



MODERN THINKING

A MOODY PALETTE AND MID-CENTURY-INSPIRED INTERIORS CAME TOGETHER TO CREATE THIS INVITING NEW HOME IN BAYSIDE MELBOURNE

Story JACKIE BRYGEL Styling ALANA LANGAN Photography ANNETTE O'BRIEN



FRESH FACED

Open to the verdant outdoors (opposite), Melinda and Stephen's home in Melbourne's south is all at once clean-lined and comfy. The ever-luminous living and dining zone (above) is grounded by engineered oak flooring and features a dramatic 'Wireflow' light by Arik Levy (sourced from Vibia), a conversation-starting 'Stella' dining table by Zuster and classic 'Series 7' chairs by Arne Jacobsen. >

KITCHEN As in the rest of the home, the kitchen shows the perfect blend of form and function (below). While the rear bench is clad in virtually indestructible stainless steel, the expansive island – where Stephen and Melinda enjoy a relaxed chat – is topped in scene-stealing Grey Aether honed marble. “Stainless steel is such a great industrial work surface,” says designer Fiona. The bench is lit by three gleaming A110 ‘Hand Grenade’ pendants by Alvar Aalto from Artek, while stunning timber cabinetry is a functional nod to the mid-century modern style.



“IT’S LOVELY TO *dress up* THE ISLAND WITH A BEAUTIFUL PIECE OF MARBLE THAT APPEARS ALMOST LIKE A *work of art*” ~ MELINDA

It’s early on a chilly weekday and the sun is just beginning to peek through the clouds. But beyond homeowners Melinda and Stephen’s front door, morning light in all its glory is having a moment. Around almost every corner of this newly finished mid-century-style home, dappled sunshine floods the walls, imparting a definitive sense of light, airiness and warmth.

“The house is oriented to capture the northern light and it’s open plan,” says Melinda, who concedes it’s an abode that stole her heart well before it was move-in ready – much to Stephen’s delight. “Steve says, ‘happy spouse, happy house’ and he’s always been happy to leave most of the decorating decisions in our previous homes to me,” she adds with a smile. “But he had more input with this one.”

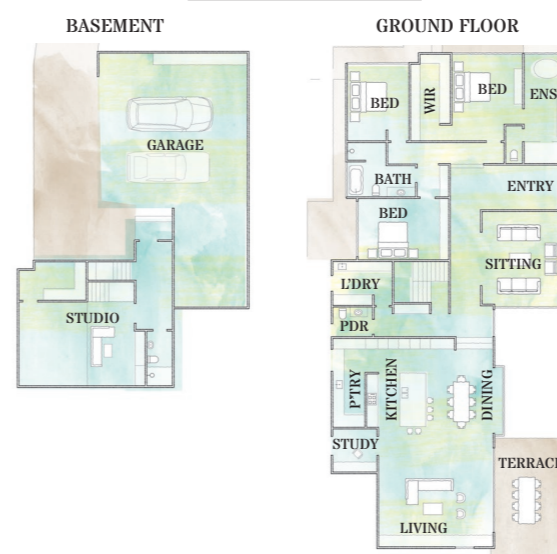
The couple previously lived nearby in another contemporary home they had built, like this one, with the help of renowned interior designer Fiona Austin. “Our last home was beautiful,” says Melinda. “But we wanted to take all the things we loved most from the houses we’d lived in over the past 26 years and put them together in one.”

And that they certainly did – to stunning effect. A tonal palette sets a dramatic scene, with deep charcoals juxtaposed against crisp white walls and smoked-oak floors. Layers of texture and sumptuous soft furnishings warm the interiors, while lush greenery enveloping the home lends joyous life and tranquillity throughout the seasons. Both inside and out, homage has been paid to the couple’s long-time appreciation of modernist design, with the house blending seamlessly into the streetscape. “We love this style of architecture and the neighbourhood is renowned for mid-century homes,” says Melinda. “Fiona was very passionate about ensuring that our house would be sympathetic to the homes that surround it.”

