

HOLIDAY AT HOME

A dark, poky dwelling is renovated to create a breezy, beachy house where it feels like you're on vacation every day

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The living and outdoor areas have a smooth flow, while the palette of whites is punctuated with Melissa's art collection.



Designed for Melissa Bonney, director of The Designory, this light and bright home was a full renovation from the front door through to the sparkling new pool in the backyard, and everything in between.

With a run-down two-storey house already on the site, the challenge was to turn the building into a high-end home in a beach-side suburb of Sydney.

Led by Melissa, the design team redefined new zones for both downstairs and upstairs. This was done to create a haven with a focus on bespoke joinery and natural materials and finishes.

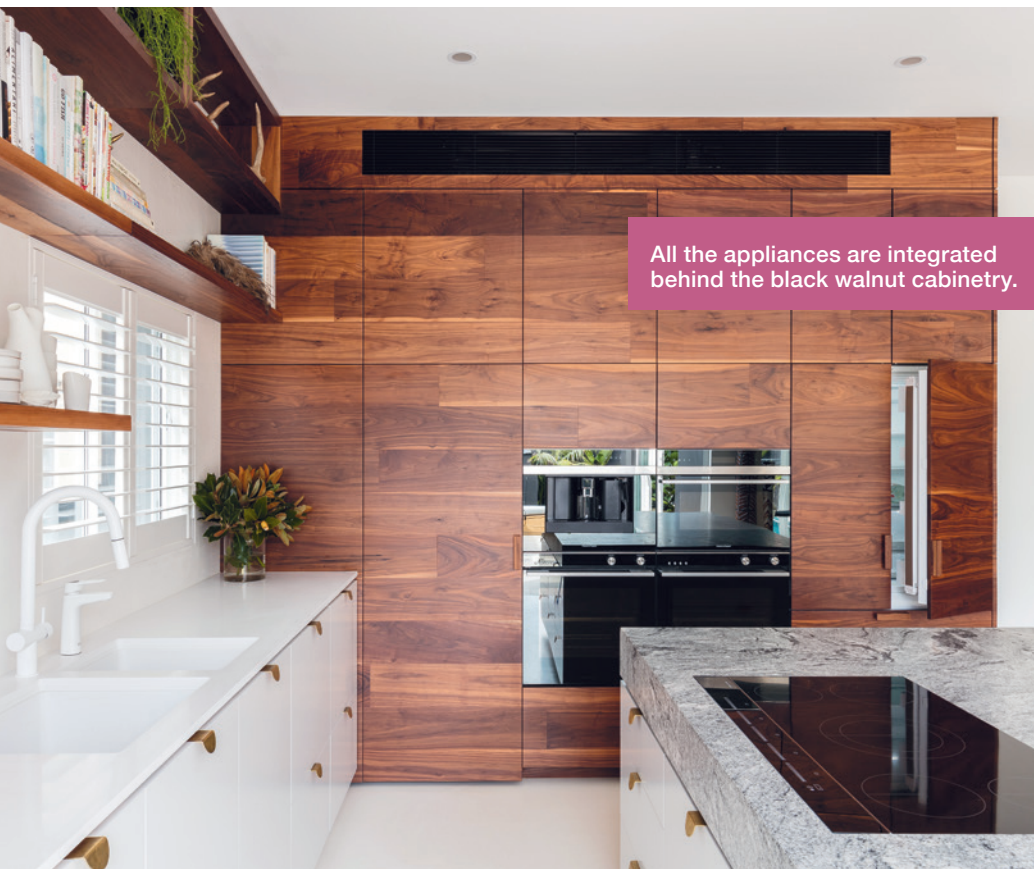
'The property was a rabbit warren of small, dark rooms. The addition of doors, windows and skylights allowed us to gain natural light and connect to the outdoors,' says Melissa.

Upstairs, six small bedrooms would become five well-designed spaces, including the master suite, two bathrooms and an ensuite. ▶





A granite island benchtop was custom-built for the home. Darker hues punctuate the light space.



All the appliances are integrated behind the black walnut cabinetry.

Setting the scene

With a view to the pool and outdoor entertaining area, the living room features a striking suspended fireplace, giving the space a focal point.

The walls are finished with a stucco render, creating a textured, icy-smooth and glossy finish. The new windows, skylights and sliding doors now allow plenty of natural light to come in, making the finish really stand out.

