



New heights

For one Sydney couple, a case of 'location, location, location' grew into a family-friendly home that's all about easy living.

STORY JUDY BAROUCH | STYLING NELL SIMPSON | PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL OMM

Flowers from Florid (throughout)

Homeowner Kristen Marsh in the kitchen with three-year-old daughter Milana, Vegas the Rhodesian ridgeback and Sammy the Schnoodle. Joinery by N&J Joinery. Island bench in travertine. Vola tapware from Cass Brothers. Bar stools from Koskela. Yellow stool from Top3 by Design. Orange stool from Mark Tuckey. Flooring in limed Victorian ash. **OPPOSITE** Travertine steps lead to the home's first-floor main entrance. For Where to Buy, see page 284.

This is the life

This house was designed to be child and pooch-friendly. "We chose the polished-concrete blocks because they require so little maintenance," says Kristen. "The kids can tear up and down and, unlike paint, the walls don't get marked or chipped." There's a lawn out the back for running around on, a sheltered outdoor dining area and, at the top of the sloping block, a sparkling pool surrounded by hardy coastal plants.



The palette is restrained, a combination of sand and driftwood tones that allows all the design elements to shine.



The large dining table from Mark Tuckey is ideal for entertaining. Chairs from Koskela. Pendant lights from Corporate Culture. Sliding glass doors from Crescent Timber. **OPPOSITE TOP AND BOTTOM** In the living room, tactile furnishings balance the high-gloss powder-room pod. Rug from Korda Design. Polished-concrete blocks from Boral. Patricia Urquiola chair and footstool from Hub Furniture Lighting Living. Jasper Morrison stools from Vitra. Sofa and cushions from Jordan. Artwork by Ian Shadwell. For Where to Buy, see page 284.



When Kristen and John Marsh first spied a for sale sign on this property in Sydney's east, the location stopped them in their tracks. They realised that by rebuilding and extending up, it would be possible to create the perfect family home for themselves and their three energetic children - Billy, now seven, Nicco, five, and Milana, three - plus obtain ocean views across four of the city's iconic beaches, Bondi, Tamarama, Bronte and Clovelly.

"Those four headlands inspired the concept for a four-level home," says Kristen. "John is a keen surfer and he loved the idea of having balconies where he could check out the surf conditions each morning."

The project - begun in 2008 and completed in about 12 months - was a harmonious collaboration between the couple and John's former university buddies, architects Neil Mackenzie and Heidi Pronk of Mackenzie Pronk Architects and designer Antonia Pesenti of Make Creative.

Sited on a sloping block, the street level has a garage with storage area for John's surfboards as well as a media room and two-bedroom guest suite. The main entrance is on the first floor and is accessed by external stairs. The layout on this level is essentially open plan, the only structure being a dramatic powder-room pod near the entrance. The kitchen and dining room are located at >

Photograph by Nick Bower (this page top)





< the southern end of this space, and there are two living areas for the family to enjoy – a sunken living room with sea views that opens to a terrace to the west and a cosy family room to the east. On the second floor are the family’s four bedrooms, with the parents’ retreat separated from the children’s zone by a bridge. The fourth level, a rooftop terrace, is a dedicated entertaining area with glorious coast and district views.


A showstopping staircase runs through the centre of the home. It doubles as a light well as the balustrade, made from steel frames in-filled with Victorian ash battens to form a series of handsome slatted screens, allows light to filter through.

The interior palette is restrained, a combination of sand and driftwood tones, which allows all the design elements to shine. “There’s the unexpected joy of items such as cork stools and oversize beanbags,” says Antonia. “We chose pieces with character to ensure that the home has an exuberance perfect for a home filled with young children.” >

Architect: Mackenzie Pronk Architects, Marrickville, NSW; (02) 9559 4595 or www.mackenziepronk.com.au. Interiors: Make Creative, Rosebery, NSW; (02) 9697 2116 or www.make.net.au.

Thrill of the new

Faced with a badly-renovated 1940s house that didn't take full advantage of its site, Kristen and John opted to knock it down and build a house that accessed both district and ocean views. Cut into the bedrock of a steep site, the total cost was around \$1.5million. "It was a challenging build that was managed with expertise and good humour," says architect Neil Mackenzie.



