

A NEW WAY TO STAY

Home exchange has become the new couch surfing – an affordable accommodation option when travelling abroad. But rather than trawling thousands of websites in search of that diamond destination in the rough, a Spanish couple has launched a home exchange site that will tantalise every tasteful traveller

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF BEHOMM MEMBERS



LOS ANGELES

OWNER: Creative director
HOME: Modern home in a central, leafy part of Los Angeles close to all the city's highlights.



NEW YORK
OWNER: Creative director
HOME: This industrial, modern loft in the Brooklyn area of New York City was designed by Ksenya Samarskaya, who also lives in the space.

The most expensive part of travelling – especially when considering our flailing currency – is accommodation. Really good accommodation does not come cheap. And who hasn't been disappointed, even horrified, to arrive in a foreign country to find that the 20 Euros deposit on the 'quaint, clean room overlooking La Rambla' is a shoebox, with no en suite, where Spanish brawlers break bottles outside your window and argue loudly until 4am?

Home exchange is a great, and affordable, way to travel. Behomm, founded by graphic designer duo Agustí Juste and Eva Calduch, promises to be the future of home exchange for the discerning traveller. It's based on the shared economy movement, which connects like-minded people with a similar love of tasteful things and an interest in a more enriching travel experience – but only those whose livelihoods are derived from the pursuit of beauty. 'We became obsessed with the idea of how incredible it would be to connect designers and visual artists worldwide with similar passions – this is not only about finding free accommodation around the world,' says Juste. 'We do believe that sharing is the future!'

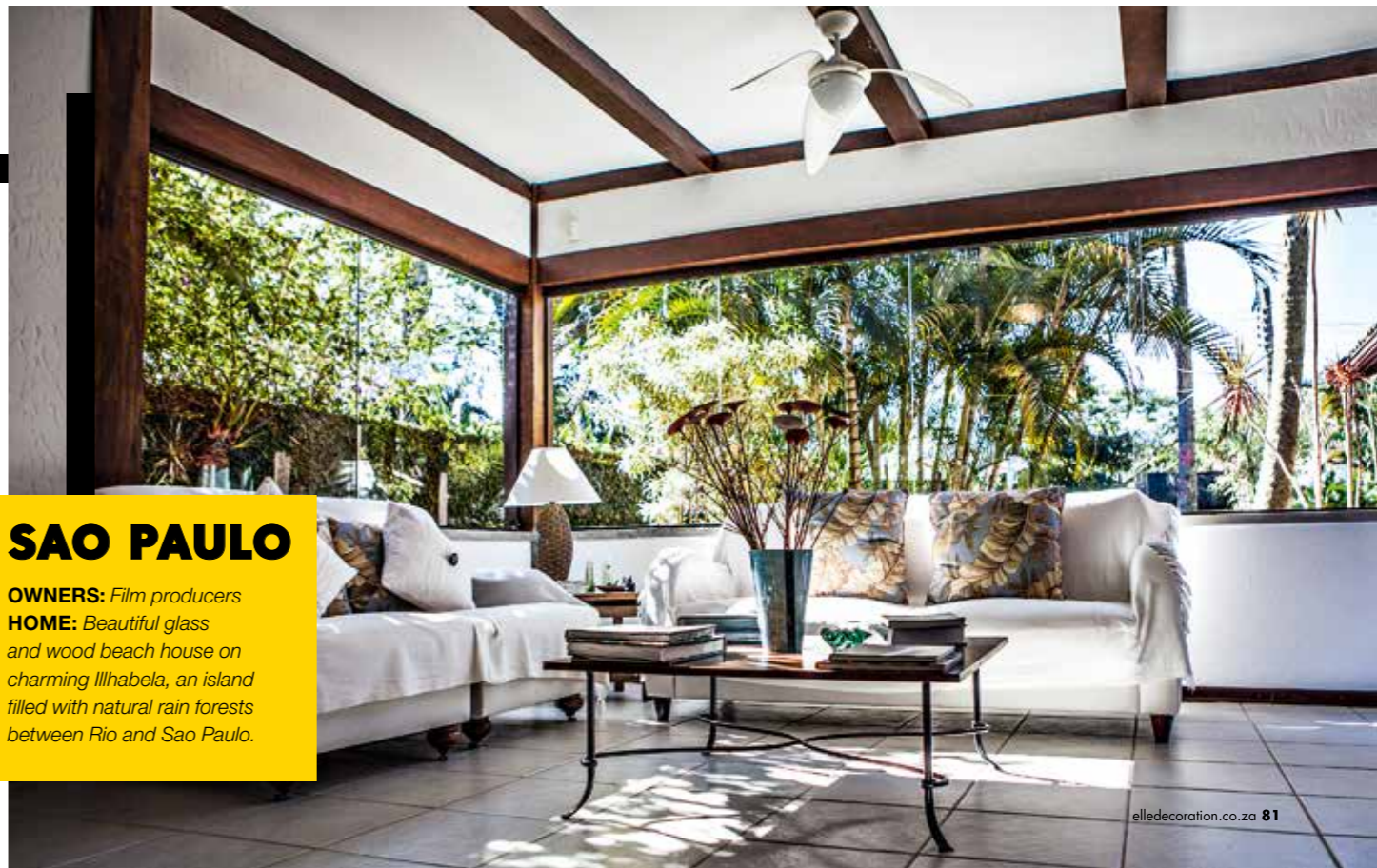
So if you are the proud owner of a beautiful home, love international travel and have an interest in connecting with people around the world, this service is for you. The founders stress that this is not about seeking out luxurious homes, that beauty has very little to do with luxury. All – beautiful, any sized – homes qualify, the only homes that are turned away are only those that are a total mess. The homes are scattered on almost every continent and country from Amsterdam to Tokyo, San Francisco to Cape Town. The site is also the very first by-invitation-only home exchange platform, making it very secure. **Visit www.behomm.com**

