

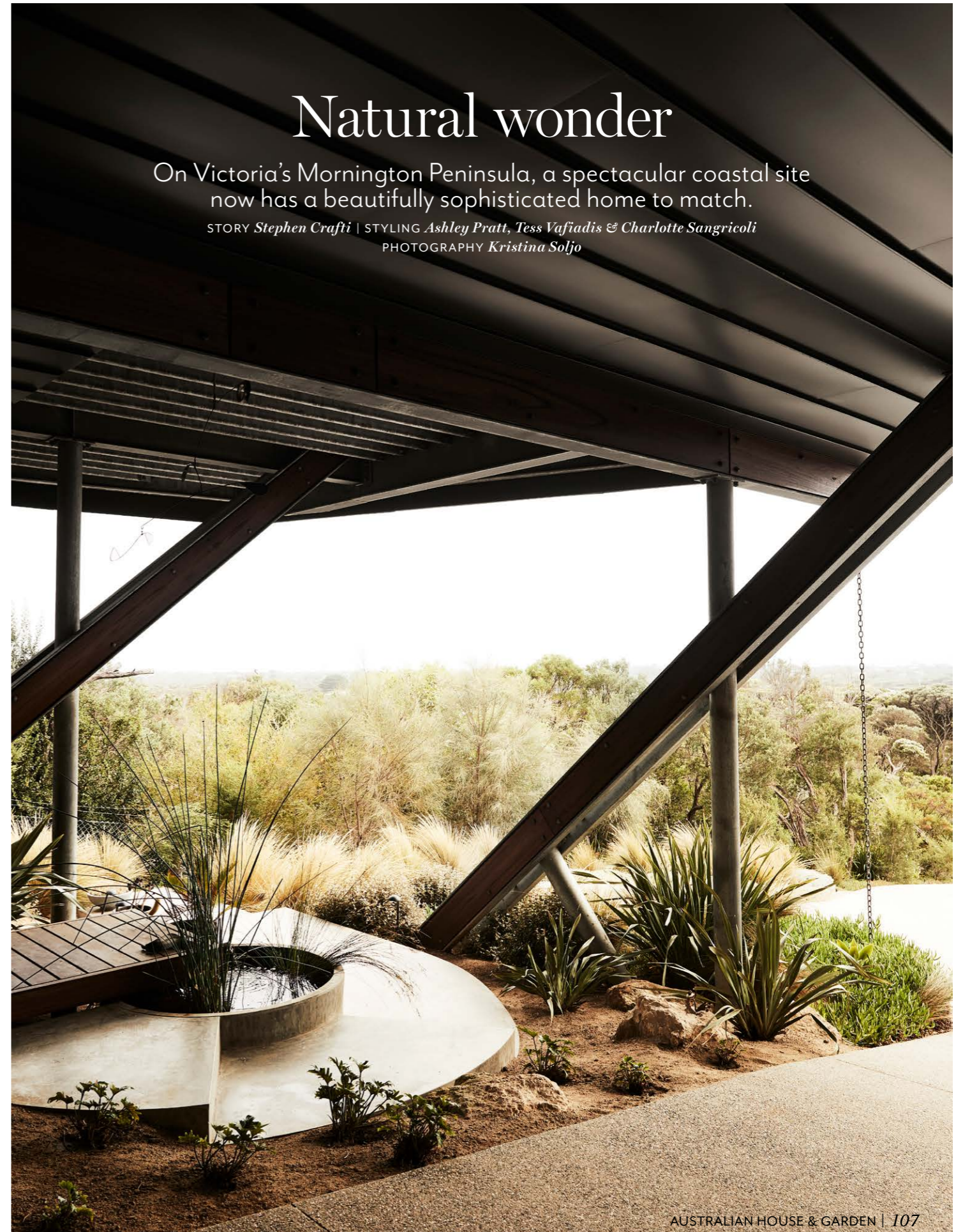


STAIRWELL Andrew made the console himself. Baby Tree table lamp, Pierre+Charlotte. Mirror, Coastal Living Rosebud. Runner, Armadillo & Co. Concrete flooring.
ENTRANCE A rain chain delivers rainwater directly to the garden. Water feature by Zenibaker Architects. Landscaping designed by James Ross Landscape Design, maintained by J&K Plantscapes. Zinc cladding. Exposed aggregate concrete, Rosebud Garden Supplies.

Natural wonder

On Victoria's Mornington Peninsula, a spectacular coastal site now has a beautifully sophisticated home to match.

