



into

the

woods

photography alicia taylor styling kimberly amos

Play it cool The exterior of River Hawk Ranch has been painted with Resene CoolColour Double Cod Grey, chosen for its heat-reflecting and cooling properties. **Natural affinity** "We've really connected with this land and river," says homeowner Kimberly Amos, pictured with her faithful four-legged companion Chief (opposite). →



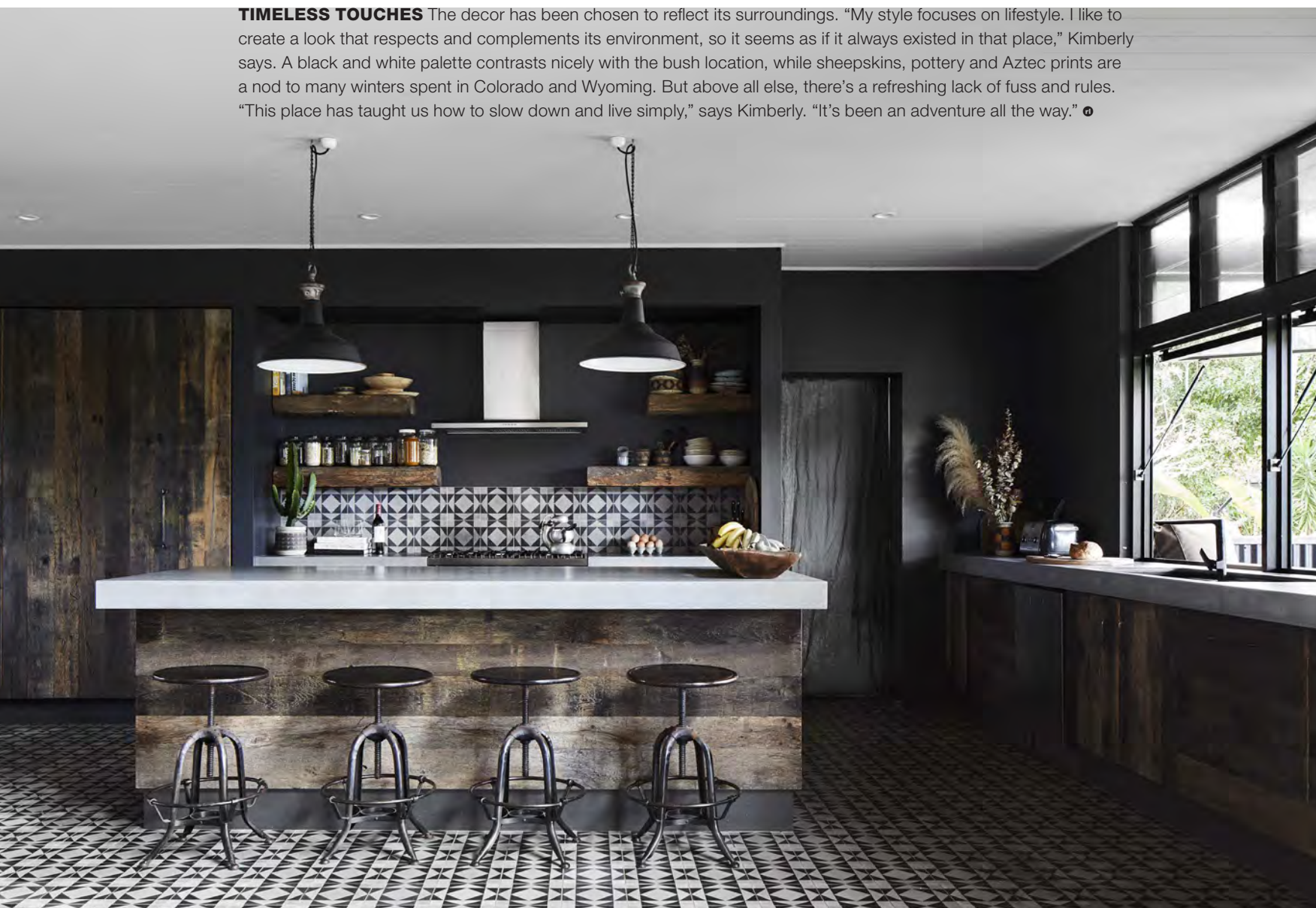
An old working shed is now a boisterous family home, where days are filled exploring nature's playground and evenings are spent around the campfire

