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HOUSE & GARDEN

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The bright side

Creative thinking and clever inclusions imbued this Sydney home with charm and personality.

STORY *Stephanie Hope* | STYLING *Holly Irvine* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Tom Ferguson*



LIVING/DINING Vintage console, Sounds Like Home. Andy sofa, Camper occasional chair (left) and Jean armchair, all Jardan. Cushion on armchair, Adairs. Classique dining table and Root dining chairs, Globe West. Curtains made from Zepel Fabrics Allusion, The Curtain Factory. Escea gas fireplace. Sintesi Ceramica 'Met Arch' tiles (fire surround), Premium Tile & Mosaic Outlet. Custom coffee table, SED Joinery. Rug, Bayliss. Eterno European-oak flooring, Tongue N Groove Flooring (throughout).



H&G HOUSES



**“SUZI LOVES ENTERTAINING
SO GETTING THE KITCHEN
RIGHT WAS CRITICAL.”**

KYLIE HICKMAN, INTERIOR DESIGNER

“Great bones but lacking in personality.” That’s the way interior designer Kylie Hickman of Zavie Creative describes the state of this two-storey red-brick property in Sydney’s inner west. Before she and her business partner Gil Bennett worked their magic on it, that is. “The layout was made up of a series of small rooms that felt dark and cramped. The kitchen was bland and awkward to use, the bedrooms felt cold and uninviting. Storage was minimal and the gardens were very basic,” Kylie adds.

Homeowner Suzi agreed with the designers. She wanted a “fun but functional” home for her children – Rosie, 11, Coco, seven, and Ben, three – and their bordoodle pup Oreo. It had to feel light and airy, with easy flow from front door to back garden. Robust child- and dog-friendly surfaces were imperative, as was lots of storage and outdoor space where Suzi could relax while the kids used up excess energy.

It was agreed that the best solution was an extensive renovation. The rear of the home was demolished and extended to create an open-plan kitchen/dining/living area, butler’s pantry, bathroom, mud room and laundry.

Upstairs, the bedroom count grew from two to four. There’s a new family bathroom and ensuite and walk-in wardrobe for the main bedroom. Outside, the gardens were relandscaped and an alfresco kitchen, covered entertaining area and pool installed. “Suzi loves entertaining, so getting the kitchen right was critical,” says Kylie. “She also needed lots of clever storage to contain the children’s clutter.”

In the kitchen, an appliance drawer is concealed behind Häfele pocket doors and the central island has underbench cupboards and drawers. There are also drawers for spices, chopping boards, baking trays and utensils, plus a coffee-making station near the fridge. In the living/dining zone, there are deep drawers within the joinery – ideal for quickly stowing toys – and a window seat that looks out to the herb garden.

As there’s no room for preciousness in this busy household, finishes were chosen for their durability, as well as their ability to deliver textural ►

LIVING Artwork by Isabelle De Kleine, Curatorial & Co. Console, Sounds Like Home. Eames ‘House Bird’, Living Edge. Vases from Muuto, Marmoset Found, Papaya and Country Road. **KITCHEN/LAUNDRY** Kitchen by Best Kitchens. V-groove joinery painted Dulux Milky Spearmint (wall-side cabinets) and Dulux Green Sea (island). Staron Solid Surface benchtops in Aspen Alder. Stove and ovens, Miele. Mumu pendant light, Mondo Luce. Bar stools, Globe West. Armando Vicario tap, Whitfords Home Appliances. Miele oven and integrated dishwasher. Drawer pulls, Designer Doorware. Banquette cushion in Laurie fabric, Warwick Fabrics. Washing machine and dryer, both Bosch Home Appliances.





