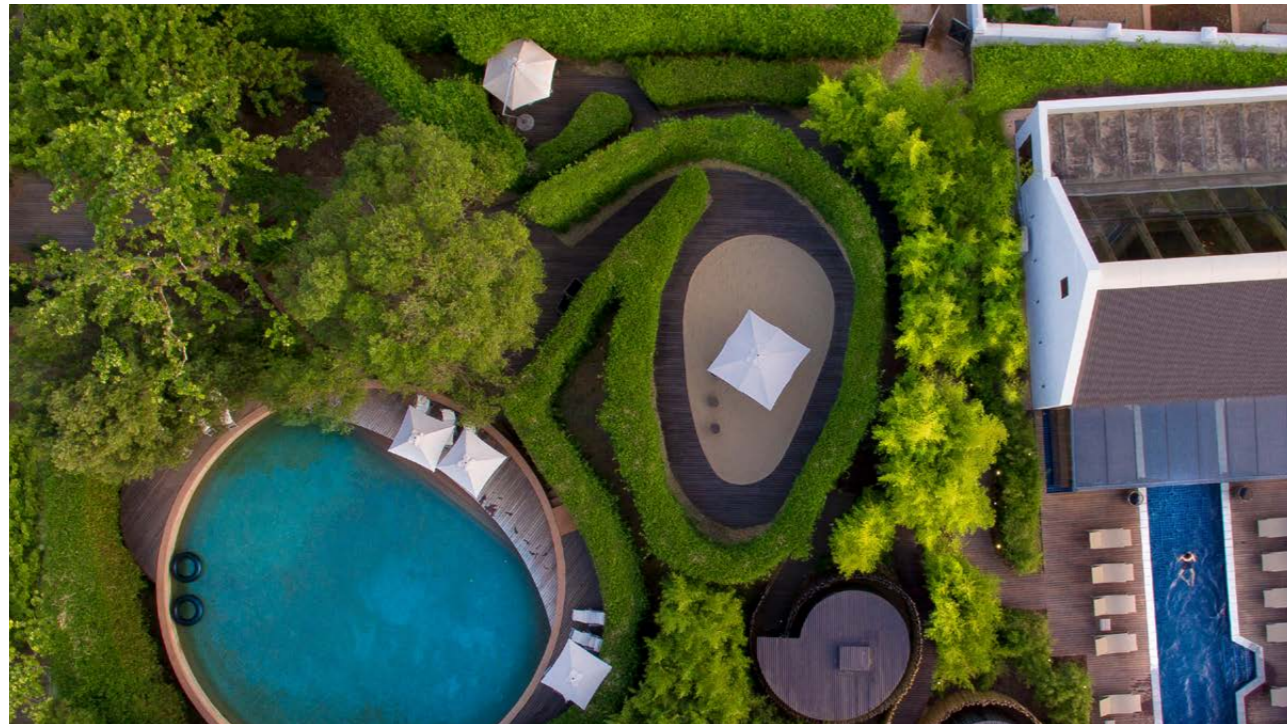


Completed: 2022  
Location: Franschhoek, Western Cape

**B**abylonstoren, the renowned garden and wine farm set at the foot of the Simonsberg Mountain in the Franschhoek wine valley, has always been known as a welcoming space of sanctuary. To elevate the already award-winning Garden Spa, a Hot Spa was designed, enhancing this marvellous well-being experience nestled in nature.

Surrounded by picturesque mountains and with views over the farm's famed garden and vineyards, the Babylonstoren Hot Spa offers a large indoor-outdoor pool, salt room, sauna, steam room, and two vitality pools, in addition to an authentic hammam and traditional Rasul chamber. As with everything on this working farm, the emphasis is on simple yet sophisticated functionality. The new Hot Spa provides a beautiful communal space where guests can relax before or after treatments. The two circular vitality pools are connected by a water channel to form an indoor-outdoor heated pool that can be enjoyed year-round, regardless of the weather. They are accompanied by mosaic alcoves with colder running water – the difference in temperature between these and the pool itself is known to encourage blood flow, giving the body an energising and refreshing boost. Nestled between these alcoves, a welcoming hearth with a fireplace provides added warmth during colder seasons.

The Hot Spa also offers a sauna, a second heated pool, and a salt room, built from blocks of raw Himalayan salt. The characteristic pink hue of Himalayan salt offers a soothing, healing environment, as this sought-after natural mineral is known for its therapeutic properties, and has long been used to lift mood and reduce fatigue.



#### MEET THE TEAM

**Architects:** TV3 Architects  
**Main Contractor:** JDV Construction  
**Civil & Structural Engineer:** De Villiers & Hulme Consulting Engineers  
**Quantity Surveyor:** De Leeuw Group (Stellenbosch)  
**Mechanical Engineer:** Sparq Consulting  
**Electrical Engineer:** Arthur Morris  
**Electrical Contractor:** Valley Electrical Contractors  
**Photography:** Courtesy of Babylonstoren

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The world-renowned gardens at Babylonstoren inform everything on the farm, and here they are framed by tall windows that bring the surrounding greenery and light right into the spa. However, it is the water that flows through the land that is the prevailing theme here; the treatments and the space are founded in water or steam, and the sound of running water provides a backdrop that soothes and settles. More than simply a backdrop to the full experience, the Hot Spa is a haven in itself, and an intrinsic part of the therapeutic process.

Adjacent to the Hot Spa are the new hammam and Rasul treatment rooms. The hammam offers a fresh take on the fabled ancient Turkish public baths that have offered both physical and spiritual renewal for centuries. The traditional hammam is echoed in the vaulted ceilings and beautiful mosaics in a range of glorious blues, made entirely from heated marble slabs. The Rasul (mud bath) also offers a centuries-old Arabian-inspired cleansing practice. In contrast to the hammam, the curved walls of the Rasul are tiled in mosaics in tones of botanical green, again invoking the beloved Babylonstoren gardens.

Acting as a holistic retreat not too far from the chaos of the city, the Hot Spa provides a place of relaxation to those whose idea of recreation sounds a little something like 'wellness ritual'. The space, inspired by nature and personal restoration, is designed to perfectly reflect its intentions and curate an atmosphere that carries guests to their best-rested selves.



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