

OLD IS NEW AGAIN

In Melbourne, a Federation home with a colourful past has been transformed into an ideal base for its owners, a family of seven.

STORY *John McDonald* | STYLING *Julia Green* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Armelle Habib*

FAMILY ROOM This room is a much-loved TV/games space for the children (from left) Olivia, 19, Ben, 17, Mitchell, 12, Imogen, 13, and Max, 14. They are pictured with the family's Finnish lapphund Arlo (left) and samoyed Ishka. Side table, sofa, games table and chairs, all Christian Lyon Design. Vintage Papa Bear armchair by Hans Wegner. Singita sculptures, Boyd Blue. Jetmaster fireplace with Super White Dolomite fire surround.

Old houses often have colourful histories. This 1905 home in south-east Melbourne – now the home of a family of seven – is a case in point. “It was built on a much larger block, but the lot was subdivided in 1964,” says homeowner Nicole. “Conversely, the house was much smaller than it is now.”

During World War II, the house was used as a private hospital, then converted into flats in 1947 and a boarding house in 1958. The home was restored to a residential property in the early 1980s. By the time Nicole and her husband Ross bought the house in 2017, it had been renovated a number of times and the original Federation home had grown to include a billiards/entertainment room, family room and fifth bedroom. “One of

the driving factors behind our purchase was the fact the layout was essentially pretty good,” says Nicole. They did, however, want to open up the kitchen and family area, plus add an extra bedroom to accommodate their five teenage children – Olivia, 19, Ben, 17, Max, 14, Imogen, 13, and 12-year-old Mitchell. The home was in need of a cosmetic update too. “We wanted to make the interiors feel lighter and brighter too,” adds Nicole.

The couple called on James Buddle from Kate Walker Design to refresh the bathrooms and kitchen, and to rejuvenate the interior decor – from fresh paint to new furniture that was in harmony with their existing pieces. The brief was for a warm, inviting, family-friendly and practical house that was still beautiful to look at. “A modern take on a period house,” says Nicole. ▶



THIS IS THE LIFE
 Christmas Day starts very early for this family, says Nicole. “It begins with exchanging gifts, which is followed by a breakfast feast. After a day of swimming and walking the dogs, we have an early dinner – always a very traditional affair with extended family. The menu includes pork, turkey, ham, Christmas pudding and an enormous pavlova. Accompanied by Champagne and beautiful wines, of course!”

ENTRY HALL Ralph Lauren ‘Marin Weave’ grasscloth wallpaper in Hyannis Blue (available from Radford) is a fine canvas for the furniture, including a vintage Italian table from Nicholas & Alistair. Mirror and console by Pier Luigi Colli. **FAMILY ROOM** The original timber panelling was painted off-white to make the room feel lighter and more spacious. Rug, Robyn Cosgrove. Artwork by unknown artist. **KITCHEN** The striking blue on the island bench prevents the room feeling straitlaced. Super White Dolomite benchtops, splashback and rangehood surround. Stools, Classic With A Twist. Modo pendant light, Space. **DINING** A rug by Robyn Cosgrove was cut to fit the space. Dining table, Poliform. Dining chairs, Space. Artwork by Belinda Fox, Arthouse Gallery.

The palette

Dulux Snowy Mountains Half (interior, main walls)

Dulux Trespass (kitchen island)

Ralph Lauren 'Marin Weave' wallpaper (entry hall)

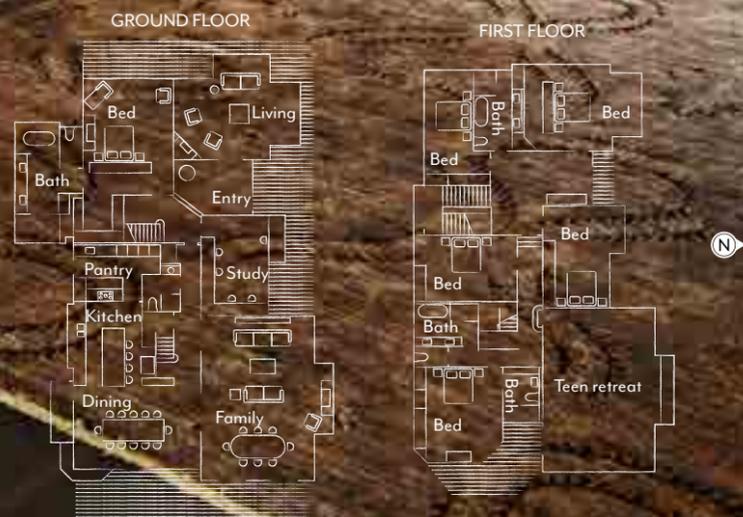
Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.

