

Let there be light

Thanks to a considered upgrade, this early 1900s cottage makes the most of its compact lot in sweet, sophisticated style.

STORY *Jackie Brygel* | STYLING *Mikayla Rose*
PHOTOGRAPHY *Martina Gemmola*

THIS IS THE LIFE

While Bridie and Justin's home may be just a quick tram ride to the CBD, a relaxed haven unfolds beyond the front door. "It's incredibly quiet here, but we're also so close to our favourite cafes and lots of buzzing eateries," says Bridie. "The parks are great for our beloved labrador Barkley and will be wonderful places to visit with our baby, Archer, as he grows up. It's the perfect location for our little family."

FRONT ENTRANCE Newly restored and freshly painted in Dulux Natural White, the Edwardian-era worker's cottage looks as good as new. Lysaght Custom Orb roofing in Surfmist. Ash bench, Project 82. Bluestone pavers.



KITCHEN/DINING Conehome Arch pendant light, Laal. The splashback is Elba marble; the floating shelf and kickboard are made from recycled brick. Silestone benchtops in Blanco Zeus Extreme. Icon sink mixer, Astra Walker. Kubus under-mount sinks, Franke. Raft stools by &Tradition. Stove and integrated fridge, Fisher & Paykel. Cabinet hardware, MadeMeasure. Flute wall light, Anchor Ceramics. Banquette upholstered in Pelle Leathers Ascona Caribou. Dining bench storage clad in Laminex Oyster Grey. Custom dining table by Joel Elliot. Seb dining chairs, Jardan. The balustrade is made from powdercoated-steel mesh.



“WE WANTED THE HOUSE TO BE AS LIGHT AND BRIGHT AS IT COULD POSSIBLY BE.”
Bridie, homeowner

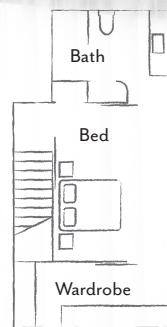
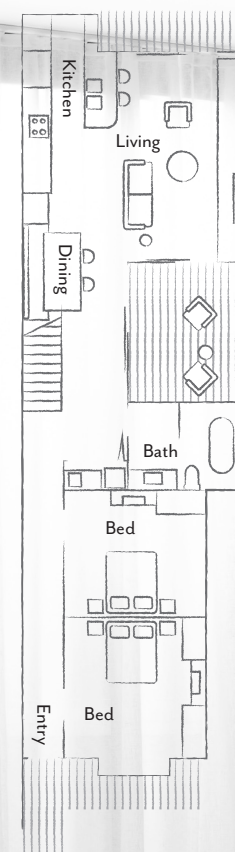


Many renovations turn up the unexpected. But not every journey unveils such a sweet surprise as the one Melbourne homeowners Bridie and Justin uncovered: a magical view of the city skyline and, on clear nights, the moon, from the landing that leads to their new upstairs retreat. “Every time I walk up to our bedroom, I pause on the stairs for a few seconds to take it all in,” says Bridie. “It’s a very special view and a wonderful bonus of the renovation.”

Certainly, though, the couple were confident they were in good hands when they engaged Mikayla Rose, principal designer and director of Heartly, and her team to reimagine their home. “The house, a single-fronted Edwardian brick cottage, sits on a 136-square-metre block in a narrow one-way street surrounded by cobbled laneways,” says Mikayla. “The home had been tidied up, with a lean-to added at some stage, but it was very tired. The walls seemed paper thin and it was very cold – very difficult to live in during winter. Bridie and Justin wanted to substantially renovate and extend the house.”

As well as improving its liveability, Bridie and Justin were keen to stamp their personality on the place. And that they definitely did. “We bought the house in 2014, just after we got married, and started thinking about the renovation a year or so later,” says Bridie. “We knew we ►

THE LAYOUT



First floor

Ground floor



LIVING The glass-walled internal courtyard funnels natural light into the ground-floor living spaces. Artwork by Stuart Cantor. Custom sideboard clad in American oak veneer. Alison lounge chair, Trit House. Zaza sofa, King. Sidney coffee table, Jardan. Rug, Armadillo. Volley chair by Adam Goodrum (in courtyard), Tait. **STAIRWELL** Engineered-timber flooring in Pale Oak, Woodcut.

could give it a new lease on life but really wanted to live in the house and get a good feel for it first.” After the design was finalised in 2019, building works commenced in May 2020 with Bridie, Justin and their rumbunctious labrador, Barkley, moving temporarily into a rental apartment nearby.

Just six months later, the transformation of the couple’s beloved home - one that delivers lashings of natural light and space - was complete. While the heritage rooms facing the street have been carefully restored to reflect the cottage’s architectural past, a luminous two-level addition that wraps around two north-facing courtyards ushers in a beguiling new chapter for the property.