IF YOU ASKED A TEENAGED BOY to design his dream house, it would probably look a lot like River Hawk Ranch. Stephen Eakin and Kimberly Amos purchased the 60-acre property in 2015 with the idea of giving themselves and their three sons Noa, 19, Hunter, 18, and Arlo, 14, space to breathe, explore and make lots of mess, noise and memories. Its position on the Brunswick River overlooking Byron Bay provides ample opportunities for canoeing, swimming, fishing and chatting around the campfire, while family dinners and movie nights are a regular occurrence up at the homestead. "Here we've created a robust boys' barn," says Kimberly. "Filthy footprints and muddy paws are welcome; it's a home to be enjoyed."

BARN RAISING The majestic farmhouse that we see today didn't always look this way. "The shell of a shed existed; we built a home inside," Kimberly tells. Downstairs is a big barn-style kitchen and dining zone, fireplace and lounge room, while a mezzanine library and bedrooms reside upstairs. Reclaimed materials are a feature, from timber floors sourced from a Dutch barn to weathered fence palings used to build desks and benchtops, while walls are painted Murobond 'Jet' by Mr Jason Grant to disguise marks, and the concrete and tile floors are hard-wearing – perfect for three rowdy boys.

TIMELESS TOUCHES The decor has been chosen to reflect its surroundings. "My style focuses on lifestyle. I like to create a look that respects and complements its environment, so it seems as if it always existed in that place," Kimberly says. A black and white palette contrasts nicely with the bush location, while sheepskins, pottery and Aztec prints are a nod to many winters spent in Colorado and Wyoming. But above all else, there's a refreshing lack of fuss and rules.

"This place has taught us how to slow down and live simply," says Kimberly. "It's been an adventure all the way." 🍷



Wheels in motion The spacious dining area holds a table and chairs from HK Living, with two oversized pendants from Bali hanging overhead. Kimberly's brief from the boys: "Can we skateboard around the table without crashing into anything valuable?" **Built to last** "All the surfaces are robust and dark in colour," she says of the kitchen (opposite), with its timber cabinetry and kitchen island made from leftover flooring boards and shelving constructed out of old railway sleepers.

text stephanie hope

who lives here?

Stephen Eakin and Kimberly Amos, owners of boutique hotel The Atlantic Byron Bay, their three boys Noa, 19, Hunter, 18, and Arlo, 14, and Chief the Bernese Mountain Dog.
@atlanticbyronbay; @riverhawkbranch →



Master the art The barn's entrance wall features a changing display of artworks – this one and the smaller piece to the left are by Emma Gale. Also on the wall are a collection of Kachina dolls from New Mexico and Arizona. Two French chairs from Fossil Vintage flank a tree stump made from a camphor tree felled on the property. **Old flavour** Kimberly and Stephen kept the original concrete floors downstairs, using tiles from Jatana to delineate the kitchen space. Local bridge timbers have been used as support beams throughout.

how to replicate the ranch look

- 1 Opt for a simple floor plan with lots of open space left around furniture items. High ceilings and exposed beams and rafters create a lofty, barn-like feel.
- 2 Incorporate some industrial elements to continue the raw and rustic theme. Try steel or iron light fittings, concrete floors and timber or brick accents.
- 3 Layer traditionally “country” items like a sheepskin rug, tree-stump tables or barn doors against a modern colour scheme or sleek finishes.
- 4 Add international flavour in the form of Moroccan rugs, Balinese pendants, tribal masks, Aztec-print cushions, potted cacti and Texan boots. →



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Driving force A friend's old Moke is parked out front. "The boys take it surfing and paddock bashing down by the river," Kimberly says. **Alfresco dining** "We eat outside eight months of the year," she adds. The deck's handmade daybed, Fossil Vintage table, sheepskin rug and Society Inc lighting assists in this. **Chop chop** A stack of wood feeds the Lopi Liberty fireplace inside. **Volume control** This quiet reading area overlooking the pool is made cosy thanks to a Pampa rug and cushions. **Creative space** On-site workshop The Makery is used to host artist retreats. "Everything in this cabin was reclaimed from previous builds or found on the property," says Kimberly. **Hang it** Vintage nautical buoys dangle from a paperbark tree.



