

modern VINTAGE

THIS STRIKINGLY REPURPOSED MODERNIST HOME IN MELBOURNE IS A CELEBRATION OF ALL THINGS NATURAL

STORY JACKIE BRYGEL STYLING BECK SIMON
PHOTOGRAPHY RHIANNON SLATER

KEEPING IT REAL With a full-height glass sliding door leading directly to the alfresco area and the garden, the dining room of Megan and husband Sam's Melbourne home – which they share with their two children – is a triumph of clever planning and the use of raw materials. An exposed stone feature wall and recycled wood-panelled ceiling imbue the room with luxurious warmth and texture, while a Feelgood Designs 'T2' oak-topped dining table (try Stylecraft) is teamed with 'Klarkson' dining chairs from Freedom. "The chairs are super-comfy and so easy to clean," says homeowner Megan. Presiding over the table is a 'Tolomeo Suspension Mega' pendant from Artemide and contrasting prints including 'Daybreak' by Ellie Malin from Modern Times (above). >



Something special is taking shape in the garden of Megan and Sam's home in Melbourne's eastern suburbs. Under the shade of a towering Japanese maple tree, a new project is underway – and it has nothing to do with the recently completed renovation of the family's mid-century home.

Sam and the couple's eight-year-old daughter, Hannah, are busy building a house for the fairies, complete with pixie-sized furniture. "Hannah just loves being in the garden and she really enjoys working on this with her dad," says Megan. "When her house is finished, the fairies will be very welcome here!"

In fact, the duo's home extends a warm greeting to all those who visit. Built in the mid-60s and set on a hilltop with lush greenery all around, the thoughtfully extended home is a lesson in the power of natural light and texture. It also pays homage to its modernist origins, with a striking wood-panelled ceiling, sunken living room, stone feature walls and bold colour throughout.

Most of all, this is a luminous house that invites in the sunshine, and its owners, along with Hannah and her 10-year-old brother, Thomas (both pictured opposite), are happy to call it home. "We're very much an outdoorsy family, so we wanted a place that was geared towards the garden and foliage," says Megan. "We also like raw and natural elements such as timber and stone, which bring in warmth."

"BEFORE THE RENOVATION THE HOUSE WAS *liveable* BUT WE WANTED MORE SPACE, TO UPDATE IT AND *open it up* MORE TO THE OUTSIDE" ~ MEGAN

They saw the abode's potential in its previous life. "We loved it when we first looked at it many years ago," says Megan, "but the home itself had only had an extension done in the '70s and a kitchen makeover at some stage, although it had been very well maintained."

Enlisting the help of Steffen Welsch Architects, Megan and Sam compiled their wishlist, which included a family-friendly floor plan, stylish kitchen, new bathrooms and a paved alfresco area. "We wanted to bring the house into the 21st century and reconcile a late modernist design with contemporary expectations to provide a more functional space, and to be respectful to the old," says architect Steffen.

A central living zone now links the children's wing at one end of the house to a tranquil parents' retreat at the other. "The kids can be as noisy as they like in their space, and we have our peace and quiet when we want it," says Megan. Sustainability also matters, with the home featuring new double-glazing and a solar hot water system. "The house used to be very hot in summer, but the new windows have made a huge difference, as have external blinds," she says. "It now keeps cool in summer and stays warm in winter."

There's much for the family to love, not least the fact that their home has been designed just for them. "We haven't renovated it to sell," says Megan. "We've done it to make it *our* house and look forward to enjoying it for a very long time."

STUDY NOOK Almost every centimetre of this carefully considered home has been put to good use. In the central hallway, an alcove has been cleverly converted into a functional study nook (above left), with a built-in desk and drawers. "It's also a great spot to dump everything from schoolbags to bills," says Megan. Bringing colour and beauty to the work area is a landscape painting by English artist Angela Newberry titled 'Sunset At Mary River'.

ILLUSTRATION KENZIEDSIGN.COM



LIVING AREA Light and informal, the sunken living room perfectly illustrates the relaxed design aesthetic Megan and her husband, Sam, prefer. "This is a lovely room to relax in and play board games together," says Megan. The Jordan leather sofa (the designer's 'Alfred' design is similar), bought many years ago, was "a splurge but well worth it", she adds. The room's neutral scheme receives splashes of colour from limited-edition prints – (from left) 'And She Was' by Caroline Walls and 'Dutch Masters' by Elizabeth Barnett from Modern Times – plus a landscape painting by Tasmanian watercolour artist Peter Hiller titled 'Morning, Hawley Beach'. The 'Pirce' aluminium pendant light from Artemide is in keeping with the retro look. >

FLOOR PLAN



RUG
'Monte #36'
Argentinean
sheep's wool rug,
\$1540/290cm
x 200cm, Pampa.