LIVING The rich tapestry of materials – marble, timber, striking wallpapers and luxe fabrics – is fully expressed in this beautiful room. Custom armchairs with Voyage Decoration velvet upholstery, available from Elliott Clarke. Ralph Lauren 'Marlowe Floral' wallpaper in Porcelain, Radford. Mirror, Carrara marble coffee table and sofa by Australian interior designer David Hicks. Afghan Mahli Fine rug, Cadrys. Wall sculpture by Curtis Jeré. ▶

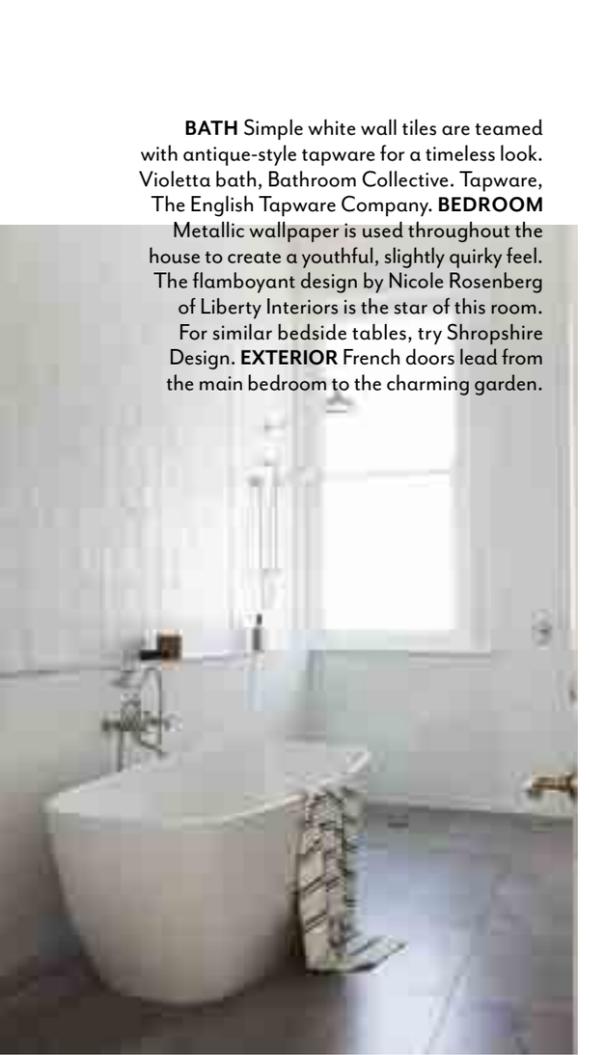


MAIN BEDROOM Above and opposite D'Arts 'Zen-Plum' wallpaper from Elliott Clarke makes for a glamorous backdrop. The Grigio Carnico marble fire surround is original. Afghan Kandahar rug, Cadrys. The antique chaise was reupholstered to tie in with the wallpaper. Vintage chandelier. The Chinoiserie cabinet is antique. **STAIRS** The custom-designed striped runner is a 21st-century touch. The mahogany balustrade is original. **MAIN ENSUITE** Even this small room gets a garden view. Roll & Hill 'Modo' sconce, Space. Tundra Grey limestone flooring and vanity top, CDK Stone. The walls have a tadelakt (polished plaster) finish. Victoria & Albert 'Amiata' bath, The English Tapware Company. ▶

The layout



BATH Simple white wall tiles are teamed with antique-style tapware for a timeless look. Violetta bath, Bathroom Collective. Tapware, The English Tapware Company. **BEDROOM** Metallic wallpaper is used throughout the house to create a youthful, slightly quirky feel. The flamboyant design by Nicole Rosenberg of Liberty Interiors is the star of this room. For similar bedside tables, try Shropshire Design. **EXTERIOR** French doors lead from the main bedroom to the charming garden.



James and his team took charge of the project in 2017 and the family moved in just under 12 months later. On the ground floor, the original front door opens to an entry foyer with the living room immediately to the right and a dramatic vestibule for the stairs. The main bedroom suite, family-size study and open-plan entertainer's kitchen/casual dining zone are accessed from the vestibule. A family room is accessed via french doors from the kitchen/dining area. The first floor accommodates five additional bedrooms - one for each child - plus three bathrooms and a teen retreat.

All fixtures and fittings were replaced, right down to the door hinges, and vintage-style tapware installed to create the decor that references the period of the house without being a slave to style. Everything is designed with comfort in mind. Nicole is a big fan of the laundry chute, which, for structural reasons, delivers dirty clothes to the pantry. "I was grateful to at least get it to the ground floor," she says, laughing.

Today, the whole family enjoys every second in their renovated home. "I can honestly say this is my dream home. I just love every single element of it," says Nicole.

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