“Bridie and Justin had a strong vision for the interior aesthetic, and we embraced that wholeheartedly,” says Mikayla. “We were very much on the same page, so they felt confident allowing us creative licence to come up with unique ideas within their broad brief. Together with the builder, Jordan Ames of ACS Builders, we really had a dream team working on the project.”

This home now puts every centimetre of this compact block to good use too. But perhaps best of all, this is a home in which comfort comes to the fore, one that adapts efficiently to the ever-changeable Melbourne climate. “The concrete slab of the extension and northern orientation of the windows creates thermal efficiency, which is boosted by double-glazing with ‘thermally broken’ frames,” says Mikayla. “This type of frame is really important for double-glazing as it separates the glass from the surrounding material - often aluminium, which is a ▶

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THE PALETTE

Dulux
Natural White
(throughout)

Haymes Paint
Black Pitch
(front door)

Dulux
Blossom Time



Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.



THE PALETTE OF GREY, WHITE, OAK AND
BLUSH IMBUES THE INTERIORS WITH A
SERENE AND SOPHISTICATED VIBE.

MAIN BEDROOM *Above and right* Bed, Koala. Eggcup stool, Mark Tuckey. Calo pendant light, Klaylife. Everest carpet, Victoria Carpets. **MAIN ENSUITE** *Above right and opposite* Inax 50 wall tiles in Pink, Artedomus. Matt White wall tiles and LEA London Grey floor tiles, Signorino. Custom shelf unit and vanity. The vanity benchtop is Elba marble. Icon basin and shower tapware, Astra Walker. Basin, Studio Bagno. Flute wall light, Anchor Ceramics. Artwork by Annie Everingham. ►



H&G HOUSES

ARCHER'S ROOM Little Lion Cub art print, Olive et Oriel. Muuto 'Around' coffee table, Living Edge. Darling 1.5-seater sofa, James Lane. Cabinet pull, MadeMeasure. Carpet, Victoria Carpets. **MAIN BATHROOM** *Right and below* Inax 'Nuances' mosaic tiles, Artedomus. Matt White wall tiles and LEA London Grey floor tiles, Signorino. Vivid Slimline rail shower and tapware, Phoenix Tapware. Kado 'Lux Petite' freestanding bath, Reece. Good One stool by Alastair Keating, Tait. Custom wall shelf and vanity. Elba marble is used for the vanity benchtop and at the rear of the bottom shelf. Wall hook, Anchor Ceramics.



good conductor of heat and cold. The 'break' ensures there is no thermal transfer between the glass and its frame, and therefore no heat gain or loss."

Throughout, cloud-like Elba marble is teamed with tactile oak, leather and polished concrete, with pretty accents of blush pink for warmth. This scheme imbues the interiors with a serene and sophisticated vibe. "Bridie and Justin love this palette. It works beautifully to create a very calming space," says Mikayla. "My team and I really enjoy working with heritage buildings. The challenge of restoring original details and breathing new life into an old space to create a home for modern living, without losing the character and patina of years gone by. I love the way it's all come together here."

As does Bridie. "We wanted the house to be as light and bright as it possibly could be, and we're just thrilled with the result," she says. "The house, with the concrete floor in the new downstairs living area, is also surprisingly robust and easy to maintain."

With the vision brought to fruition, all that remains is for Bridie, Justin and their new baby Archer to relish their time as a young family in the home. "During the renovation, I went to bed at night dreaming of the finished product and how we would live in the house," says Bridie. "It's even better than I could have imagined. It was definitely worth the wait." *Heartly, Abbotsford, Victoria; 0447 006 449 or heartly.com.au. ACS Builders, Melbourne, Victoria; acsbuilders.com.au.*



THE SOURCE

A compact footprint calls for smart pieces that have strong lines yet still sit lightly.



1 Luxury vinyl flooring in Burnished Concrete, POA, Polyflor. **2** Smeg TSF02WHAU 50s Retro **4-slice toaster**, \$269, Winning Appliances. **3** Full Circle 'Tidy' dish cloths, \$12.95/three, Howards Storage World. **4** Hee lounge chair, \$475, Hay. **5** Inax 'Accordi G' tiles, POA, Artedomus. **6** Woud 'Annular' pendant light, \$699, Southwood. **7** Salt and Sky VIII photographic print by Brooke Holm, from \$1850, Modern Times. **8** Grand Pauline candleholder, \$79, Maison Balzac. **9** Lola James Harper 'The Coffee Shop of JP' candle, \$79, Libertine Parfumerie. **10** SPO1 'Holland' dining table by Metrica, \$7145, Space. **11** Kartell 'Shanghai' vase by Mario Bellini, \$330, Space. **12** Tash, Curved and Comb (from left) decorative bricks by Austral Bricks, POA, Brickworks. **13** Cesello wall-mounted tap set, from \$1850, Abey. **14** Alta stool, \$290, MCM House. **15** LSA International vessel (35cm), \$400, Amara. *For Where to Buy, see page 200. H&G*