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australian

# no one beautiful

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# PRETTY IN PINK

TV presenter and city-turned-farm girl Catriona Rowntree has created her own patch of paradise in rural Victoria with her husband James and their two sons

STORY KATRINA O'BRIEN & JULIA GREEN STYLING JULIA GREEN  
PHOTOGRAPHY ARMELLE HABIB



**ENTRANCE (above)** A long driveway flanked by lush greenery leads the way to Catriona's country idyll. Wire gates crafted by Shades Of Gray display the *Getaway* presenter's signature "practical but pretty" touch – "They keep the children in, but are totally beautiful," she says. **GUEST HOUSE (opposite)** Visitors receive five-star treatment with their very own guest house, resplendent in classic French country style. "I wanted it to be like my ultimate hotel room," Catriona explains. The dreamy daybed and grand mirror were picked up in Paris, while the coffee table is from local antique store Lilypond. >





#### MASTER BEDROOM

A beautifully restored fireplace takes pride of place in Catriona and James's bedroom. The mantelpiece houses favourite treasures such as cherished Lalique glassware, with freshly picked roses adding a flourish of pink. "Roses are the superheroes of our garden, having toughed out the drought," Catriona says. "They're so hardy, yet utterly beautiful."



"In the country, looking out the window is like looking at a painting that is forever changing" - Catriona

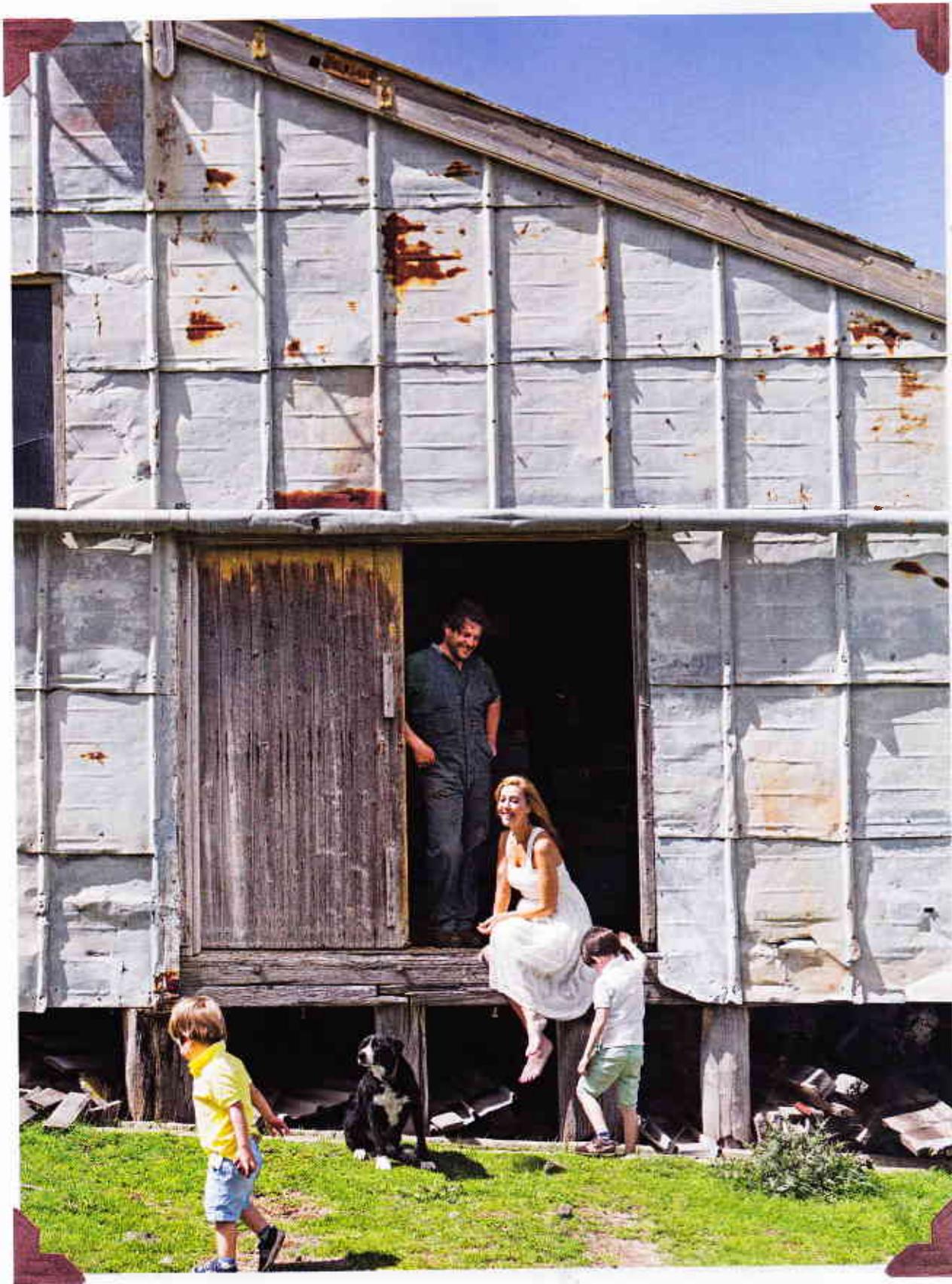


**GUEST BATHROOM** (above left & left) An ornate mirror and gorgeous clawfoot tub set a tone of luxury. Catriona used a set of beautiful blue tiles she found in Obidos - "the most romantic village in Portugal" - to create exotic and unique wall art. "I bought all the tiles I could physically carry and afford at the time," she says. "They only just squeezed into the plane's overhead locker!"

**STUDY** (above right) Catriona's study enjoys sweeping views of the farm and a flood of natural light, while the smell of sweet-scented blooms drifts in through the window. "Very little work takes place at this desk, as I can never take my eyes off the view!" she says. "Plus, my children are usually glued to my legs when I'm in here too."



**VERANDAH** Catriona relishes the fresh air and stunning surrounds from her rattan daybed, a wedding gift from a friend, landscape designer Paul Bangay. "Just quietly, I also love the fact that in the country you can't see any neighbours," she says with a smile. The painted floor decal was inspired by a trip to South America, and makes a striking statement. >



**SHEARING SHED** The family takes to the outdoors with their dog, Tango Dancer. "I love the energy of the shearing sheds," says Catriona. "I always feel like I'm walking through a Tom Roberts painting in there – which of course my husband thinks is nuts – but strangely he puts up with all my romantic notions!" **VERANDAH** (opposite) A table and chairs from country Victoria store Shades Of Gray bring old-world charm, with blossoming wisteria providing a divine lilac canopy overhead. "We grew it from scratch," comments Catriona. "James selected three twiggly-looking plants and I selected another three in full bloom. Of course James's have grown prolifically, while mine have done very little!"

## STYLE SECRETS

*How has having children changed your approach to decorating?*

**Catrina:** "I used to have a coffee table with sharp edges – now gone – and my linen-covered couch takes a beating every day. I feel like their toys are taking over the house, but I wouldn't have it any other way."

*Any current obsessions?*

"I'm obsessed with Pinterest and have been known to sneak onto it in the middle of the night! But I also love print and when James sees me stroke the page of a magazine or book, he knows he's in trouble."

"I'll soon be putting him to work turning a crazy idea into reality." **hb**