Shelf life Railway sleepers from Bangalow act as shelves in the kitchen, and hold ceramic pieces from Nikau Store and General Store. Jatana tiles form the eye-catching splashback.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Home among the gumtrees A campsite has been set up by the river, where the family enjoy meals and each other's company. Art classes also take place here. **View from the top** Stephen and Kimberly (and Chief!) are pictured on the mezzanine. **Lesson learnt** The merbau pool deck was a recent addition. "We thought it would be lovely to roll out of the pool onto grass, so for a year we swam in grass clippings and got bitten by green ants until we finally decided to deck the entire area," Kimberly recalls with a laugh. **Eternal flames** Winters are spent fireside. Here, Arlo and Hunter toast marshmallows on sticks designed for the ranch by Sibella Court. ->



Idyllic lifestyle "We spend most early evenings outside by the pool or around the Bunnings firepit," says Kimberly, pictured with her eldest son Noa. The butterfly chairs move around the property to adjust to the seasons.



Cabin fever Kimberly's dad and Noa built this cabin using mostly reclaimed materials. A House of Orange bed is dressed with Major Minor bedlinen, with a Moroccan rug warming the concrete floors. Barn doors leading to the ensuite tie in with the rustic location. →



Black zone The bathroom, with its Jatana floor tiles, Slabshapers sink and timber benchtop and shelves made from an old fence, is also painted black. "The concept of wild childhood doesn't resonate with a clean house," Kimberly explains.

style tip Add a country flavour to your bathroom with industrial gooseneck light fittings, raw timber box shelving and doors mounted on barn-style hardware



shop it! Inject cabin fever at home with these outdoorsy wares



1 Malawi Fish Trap **light shade**, \$569, Village. **2** Home Republic 'Inala' natural **bowl**, \$39.99, Adairs. **3** *The Leopard and the Bird* acrylic **artwork** on canvas (1.22m x 1.37m), \$4500, Emma Gale. **4** Hatch throw **rug** in Navy, \$34.95, Harvey Norman. **5** Kava Azilal **rug** (1.9m x 0.98m), \$2100, Tigmi Trading. **6** Bloomberg adjustable **desk lamp** in Grey/Natural, \$219, Living Styles. **7** Dilette **cushion** in Natural/Tobacco, \$89.95, Eadie Lifestyle. **8** 1970s cane **chair**, \$3641 for 2 (including delivery), Pamoto. **9** CLA Lighting 'Hink' **wall light** in Matt White, \$227, Rex Lights. **10** United Strangers 'In The Flesh' **side table** 5, \$695, Matt Blatt. **11** Heim & Co Icelandic sheepskin **rug** in Copper with Caramel, \$164.95, Zanui. **12** Reversible **quilt set** in Clay/Nude, \$525 for queen, In The Sac. **13** Acqua x SLD **surfboard** in Blush, \$800, The Acqua Brand. **14** Shamal **dining table** in Natural New Fir (2.8m), \$1349, Brosa. **15** Hana 16-piece **tableware** set, \$188, Castlery. **16** Sarpaneva **casserole dish** with wooden handle (3L), \$349, littala. **17** Camp fire timber **carry bag** in Forest Green, \$99, Pony Rider.



Colours and finishes
FROM LEFT Durable Matt Emulsion **paint** in Rumour, \$160 for 4L, Graham & Brown. Granada handmade encaustic cement **tiles** (20cm x 20cm), \$143 per sq m, Earp Brothers & Co. Artisan Collection antique **flooring** in Mink Grey, \$139 per sq m, Royal Oak Floors. Steel **roofing** in Ironstone, Colorbond.

Easy going "I wanted this home to feel relaxed, calm and cosy, with spaces to come together and places to find privacy," reflects homeowner Ali Griffiths. Here, she stands next to a GlobeWest table with a vase from Newrybar Merchants and a Nikau Store pot. **Oven bake** Oak from Wood Rabbit Kitchens was used to build the shelves and benchtops (opposite), which are filled with ceramics from Zakkia and local produce. →

peace of land

Set among fields of cows and a bubbling creek, this weatherboard worker's cottage combines modern style with country living

photography **maree homer** styling **sarah ellison**



who lives here?