HOW IT WORKS
 By signing up and listing your home, you will then be able to search for and view homes, and contact members through a secure internal system that hides personal contact information. The site works as a secure introductory middleman. Members enjoy unlimited exchanges, with no extra surprise fees.

'WHEN GUESTS COME I ALWAYS MAKE SURE THEY HAVE LISTS AND ADDRESSES OF ALL THE BEST PLACES'



WISCONSIN
OWNER: Art director and digital artist
HOME: Voted one of the greatest hotels in the world 2013, restored Camp Wandawega is a wonderful exchange choice when looking for a peaceful stay outside of the city.



SAO PAULO
OWNERS: Film producers
HOME: Beautiful glass and wood beach house on charming Ilhabela, an island filled with natural rain forests between Rio and Sao Paulo.



CALGARY

OWNER: Interior designer, photographer
HOME: This 100-year-old character home is located in downtown Calgary, Canada.

Lori Andrews, Calgary homeowner:

WHY DO YOU HOME EXCHANGE AND WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT IT?

As a residential interior designer, I often find that hotels lack personality. Returning from a day of sightseeing to a thoughtful, private home is so much more appealing.

IS THERE SOMETHING SPECIAL THAT YOU DO FOR YOUR GUESTS?

When guests come to visit I always make sure they have lists and addresses of all the best places to eat and see in the area. I am an avid outdoor enthusiast, so guests who stay with me will have access to a lot of information of where to hike, canoe and ski, as well as access to all of my outdoor equipment. As I live in the inner city, I give my guests access to our bicycles as well.

ANY OTHER THOUGHTS YOU CAN SHARE ABOUT HOME EXCHANGE?

One of the advantages of a home exchange is that the homeowners have a great sense of place and will be able to direct their guests to specific experiences that only the locals know about. And we all have an aesthetic sense of pride in our living spaces.



SYDNEY

OWNER: TV producer
HOME: Spacious, colourful house in Marrickville, Sydney, close to city centre and beaches. This house was designed by architect David Boyle.



BALI

CITY: Architect
HOME: Large, spacious whimsical home among emerald rice paddies and on the beach in Canggu, Bali.



OSAKA
OWNER: Architect
HOME: This minimalist, predominantly white home is in the quieter parts of Osaka, designed by Jun Murata.



AMSTERDAM
OWNER: Photographer
HOME: Spacious loft in central Amsterdam, with white-washed, black and raw features throughout.



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AMSTERDAM PHOTOGRAPH: PAULINA ARCKLIN

LONDON
OWNER: Architect
HOME: Lovely Victorian conversion duplex flat, south of the river near Oval, well connected with public transport. Home renovation by architect Hari Phillips.



Jen Taylor, London homeowner:

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU HOME EXCHANGED?
We have done four swaps in the last 16 months.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE BEHOMM EXPERIENCE THAT YOU LIKE THE MOST?
My husband and I are architects, and I am also a surface pattern designer, so we really appreciate good design and our lifestyle reflects that. When we are travelling we like to look for things that interest and inspire us, and that includes the places we stay at. Before we started home swapping we often looked for nice boutique hotels or places that are unique and well-designed. When we discovered home swapping it became clear straight away that it's the best way to travel. We get to stay in comfortable homes where everything you need is already available. With the amazing homes on offer, we do not have to sacrifice practicality for our appreciation of great design.

BARCELONA
OWNER: Architects
HOME: Beautiful 1910 apartment in the middle of Barcelona's Eixample. Home renovation by architects Anna and Eugeni Bach.