A bath carved from a single block of travertine is a talking point in the main bedroom's ensuite. Bath from StantonMoor. Vola tapware from Cass Brothers. Stools from Mark Tuckey. **OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** The slatted balustrade on the spine staircase allows light to filter through the house. The west-facing front balcony is a great spot to sit and watch the sun go down. Cane chair and footstool from Mark Tuckey. Cole & Son Birch Tree wallpaper from Radford Furnishings brings an element of the outdoors into the main bedroom. Bertioia chair from Dedece. Pendant light from Artemide. For Where to Buy, see page 284.

H&G houses

Add a dash of...



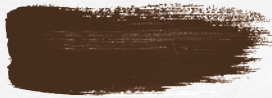
Dulux Tangerine Bliss



Dulux Yellow Mask

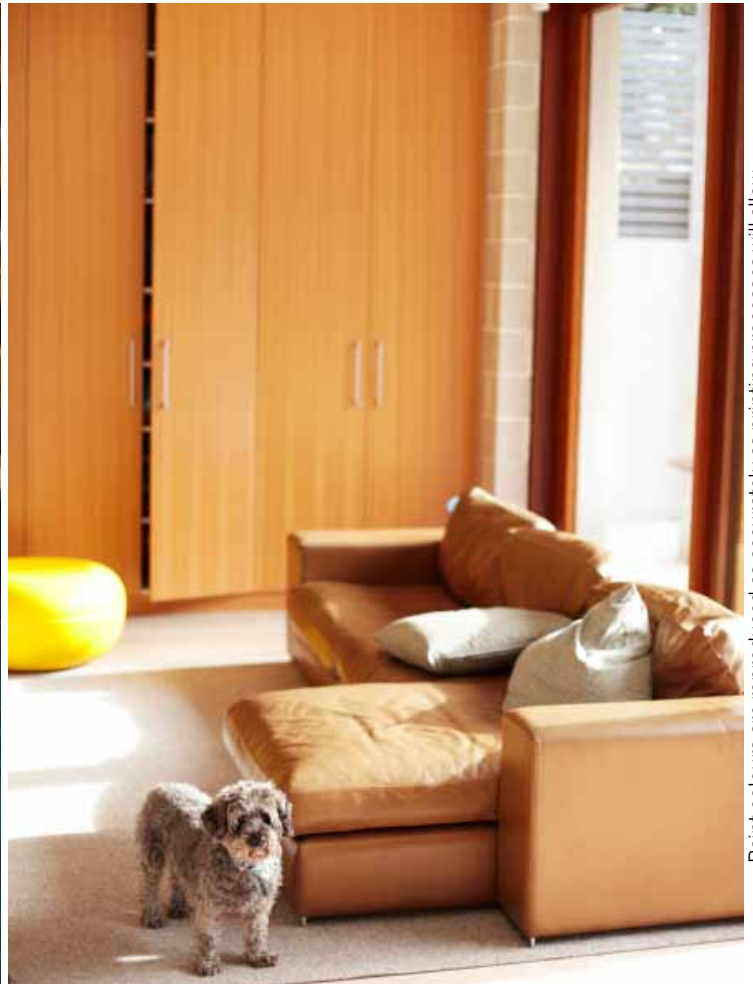


Resene Lochmara

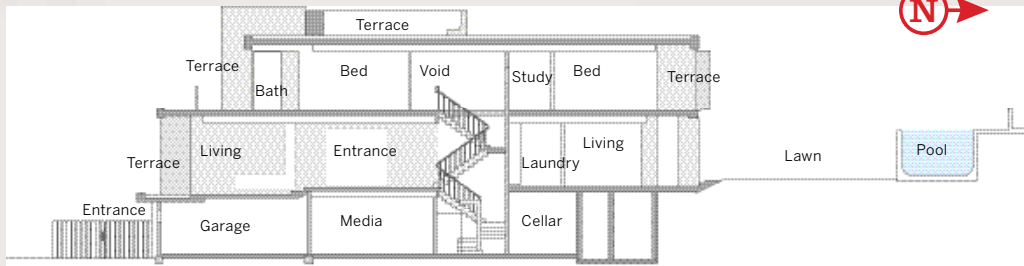


Wattyl Cafe Noir

Citrus and sea hues evoke summer year-round, with deep brown for balance.



CROSS-SECTION OF HOUSE



Milana leads Sammy out to the sheltered rear terrace. Timber-framed doors from Crescent Timber. **OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT** Billy loves the quirky style of the bedroom he shares with his siblings. Map wallpaper from Annandale Paint & Wallpaper. Fire engine bed from Carbeds. Sammy in the family room. Bubble ottoman from Korban/Flaubert. Sofa from Jordan. Rug from Koskela. Billy (left) and Nicco relax in the pool. **H&G**