As the house was originally designed to feature a palette of fresh whites set against a range of greys, Melissa wanted to bring a fresh element to the kitchen.

‘The kitchen sets a tone for a home, so we brought the warm tones of walnut and brass in there, then throughout the home,’ says Melissa.

‘The wall of American black walnut was created by hand by our joiner, who followed the wood grain against all the cabinet fronts to create a seamless look.’

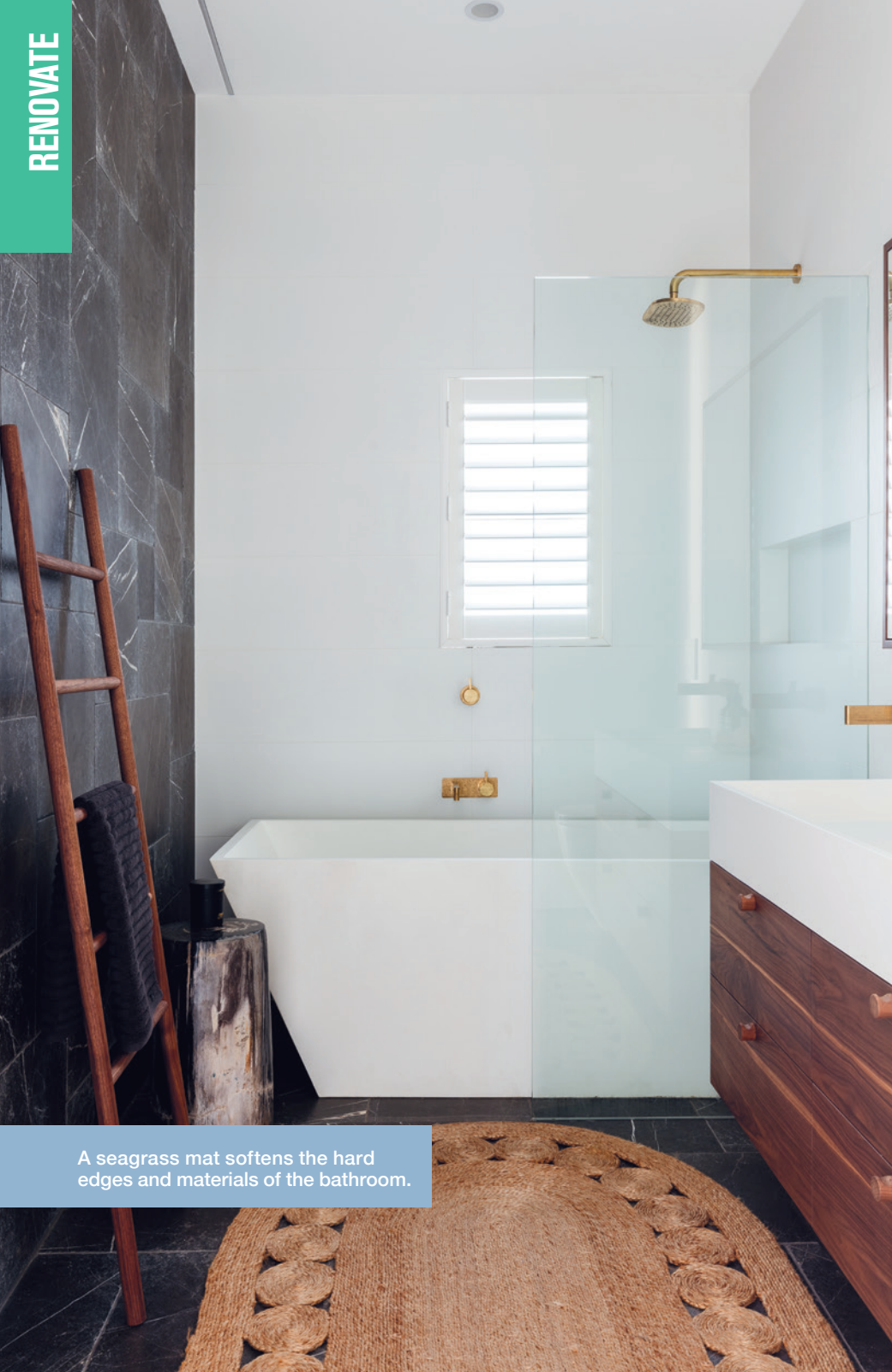
Here, and in the living and dining areas, the full effect of the white epoxy resin flooring is apparent, adding shine, texture and a feel of easy luxury. ►



A dining table off the kitchen makes for easy family living.



