

COMMON GROUND

From the outset, Arjaan De Feyter treated this house as a shared project. Guided by a clear concept and an openness to the client's way of living, dialogue shaped every decision from start to finish.

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Dark walnut cabinetry is paired with *Fossil Smoke* natural stone flooring, giving the space a grounded quality. A *Moonlight* chair from Exteta stands next to the fireplace and a custom *Hugo* table from Fontein&Bova, both sitting on a custom rug from Bruder, while the ceramic pendant

light is from Rose Uniacke. Opposite page: The living kitchen is organised around a central block finished with a bronze technique by Lakkerij Vergote, while a *Bubble Rock* sofa from Living Divani was reupholstered in orange fabric from 't Huis van Oordeghem.



De Feyter moved the kitchen to the centre of the building, where it connects to various separate areas of the house and to the outside. The large kitchen island is designed for informal gatherings.



In the dining area, *Yoko* armchairs from Minotti are paired with a custom walnut *Tonga* table. The *73 Series* lights from Bocci cast a soft, sculptural glow, while the *Roch* rug from RR Interieur adds warmth and tactility underfoot.



In the kitchen, a custom-made brass sink is combined with a tap by Aqualux, set into a walnut worktop. Behind the kitchen island sits a dark red stove by La Cornue.

A monumental fireplace with a suspended chimney divides the lounge and dining area, which was deliberately made dark to lend the space a cosier atmosphere.



The house has plenty of sightlines offering surprising views, such as here, where a large artwork by Max Frintrop is revealed. Curtains by Verilin frame the space.



A *Standard* sofa from Edra sits freely in the space, flanked by solid lime wood *Calix* side tables from Baxter with a shellac finish, while the organically shaped linen rug is from JOV. All the cushions were provided by La Patronne from 't Huis van Oordeghem.





The half levels create subtle visual connections between spaces, allowing glimpses beyond the room you're in without fully revealing what comes next. This partial openness softens the house's experience, making it feel less like a succession of enclosed boxes and more intimate and lived-in.



A *Ventaglio* desk by Cassina in limited-edition walnut, designed by Charlotte Perriand, paired with a *Soft Pad* chair by Ray & Charles Eames for Vitra in black leather with a chrome finish. A plush rug softens the space, while the ceiling is clad in walnut wood.



A garden room has Sky-Frame sliding doors that open to the pool area. In the foreground, a *Softcage* armchair from B&B Italia. This and the Fontein&Bova stools were reupholstered by 't Huis van Oordeghem. Beyond sits an *Ogado* dining table alongside *Solid* chairs from Manutti. An *Otto* side table from Tribù, and poufs from Paola Lenti, stand on a custom rug from Bruder.

The main bathroom was finished with hand-applied microtopping by Painted Creations, extending seamlessly across the walls. The bath from Notonlywhite was given the same treatment to match it to the space.



VOLA fittings in a copper finish are combined with alabaster wall sconces, adding a subtle warmth to the mineral surfaces.





For this house near the Belgian shore, the owner spoke with a small group of designers whose reputations were already well established. These conversations were marked by confidence and ambition, often framed through bold gestures and expansive ideas. But in designer Arjaan De Feyter, he found a different kind of engagement: a designer with a clear vision, who was equally invested in the conversation itself and in understanding how the house would be lived in. From the first meeting, dialogue set the tone for a shared way of working.

That first meeting with De Feyter stretched on, unplanned. “I don’t believe in rushing those early talks,” the designer says. “And I was genuinely interested in what they wanted.” The house itself was already ambitious in scale – nearly 900 sq metres – but never intended to feel monumental. De Feyter felt the architectural framework was strong, yet flexible enough to be rethought from the inside out. Functions were reshuffled and rooms reassigned. The kitchen, for example, was no longer treated as a purely functional space, but as a social anchor. “The kitchen isn’t just where you prepare food, but rather a meeting place where you gather with loved ones,” he explains. “I think we Belgians spend a lot of time creating the right atmosphere for gathering – it needs to feel unrushed, because we want to take time with each other.”

Warm materials and deep, tactile tones began to shape the interior language. “Too many homes today look like a collection of white shoeboxes to me,” De Feyter reflects. “They’re immaculate but sterile, and people don’t live like that. There’s a reason why people like spending time in old-fashioned brown cafés, you know? I find the word ‘cosy’ doesn’t really cover it – there has to be room for emotion, for warmth and even a little mess.”

The building’s layout aids the intimacy that De Feyter was aiming for. At the heart of the house lies a central core, around which a sequence of half-levels was built. Movement is gradual rather than linear; sightlines connect rooms across heights, creating a sense of continuity without exposure. “I’m always thinking about internal circulation,” he explains. “Not in a technical sense, but in how people move around their home. It’s important to bring it back to a human scale, particularly in large homes like this.” Zoning also played a crucial role. The upper levels house the guest quarters, conceived almost as a self-contained domain – comfortable for visitors, liberating for the residents. In this way, togetherness and privacy coexist without friction.

The process itself was anything but effortless and took some considerable time. Certain choices had to be defended – such as the dining room, which De Feyter insisted should be dark. “I had to fight for that one,” he admits. Darkness, when applied intelligently, can be generous, says De Feyter, creating focus and intimacy. The owner, demanding yet deeply engaged, regularly voiced doubts. But those moments became productive rather than obstructive. “If a client comes with a solid argument,” De Feyter says, “I’m the first to listen. That’s usually when the project gets better.”

Rather than seeking carte blanche, the designer thrives on exchange: brainstorming, questioning, and refining. It’s an intense way of working that he admits doesn’t suit every client, but in this case, it led to outcomes that feel distinctly personal. “Do you have the time for this?” the owner asked De Feyter early on. The answer, ultimately, is embedded in the house itself.

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Opposite page, the bedroom is surprisingly snug, shaped by the human scale De Feyter often refers to. An antique dresser and linen bedlinen add a sense of tactility and personal use, reinforcing the room’s lived-in quality. The pool area combines outdoor furniture from Kettal and Tribu via ‘t Huis van Oordeghem.