STORY *Stephen Crafti* | STYLING *Ashley Pratt, Tess Vafiadis & Charlotte Sangricoli*
PHOTOGRAPHY *Kristina Soljo*





DINING Sculpture by Mela Cooke. Phasmida Branch 5 suspension light, Christopher Boots. Jade dining table, Zuster. Series 7 dining chairs, Cult. American-oak flooring, Royal Oak Floors (throughout). Ceiling clad in American-oak veneer (throughout). **RETREAT** Elaine enjoys a quiet moment. Double-glazed windows in low-e toughened glass by Autex Windows. The glass and window frame are rated BAL40 due to the risk of bushfire in the area. Tolomeo Mega floor lamp, Artemide. Leeroy sofa, Tommy ottomans and Nikki armchair with footstool, all Grazia & Co. Salsa rug, Halcyon Lake. Australian House & Garden vase and cushions, all Myer. **FRONT GARDEN** The curved path creates a palpable sense of arrival. Colorbond Windspray roof and downpipes. Landscaping designed by James Ross Landscape Design, maintained by J&K Plantscapes.



Situated on an escarpment with views to Bass Strait, this property's location is undeniably one of its star attractions. The owners, Andrew and Elaine Stewart, had been living in this idyllic spot for decades, in a three-level 1980s home that had long passed its use-by date by 2014. "We spent at least two years looking for another site, but where else would you find these views?" says Andrew. The Stewarts decided to stay put and build anew.

This new home, designed by architect Michael Baker of Zenibaker Architects, is a striking contemporary structure that evokes the beach houses on stilts of the 1950s. Unlike those Mid-Century homes, however, this one is supported by massive columns and trusses. "I wanted to express the form of a postwar beach house but I also wanted to create the sense of walking under a pier," says Michael. The concrete steps and a water feature at the home's entrance are further references to the nearby ocean. The link to the water was always going to be there: "Andrew has spent a lifetime on ships, so the sea is in his DNA," says Michael.

Although Andrew and Elaine were open to a number of design styles, they were clear that their prime objective was that this would be home for the long term. "We wanted the kitchen, living areas and bedrooms, including the main bedroom, all on one level in case we struggle with stairs ▶



in the future," says Elaine. They also specified wide corridors and doorways for ease of access and installed a lift in case the stairs they do have become too much.

The home, built by Pop Building, spans two levels. On the ground floor is a flexible space that is used as both guestroom and TV room - a boon when the couple's four children and four grandchildren come to stay. There's also a double garage and an adjoining workshop that is well used by this pair of former furniture makers.

The first floor is where the action is, however. This level contains three bedrooms (the main with walk-in wardrobe and ensuite), a vast L-shaped open-plan kitchen/dining/living area and a relaxing retreat adjoining a northwest-facing terrace at the front of the home. The rooms are arranged around a timber-clad pod that houses the

bathroom, laundry and a pantry. Connecting the two levels is a staircase with netting as a balustrade, another nautical reference. Here, an angled glass roof floods the stairwell with light and captures more of those spectacular views.

The open-plan communal area is zoned to create a sense of separation - much needed when the extended family descend, says Elaine. This arrangement also allows the couple to enjoy different aspects of the property's panoramic views of the ocean, the nearby national park, the pool terrace and their newly landscaped garden.

Since the kitchen is always on show, it was important to Elaine and Andrew that it looked and felt sophisticated. Michael delivered on this part of the brief by using a restrained palette of materials. The five-metre long island bench is made from poured concrete, with the ▶

The palette

Dulux Whisper White (interior, throughout)

Porter's Paints Bayleaf

Porter's Paints Wattleseed



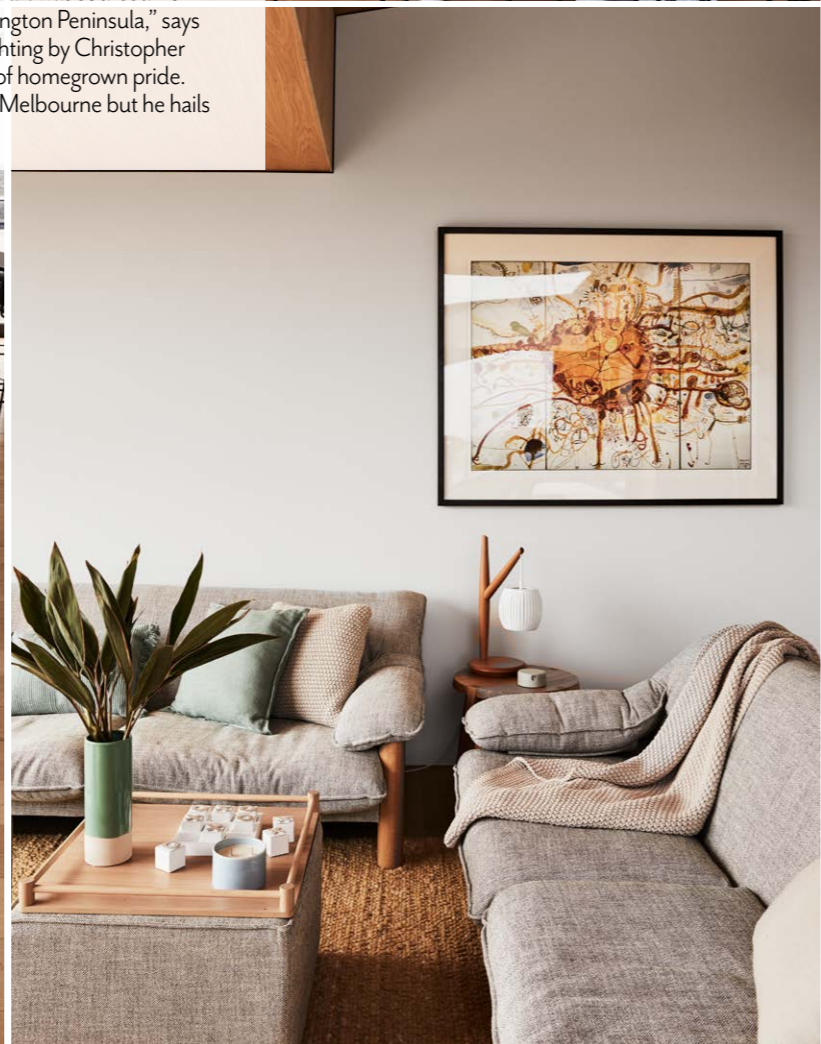
Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.