Ali Griffiths, a stylist and interior architect, and her partner Michael Beukers, director of Beukers Building.
@aligriffithsinteriors; @beukersbuilding; @bennyscottage →



Heaven and earth Ali explains that the property, called 'Benny's Cottage', sits "in the middle of what was once the largest expanse of subtropical rainforest in Australia, which was felled for red cedar and dairy production. Previous owners planted natives that are almost fully grown and make a beautiful entrance to the property." **Room for more** An MCM House dining table and chairs create a lovely communal feel in the kitchen (opposite), which boasts a Falcon oven and cabinets by Wood Rabbit Kitchens. Bold strap pendants from Special Lights punctuate the oak floors and walls painted in Dulux 'Lexicon' quarter-strength.

"A MEDICATION FOR THE MIND." That's how Ali Griffiths describes the home she bought and redesigned with her partner Michael Beukers, an old weatherboard cottage set on five acres of the Byron Hinterland's rambling hills and valleys. Back in 2017, the pair had been looking for their next design project. "I scoured the coast north and south of Sydney, but I always came back to Byron," says Ali, who is drawn to the area's creative energy. She wanted a home with character, manageable land and country views, and this place had it all. Work began the day they got the keys, but she adds, "in the evening we made time to have celebratory beers!" **NEW TERRITORY** Time had not been kind to the original timber structure built in the early 1900s, but Ali and Michael retained as much of its charm as possible while introducing modern comforts. "Everything was planned down to the last piece of furniture," she says. The weatherboard was reinstalled, the home was insulated, Mafi oak flooring was laid and the interior was reconfigured to create open spaces. The style came together organically. "I grew up in the English countryside, so the inspiration came from the vaults of my childhood," Ali explains. She created the timeless look with a simple colour palette "that would be easy on the eye and wouldn't date" and classic country-style elements such as shaker doors and timber beams "with a simplistic and modern edge". **DOWN TO EARTH** While the cottage was a drawcard, it's the location that Ali loves most. "When we first arrived, it was obvious the place had a great energy. The icing on the cake was stepping onto the verandah to hear running water from the creek." Here, mist-coated mornings are shared with the neighbour's cows. Evenings are spent in the pool, soaking up the sunset, tucking into local cheeses and cured meats around the dining table, or curled up on the sofa, wine in hand, by the roaring fire. 🍷

text lindy/ crabb

Grey scale Ebony doors and trims accent the warm neutral scheme in the open plan living, dining and kitchen area. "After deciding to paint the skirting and architraves black, we peeled away seven layers of old paint to find the first coat had actually been black!" Ali tells. Scattered across the MCM House sofa and armchair are cushions from Pampa and Norsu. **Home territory** The couple (right) used Dulux Duralloy paint in Off White on the exterior. **Close to hearth** A Kemlan fireplace lends rural charm to the room. The Pierre + Charlotte floor lamp (bottom right) is Ali's favourite piece.



how to make country style contemporary

1 Traditional country style doesn't have to look dated. A neutral palette in warm tones sets a contemporary mood, then add bold accents, like these black cabinet doors.

2 Timber furniture will look more modern when the silhouettes are minimalistic and streamlined. It's best to avoid lots of heavy hardware and ornate embellishments, too.

3 Ceramic homewares, dried foliage, votive candles and stacks of books will create the homely country vibe you're after without making the space feel like a vintage shop. →





style tip A small pendant hung quite low on either side of your bed creates a subtle lighting feature →

Required reading An MCM House coffee table in the open plan living area is a study in layering – from the Temple & Webster rug beneath to the books, ceramic tea cup and Nikau Store vase on top. **Beauty sleep** Soft tones and raw timber set a dreamy scheme in the bedroom (opposite). The bed and bedside table are by Mark Tuckey, with linen from In Bed, a Bemboka throw and round cushion from Pampa. A Caravaggio lamp hangs to one side.