"ADDING PERSONALITY TO
THE HOME WAS A KEY ASPECT
OF THIS RENOVATION
PROJECT." KYLIE HICKMAN

MAIN ENSUITE Zellige tiles in Grigio (feature wall) and terrazzo floor tiles, all Di Lorenzo Tiles. Hansgrohe 'Raindance Air' ceiling-mounted showers, Just Bathroomware. **ROSIE'S ROOM** James Dunlop 'Palmes' wallpaper, Annandale Wallpapers. Nau nesting side table, Cult. Custom bedhead in Zepel Fabrics Baron with Warwick Fabrics Prague piping. Bedlinen, Cultiver. Curtains in Zepel Fabrics Dialogue from The Curtain Factory. ►



THIS IS THE LIFE

Renovating has improved both the style and liveability of this home. The floor plan now flows more naturally, and the indoor areas connect seamlessly with the garden. "The rear of the home was designed to allow Suzi to prepare a meal in the kitchen but still keep an eye on the kids playing outside," says Kylie. "Another much-loved feature is the side access to the laundry and bathroom so no one need traipse through the house while wet!"



warmth and interest. “European-oak floorboards are laid on the ground floor, stairs and first-floor hallway. The boards are lightly whitewashed so scratches won’t show,” says Kylie. Elsewhere, the bedrooms have soft yet hard-wearing loop-pile carpets and the bathrooms feature terrazzo tiles. Tactile oak-veneer joinery is an organic touch; linen curtains lend softness to the spaces. Staron Solid Surface, a quartz composite, was chosen for the benchtops throughout, specifically because of its ability to be refinished if required.

Kylie and Gil deduced that each family member would need a space to call their own, so the bedrooms have been designed as places of sanctuary. Rosie and Coco weighed in on the decorating schemes for their rooms, while plane-obsessed Ben’s room is the stuff of three-year-old dreams. When in need of respite from family chaos, Suzi can retreat to her serene main bedroom suite, which enjoys picturesque bay views from the balcony.

The home’s nature-inspired palette provides a lovely connection between indoors and out. There’s plenty of warm timber, which is complemented by soft greens, dusty pinks and occasional touches of blue. “Giving the home personality was a key aspect of the project,” says Kylie. “Suzi loves colour, so we introduced pops of vibrant yellow, burgundy and mid blue in the soft furnishings. These colours bring energy and fun to the place.”

Outside, a generous lawn area is large enough for Rosie – a talented competitive diver – to practise her tumbling on an inflatable track. A comfortable day bed by the pool is the perfect spot for Suzi to relax while supervising the kids.

“Suzi is thrilled with her finished home, especially the range of spaces in which to entertain – inside, outside or poolside,” says Kylie. “The family practically live in the new open-plan area. It’s a great spot for sharing a meal, doing homework, playing board games or curling up on the sofa. It’s absolutely the heart of the home.” ▶

Zavie Creative, Banksmeadow, NSW; 1300 160 791 or zaviecreative.com.

COCO’S ROOM *This page* Wallquest ‘L’Atelier de Paris’ wallpaper, Annandale Wallpapers. Otis side table, Life Interiors. Bedlinen, Cultiver. **BEN’S ROOM** *Opposite, top left* For similar bed, try Living Styles. Rug and plane shelf, Etsy. Orbit 1 side table, Life Interiors. Anglepoise lamp, Cult. **FAMILY BATHROOM** *Opposite, top right and bottom left* Staples vanity and Bombo mirrored cabinet, both Loughlin. Brodware ‘Minim’ tapware, Just Bathroomware. Wall hooks, Zakkia. Entrance Satin White feature tiles and matt white wall tiles, all Di Lorenzo Tiles. **MAIN BEDROOM** *Opposite, bottom right* Norah bed and bedside table, Life Interiors. Bedlinen, Cultiver. Clive vase, Country Road.



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KYLIE HICKMAN



The palette

Dulux Snowy Mountains Half (interior, main walls)

Dulux Milky Spearmint (kitchen joinery)

Dulux Green Sea (kitchen island)

“THE SAME BENCHTOP MATERIAL, JOINERY COLOUR AND FEATURE TILES ARE USED INSIDE AND OUT FOR COHESION.” KYLIE HICKMAN

GARDEN Landscaping by LandArt Landscapes. Merbau decking. Swing from Bunnings. **OUTDOOR KITCHEN** Husky wine fridge, Whitfords Home Appliances. Tapware, Abey. Splashback in Sintesi Ceramica ‘Met Arch’ tiles, Premium Tile & Mosaic Outlet. Column clad in Burlesque Brock bricks, Austral Bricks. **POOL AREA** Custom cushions in Tullum Marine (seat), Mallacoota Sunshine (back), Mykonos Coral and Noosa Sunshine, all from Warwick Fabrics.

For Where to Buy, see page 176. H&G



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