“LIGHTING CAN BE *tricky* TO GET RIGHT
BUT I’M REALLY HAPPY WITH THE *lights*
WE ENDED UP CHOOSING” ~ MEGAN



SPLASHBACK
Get the look with
Highgrove ultra-clear
custom glass in Dulux
Harvest Gold, from
\$449/sqm, Bunnings.



KITCHEN

Grounded by large-format honed basalt tiles from Lapege, the gorgeous new kitchen is as stylish as it is user-friendly (opposite & this page). It features an eye-catching contrast of timber veneer and 2-pac joinery and is a treat for Megan and Sam (pictured top right) to spend time in. The highlight is the island bench (opposite & top), topped in what Megan calls “very tough and durable” recycled hardwood with plenty of storage (top left). “The

island’s heater is part of our hydronic heating system,” says Megan. “It heats part of the kitchen but mostly whoever is sitting at the bench – great for winter breakfasts.” A ‘Talo’ suspension light by Artemide delivers a contemporary sleekness to the casual eating space, while ‘B2’ bar stools from Arranmore Furniture are always in use. Megan also loves the joinery unit between the kitchen and living room (top left & right), saying, “It is such a lovely way to divide the two rooms”. >

ARTWORKS (OPPOSITE, ON SHELF) ‘SALAMANCA PLACE’ BY CAROLYN AUDET, (OPPOSITE, IN BACKGROUND) ‘COAST – FIELDS’ BY CHARLOTTE SWIDEN



“IT’S A VERY *relaxed* TYPE OF HOME AND ONE WE JUST LOVE *returning* TO EVERY DAY” ~ MEGAN

MAIN BEDROOM

What was once an additional living room has now been transformed into a spacious parents’ retreat (top left). Contrasting against a white wall, ‘Tolomeo Parete’ adjustable bedside lamps from Artemide enjoy star billing. The couple found the vintage teak bedside tables at Grandfather’s Axe in Melbourne’s Northcote, and the Bamboka bedlinen and throw are from Southwood. The carpet is Prestige Carpets’ ‘Natural Twist’ in Appaloosa from Don Currie Carpets, while the curtains in ‘Zarina’ fabric in Coal came from Interiors by Riveresque.

LAUNDRY

Laminex cupboards in Juicy form a zesty focal point in the laundry

(left). “I thought I’d go a bit more ‘out there’, hence the lime green cabinetry,” says Megan. “It’s so lovely having a nice, fresh colour.” The room’s Laminex benchtop in Polar White is as durable as it is clean and crisp-looking.

BATHROOM

Another fearless decor decision succeeds in the family bathroom (top right), where yellow 2-pac joinery in Dulux Harvest Gold is a joyful touch. “It’s such a sunny colour,” says Megan. She and Sam sheathed the floor and walls in Leonardo Ceramica ‘Stone Project’ limestone-look porcelain tiles in Brera from Lapege, while a recycled hardwood vanity top lends an earthy vibe.

HERMAN MILLER ‘CROSSHATCH’ CHAIR (TOP LEFT) LIVING EDGE

WE LOVE... *sensational storage*

Innovative solutions abound in this home, and this box constructed in yellow stringybark timber, which doubles as an outdoor bench seat, is no exception. “It’s simple but effective,” says architect Steffen Welsch. “When you’re outside in the backyard, you always need some storage, a place to sit and a place to put a glass, cup or plate when you entertain.” >





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COMFORT ZONE

INSIDE STORY

MEGAN & SAM'S HOME

Who lives here?

Megan, a stay-at-home mum; her husband Sam, a doctor; their children, Thomas, 10, and Hannah, eight (all pictured).

What do you love most about your home?

Megan: "All of the glass, and being able to look out to the garden from so many of the rooms."

How do you like to bring the outdoors in?

"I love to cut off some foliage and display it in a vase, but really the outside is already in because of all the windows. Everywhere you look, you can see the trees."

What's next on the to-do list?

"To work on the garden more. We're about to get together with a landscape designer to talk about what needs to be done. It will be a very native, natural garden when it's completed."



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CONTACTS

Architect

Steffen Welsch Architects,
(03) 9988 9411,
steffenwelsch.com.au.

1. Recycled hardwood panelled ceiling, try Ironwood Australia.
2. Together time with Thomas, Sam, Hannah and Megan.
3. A potted monstera deliciosa adds a pop of colour to Megan and Sam's living room.
4. A collection of ceramics by Amy Leeworthy, Pop & Scott.
5. Custom-made 'Flow' bed with bedhead and full bed upholstered in wool felt in Blazer Knightsbridge, Southwood.
6. 'Black Betty No.1' print by Amelia Anderson, Southwood.
7. Exposed stone wall, try Boral's 'Cultured Stone' cladding.

ACTUAL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION