

SUMMER DAZE

Byron Bay meets the Mediterranean in this beachside holiday home, where a swift disconnect from the daily grind is assured.

STORY *Georgia Madden* | STYLING *Melissa Bonney & Margo Reed*
PHOTOGRAPHY *Jessie Prince/The Quarter Acre*



LIVING/KITCHEN Vintage leather sofa, Collective Haus. Escea gas fireplace. Wall finished in Micro Cement in Titane by Impressionist. Della limited-edition art print by Jai Vasicek. Pendant light, Emac & Lawton. Splashback tiles, Earp Bros. Benchtops in Caesarstone Cloudburst Concrete. Tula bar stools, The Design Hunter.



KITCHEN Rounded edges and textured surfaces contribute to the home's relaxed feel. Bejmat tiles on kitchen island and splashback from Earp Bros. Caesarstone benchtops in Cloudburst Concrete. Oven and cooktop, Fisher & Paykel. Ayla artwork by Kathy Brauer, Bisque Traders.

Samudra - the Sanskrit word for ocean - is the sort of accommodation that you close your eyes and hope for when you click 'confirm' on a holiday booking. Blending Australian and Mediterranean influences with textured, rendered walls, oversized windows that draw the outside in, and cosy, low-slung seating that speaks of long, lazy afternoons, the four-bedroom, four-bathroom property is one of three in a row designed and decorated by Melissa Bonney, director of The Designory, as part of the firm's Vela Properties project. Situated in Byron Bay's 'golden grid', just steps from the beach and cafes, all three houses are used as holiday accommodation - one for Melissa; Samudra for her business partner Tim Mundy and his extended family; and a third that is exclusively a rental.

"The sprawling house that stood here was built by the previous owners 40 years ago. At the same time, they planted the most incredible garden, with huge palm trees and more than 100 gingers and heliconias," says Melissa. "When it came time to sell, the owners were less concerned about what we wanted to do with the house than our plans for the garden, which I understood completely. Tim and I shared a cup of tea with them on their balcony beneath this enormous old gum tree, and he grabbed my arm and said, 'I want my house to be the one under the gum tree'. He'd already fallen in love. Later, when the time came to design Samudra for him, that gum tree became the key focus, with the windows of all the main rooms looking out towards it."

Apart from the garden focus, Melissa's design concept came from further afield. "I'd seen beautiful images of a house in Tuscany with a white rendered pool that rises up out of the ground, which inspired the design of the pool and outdoor seating here," she says. "That white-rendered finish continues indoors to the bench seat in the dining room, the fireplace in the living room and even the bathrooms, layered with ochre and terracotta tones to capture that Mediterranean vibe.

"Repeating the same materials, textures and tones from front to back and right through the interior makes the space read quite seamlessly, which adds to its calming feel," she adds.

A curvy kitchen island clad in sandy-toned Moroccan Bejmat tiles paired with a Caesarstone Cloudburst Concrete benchtop creates an inviting spot to cook, chat and share a glass of wine. Or, when the nights turn chilly, there's a gas fireplace with its slow 'lazy flame' to gather around. Easy-care burnished-concrete floors make it clear that in this house, bare feet are always welcome, even straight from the beach.

The home is decorated with a laidback mix of old and new elements. "I'm a big believer that pieces with history add to the charm of a home," says Melissa. "We sourced some beautiful vintage furniture, including a leather sofa in the living area and

a lovely old chair in the main bedroom that I'd actually had for a few years - I'm a bit of a chair collector. The dining table came from a friend of Tim's who had recently sold his house, and we added some simple dining chairs with removable covers that you can just throw in the wash when they get dirty."

Artworks by local artists in the same rich, earthy tones as the rest of the home - including a pair of prints by local artist Jai Vasicek either side of the fireplace - add to the sense of place. "I wanted to make this a space where people could really

switch off and relax," says Melissa. "We're all so busy and connected to our devices these days, I like the idea that you can come here, step back and actually breathe."

Even though it's a holiday house, Melissa designed every element as though she would be using it herself, from the flow of the floor plan to the location of the storage. "I wanted to make things as easy as possible so that even if you just arrive with a bag of clothes, you'd have everything you'd possibly need," she says. "Want to bake a birthday cake or host Christmas Day for 20 people? No problem."

Melissa's hard work and attention to detail has clearly paid off, with Samudra the perfect holiday base for Tim and his family, along with the other lucky guests who stay here. "The feedback has been great," Melissa says. "Guests tell me it feels like the house wraps its arms around you. They never want to leave!" ▶

The Designory, Byron Bay, NSW; the-designory.com.au. This property is available to rent as holiday accommodation; to book, go to byronbayaccom.net.

"I like the idea that you can come here, step back and just breathe."

MELISSA BONNEY,
INTERIOR DESIGNER

THIS IS THE LIFE

For homeowner Tim, Samudra is the ultimate summer house. "It's bathed in sun all day, you can jump in and out of the pool, have a barbecue on the deck and let the kids run around in the park next door." It's also great for entertaining: "I love having family and friends over – the local seafood is great and I've taken to cooking whole fish. It looks impressive but it's really easy."

"I'm a big believer that pieces with history add to the charm of a home." MELISSA BONNEY

LIVING Furniture was chosen with comfort and relaxation in mind. Vintage leather sofa, Collective Haus. Armchairs, El Badi. Moroccan cactus silk cushions, Bazaar Homewares. Custom cane armchairs, Byron Upholstery. Uniqwa 'Kaya Luxe' coffee table, 'Kulula' outdoor table and 'Tula' outdoor chairs, The Design Hunter. Luxury Mirit rug, Benisouk. Motorised S-Wave sheer curtains, Luxaflex Window Fashions. ▶

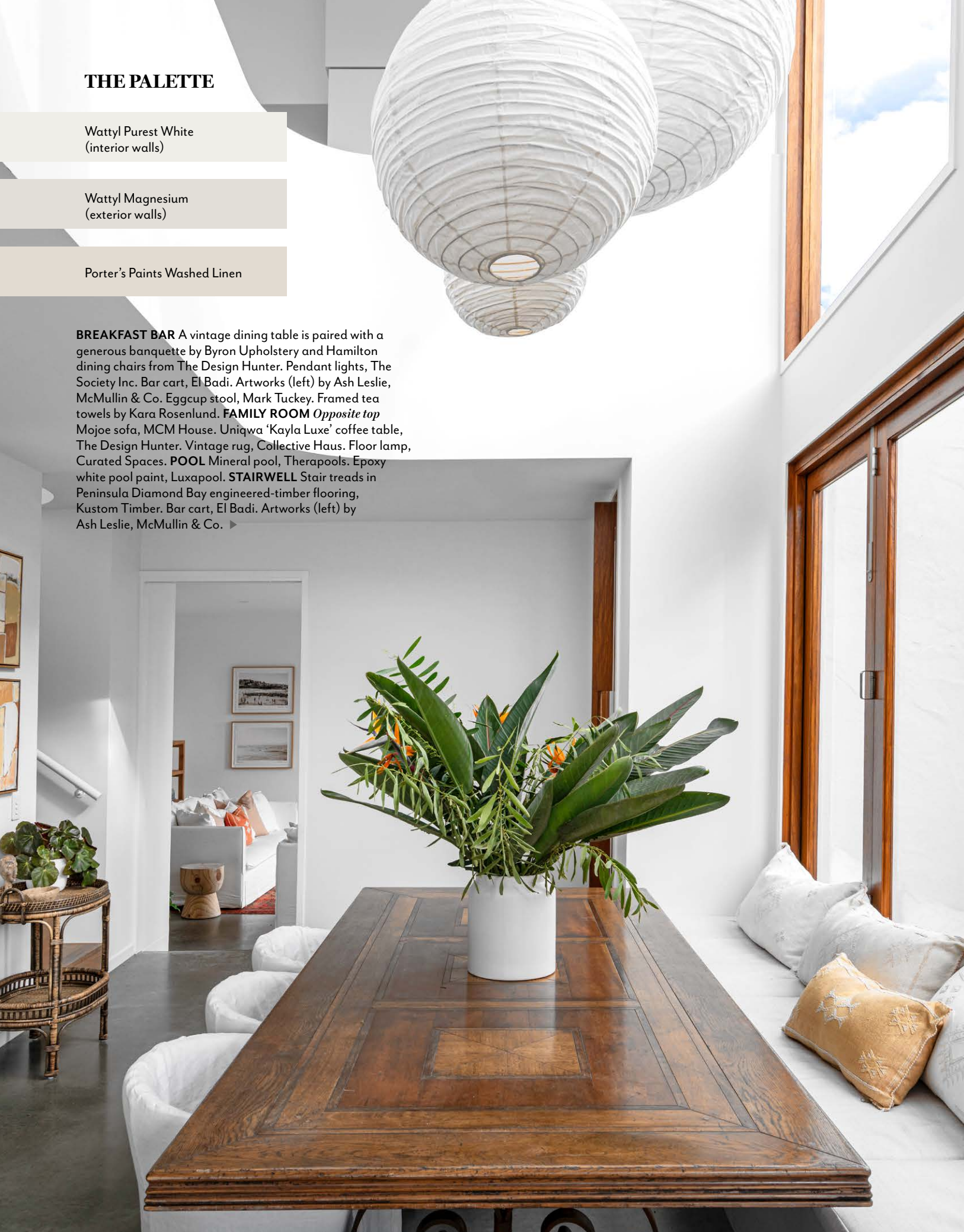
THE PALETTE

Wattyl Purest White
(interior walls)

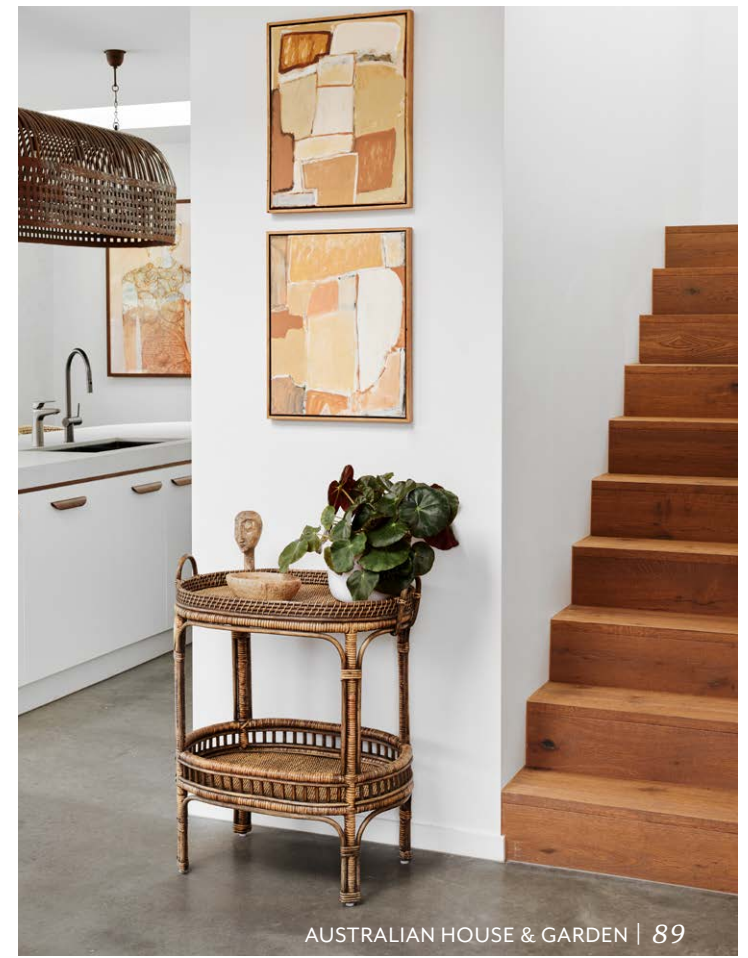
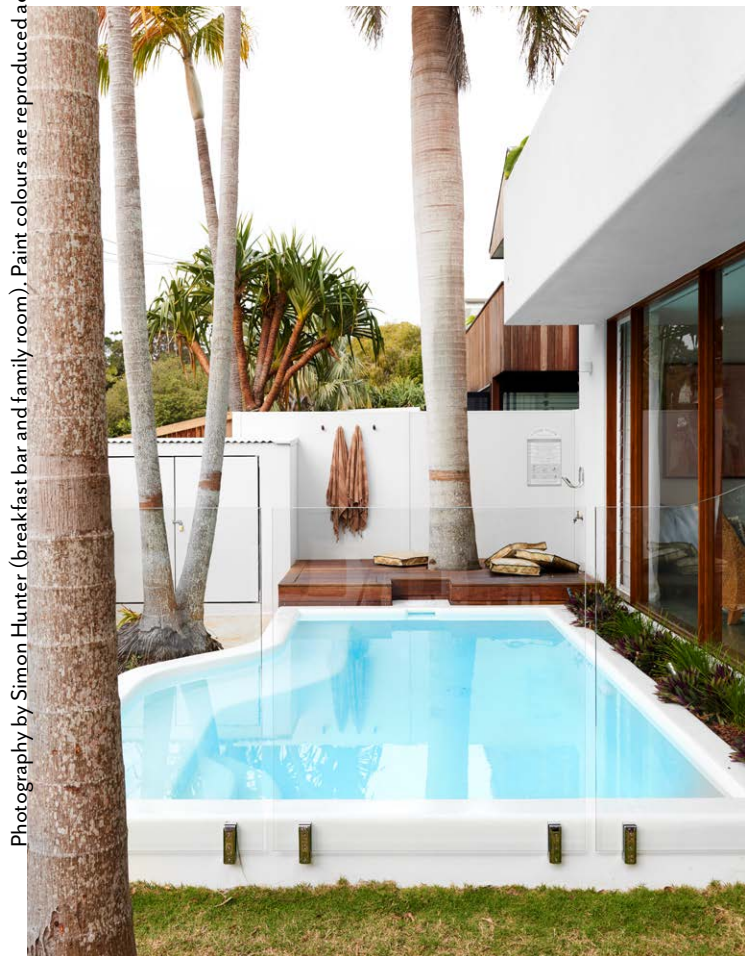
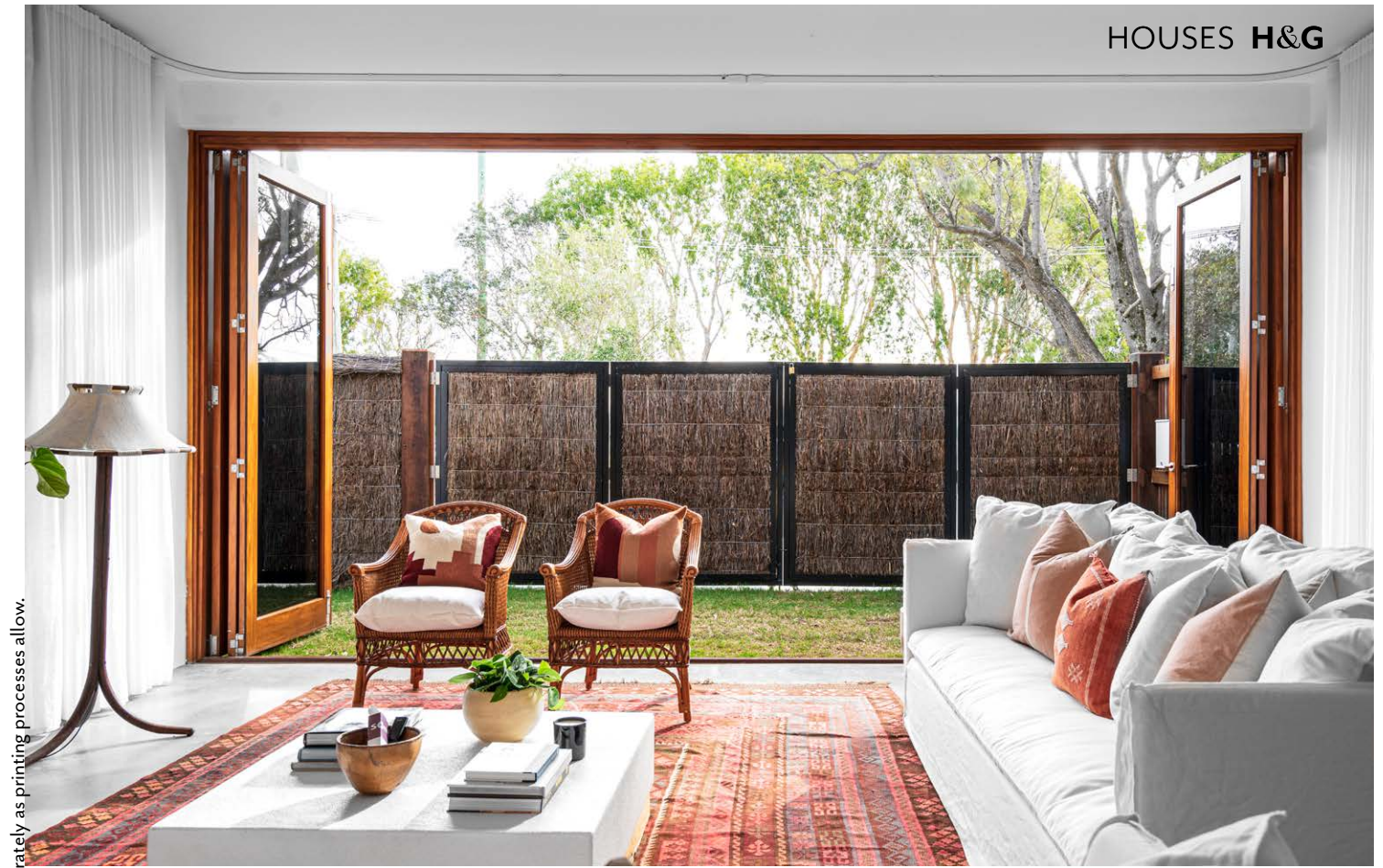
Wattyl Magnesium
(exterior walls)

Porter's Paints Washed Linen

BREAKFAST BAR A vintage dining table is paired with a generous banquette by Byron Upholstery and Hamilton dining chairs from The Design Hunter. Pendant lights, The Society Inc. Bar cart, El Badi. Artworks (left) by Ash Leslie, McMullin & Co. Eggcup stool, Mark Tuckey. Framed tea towels by Kara Rosenlund. **FAMILY ROOM** Opposite top Mojoe sofa, MCM House. Uniqwa 'Kayla Luxe' coffee table, The Design Hunter. Vintage rug, Collective Haus. Floor lamp, Curated Spaces. **POOL** Mineral pool, Therapools. Epoxy white pool paint, Luxapool. **STAIRWELL** Stair treads in Peninsula Diamond Bay engineered-timber flooring, Kustom Timber. Bar cart, El Badi. Artworks (left) by Ash Leslie, McMullin & Co. ▶

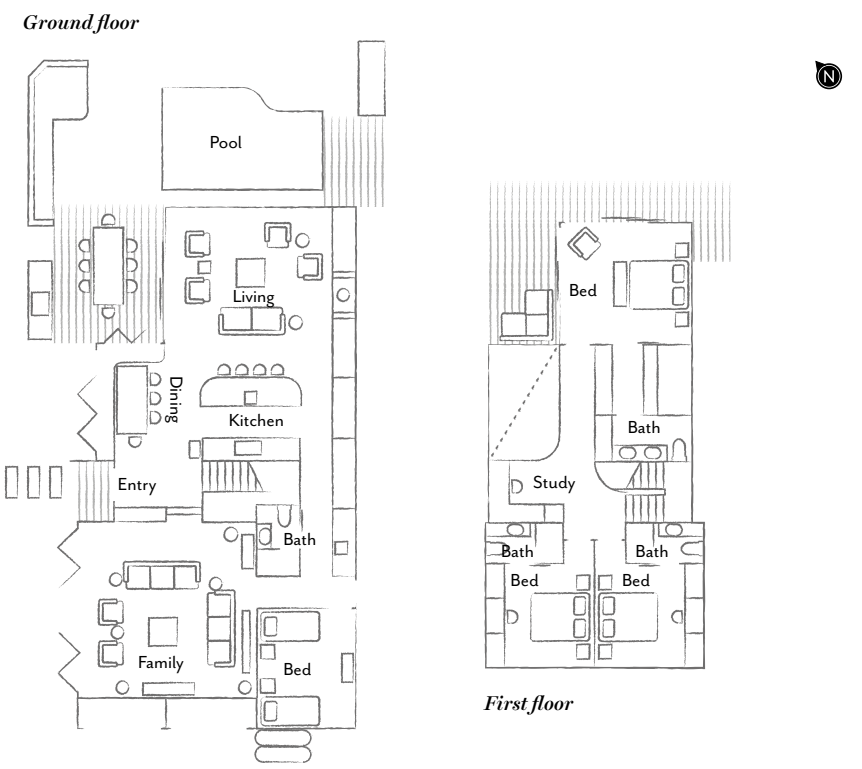


Photography by Simon Hunter (breakfast bar and family room). Paint colours are reproduced accurately as printing processes allow.





THE LAYOUT



MAIN BEDROOM *Above* Starry Night wallpaper, The Papered Room. Fossil bedside tables, El Badi. Slope bed, GlobeWest. Frank bench seat, McMullin & Co. Vintage leather easy chair. Vintage telescope, Luther & Co. *Wild Woan* artwork by Ben Raynar, Hunter & Folk. **SECOND BEDROOM** *Opposite top left* Elio bed, MCM House. Baskets on wall, Africanologie. Kangaroos II art print, Pampa. Leo table lamp, McMullin & Co. **MAIN ENSUITE** *Opposite top right and bottom left* Bejmat wall tiles in Sand and Old Stone limestone floor tiles, Earp Bros. Terra basin in Stone Raw, Concrete Nation. Vela tapware, Abey. Rattan pendant light, The Design Hunter. **STUDY** *Opposite bottom right* Rug, Pampa. Uniqwa 'Guatemala' chair, The Design Hunter. Raffia lamp, Byron Bay Hanging Chairs. Artwork by Em McLeod. ▶

Photograph by Simon Hunter (main bedroom).





FACADE The existing gardens were what drew Tim to the home in the first place, and landscaper Living4Landscapes was tasked with retaining and enhancing that leafy view. Textured render in Watty! Magnesium. Spotted gum cladding. Colorband roof in Surfmist.



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THE SOURCE

Turn to woven elements and raw textures in beachy tones for a look that nails 'laidback luxe'.

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Produced by Nina Dorn.

1 Habitat 'Nairobi' wall art, \$19.95, Pillow Talk. 2 Dust Storm Abstract wall art, \$4695, Coco Republic. 3 Isa rattan bar stool, \$2071/pair, Urban Road. 4 Saucer Bubble pendant light by George Nelson, \$750, Living Edge. 5 Tierra Petite stone side table, \$590, En Gold. 6 Watering can in White/Beige, \$49.95, The Crosswalk. 7 Chaya travertine tray, \$225, Coco Republic. 8 Dion table lamp in Natural, \$189.95, Provincial Home Living. 9 Arflex 'Naviglio' sofa by Umberto Asnago, POA, Space. 10 Haiku Camel tiles (600x600mm), \$74.95/m², Harvey Norman. For Where to Buy, see page 188. H&G