The TV is tucked around a corner in the open-plan space to define the different zones.



A seagrass mat softens the hard edges and materials of the bathroom.

Unified bathrooms

A selection of tumbled brass hardware was installed in the bathrooms, adding some texture. Over time, the brass fittings will change patina, adding a softer touch to the bathroom spaces.

‘The bathroom designs all used the same tiles and fixtures, so they all had symbiosis,’ says Melissa.

‘We chose a tumbled limestone laid in a French pattern on the floor and up the wall, with the surrounding space tiled in a simple white tile to carry light and create contrast.’

The custom-made vanities feature a rich walnut, which include generous storage drawers for bathroom linen and a range of cosmetics. ►



KEEPING GROUT CLEAN

- Minimising grout lines and keeping them clean over the years should always be taken into consideration in any bathroom.

Good design, and in particular when simplicity is a key component, relies on clean lines, both literally and aesthetically.

- Large-format tiles require fewer grout lines, but there are also new products on the market that are designed to tackle this issue.

- Coloured grouts can be tinted to match the tile and advances in fabrication mean some products are stain-resistant.



The vertical-striped wallpaper defines this cosy boy's room.



Practical and simple design solutions tailored to each child will always work well.



Bespoke bedrooms

Upstairs is all about calm, and the bedrooms are beautifully finished with bespoke joinery, luxurious wool carpet and clever design features such as built-in desks and mini walk-in robes.

‘Storage is extremely important for any home. Having well-designed built-in wardrobes that have the capacity to store everything allows for the space to feel uncluttered,’ says Melissa.

‘Children’s rooms, however, need various storage solutions. We used Muuto boxes under the window to create a kid-friendly-height bookcase. An oversized basket also helps to store toys, allowing for easy play but making cleaning up a breeze.’

For their youngest boy, Melissa chose a Shibori Stripe wallpaper from Milton & King, to help create the illusion of the room having higher ceilings.

‘It’s a strong backdrop, one that will grow with him,’ says Melissa. ▶

A much-loved artwork sets the tone for the soft furnishings.



Blush pink complements the various shades of grey.



Tranquil tones

The master suite located upstairs has a stunning curved battened wall.

‘We wanted to make curves a feature, to bring a softness to the box-like quality of the existing house,’ says Melissa.

‘Not only does it add a beautiful design detail, but it also helps to soften some spaces and divide rooms, while not closing them in.’

The generous bedroom also has a full ensuite bathroom and a balcony.

Soft and tranquil colour palettes are an important factor in the success of a bedroom, and Melissa says it can be

a major task. But taking the time to test colours out, even if only with subtle differences, will pay off in the end.

‘Needless to say, you need to double, and sometimes triple-check your colours before you decide which is the best choice for you and your space. We spent plenty of time painting patches in different areas and in changing light,’ says Melissa.

Final decisions about your interior palette should always be made while considering other aesthetic elements such as the carpets, rugs, joinery and surface materials. ►



A well-considered master bedroom is a must in a family home, as it’s somewhere for the adults to retreat and recharge



Natural light and outdoor palms add contrast and calm.



A concealed study is kept clutter free thanks to custom-designed joinery.



The rumpus room is comfortable and stylish.

Design distinctions

The front of the property has been reconfigured to create a distinct entry point. Another element was to design clever joinery hidden behind a curved wall, allowing for a discrete home office to be tucked away behind it.

An expansive rumpus-cum-media room has also been designed to work as an ideal second living area.

‘When you have children of different ages and with differing requirements, a second living or casual space to watch TV or play games, or simply hang out, is crucial,’ says Melissa.

‘It works for everyone and it can also be a great use of an area with less than ideal light, for instance.’

With the creation of a new laundry, linen and storage area, tucked in under the stair cavity, a previously unused space is made the most of.



A fire pit is a great way to bring everyone together.



Customised elements make each space better suited to meet all the family's needs

The home's outdoor areas are all geared towards providing the best function and appeal, such as an outdoor shower and seating nook at the front.

'We built this as the dream house for our family. We really got it right with this house, for us,' says Melissa.

'It was fully customised at every step so that our time within any space felt calm, organised and relaxed.

'That's what it's all about - creating a seamless space that resonates with all the people living there.' ❖

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