LIVING Painting by Sally Joubert. Twiggy floor lamp, Space. Ezra coffee table and Stamp side table, both Grazia & Co. The custom sofa - part of Elaine and Andrew's existing collection - was made by Furniture Inspirations. Armchair, Grazia & Co. Suspended fireplace, Oblica. Latitude rug, Armadillo & Co.



THIS IS THE LIFE
 Sculptures and paintings from Elaine and Andrew's extensive art collection pique interest throughout the home. "We like to support local artists and designers, so most of our art was sourced from galleries along the Mornington Peninsula," says Elaine. The sculptural lighting by Christopher Boots is another source of homegrown pride. "Christopher is based in Melbourne but he hails from around here too."



MAIN BATHROOM Haven composite-marble bath, Apaiser. Mizu 'Soothe' tapware and heated towel rail, all Reece. Wall cladding, Ameri can-oak veneer. Floor tiles, Lifestiles. **FRONT GARDEN** Landscaping by James Ross Landscape Design. **KITCHEN** Elaine and Andrew in the spacious entertainer's kitchen. American oak-veneer joinery. G4 kitchen mixer, Zip Hydrotaps. Pendant light, Christopher Boots. Dita stools, Grazia & Co. Polished concrete benchtops. Caesarstone splashback in Sleek Concrete. Stove and ovens, V-Zug. Liebherr fridge. **RETREAT** Leeroy sofas, and Tommy ottomans, all Grazia & Co. Baby Tree table lamp, Pierre+Charlotte. Australian House & Garden vase, cushions and throw, all Myer. Rug, Halcyon Lake. Artwork by John Olsen. **STAIRWELL** Architect Michael Baker. Netting, Oxley Nets. ▶



MAIN BEDROOM Pendant light, Beacon Lighting. Bedside table, Adairs. Australian House & Garden vase, bedlinen, cushions and throw, all Myer. Carpet, Floorspace. **FRONT GARDEN** Outdoor rockers, Domayne. Molly (Mel) drum firepit, Robert Plumb. Concrete bench, Hungry Wolf. **POOL AREA** Pool by Pop Building. Pool mosaics, The Pool Tile Company. Travertine coping by KHD Stone Merchants. Steppers, Hungry Wolf. Fence designed by Zenibaker Architects. **POOL TERRACE** Travertine pavers. Table and chairs, Remarkable Outdoor Living. *For Where to Buy, see page 176.*



surrounding joinery in American oak. The joinery is designed to look like furniture; appliances are integrated into the cabinetry for a streamlined finish.

As beautiful as it is, the exposed coastal location means the house is sometimes subjected to wild weather, including gale-force winds. In order to allow the Stewarts to enjoy the outdoors in comfort year round, Michael installed operable awnings to protect the front terrace. The adjacent retreat features floor-to-ceiling glass on two sides, allowing Elaine and Andrew to enjoy a feeling of being in the outdoors regardless of the weather.

Once the build was complete, Elaine and Andrew engaged interior designer Sylvanna Mitri of Austin Design Associates to help with the decoration. "Our mission was to furnish this new build in a way that felt like an oasis - a comfortable place to relax and unwind," says Sylvanna. "It was also

important that the interior was flexible and offered some separation when there's a full house."

The decorating scheme was inspired by the surrounding landscape. "Michael did a great job with the use of concrete and American oak, so we had a great canvas to work with," says Sylvanna. "We enhanced that with the use of furniture in organic shapes, in a palette of warm browns with black accents for contrast and definition."

"The house has the wow factor, but it's also extremely liveable," says Elaine. "It feels like we're completely on our own here," adds Andrew. "Only the movement of the ships in the bay remind you that there are others around." **H&G Zenibaker Architects, Mount Eliza, Victoria; zenibaker.com.au. Pop Building Group, Mornington Peninsula, Victoria; www.popbuilding.com.au. Austin Design Associates, Brighton, Victoria; austindesign.com.au.**