Once again for the couple, working with the same designer on the 24-month design and build proved a wholly harmonious endeavour. “We’re just on the same page,” says Melinda. “There’s this amazing connection between us. It doesn’t seem to matter what Fiona puts together for us, we just love it. We really do click.”

Certainly, the success of this home is evident in the fact that its owners now have no intention of moving – ever again. “We’re not going anywhere,” confirms Melinda, before adding with a laugh: “My mother wants it in writing.” And now it is!

FLOOR PLAN



LIVING ROOM A design classic, the Ligne Roset ‘Togo’ sofa suite from Domo beckons in this cosy chill-out domain (right). “It was a big investment and when we bought it we thought, ‘Oh dear, we hope Fiona approves!’” laughs Melinda, whose concerns proved well and truly unwarranted. “I absolutely love it!” says the designer. Above it, an evocative pair of limited-edition photos – ‘Winter Mist 1 and 2’ – by Katie Carmichael takes pride of place. >

ILLUSTRATION KENZIEDSIGN.COM



FACADE

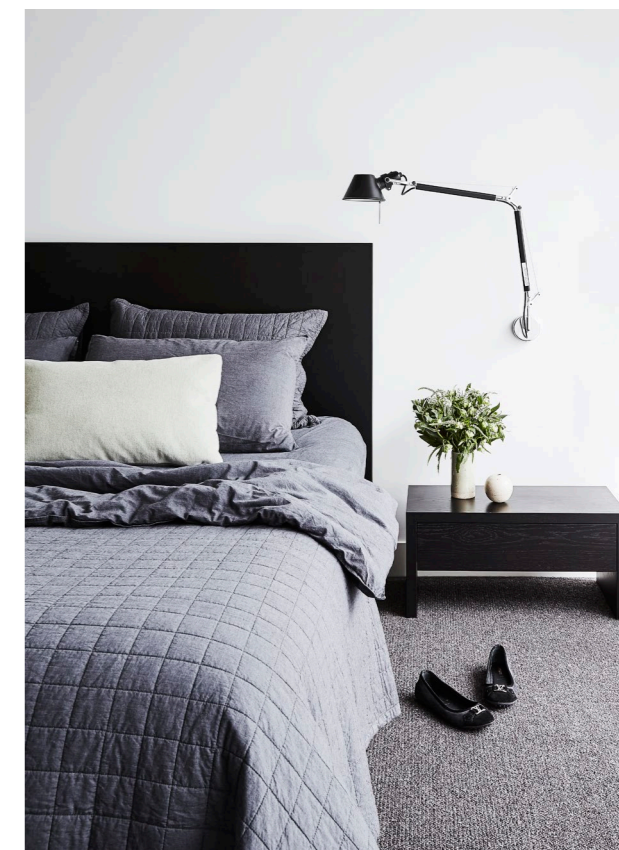
Set back from the roadway and encased by fragrant greenery, the home’s mid-century facade is in perfect harmony with the neighbours. Magnolias planted with roses and a ground cover of lamb’s-ear create an instantly welcoming entryway.



WE LOVE...
*a room
with a view*

What could make a bathing sanctuary even more blissful than a floor-to-ceiling picture window that presents the leafy outdoors as a living artwork? "Sitting in the bath and looking out at the private front courtyard is just heavenly," says Melinda. The stunning oversized bath – the freestanding 'Sentosa' from Apaiser – makes it all possible. Visit apaizer.com.

ENSUITE Sleek, luxurious and light-filled, Melinda and Stephen's ensuite is, well, a difficult place to leave (above). The stunning bath, partnered with an Icon Astra Walker floor spout, is here for far more than its good looks. "I use the bath all the time," says Melinda, who also loves the Hydrotherm 'H3 Model' heated towel rail that delivers warm and fluffy towels as needed.



ENSUITE The beauty of natural stone – in this case the richly veined Grey Aether marble that tops the vanity – and the Apaiser 'Sanctum' stone basin add further five-star appeal to this ensuite (top left & opposite). On the floor, 'Glade Cinza' matte tiles from G-Lux offer beauty in simplicity. **MAIN BEDROOM** Put simply, this space (top right) is "the perfect sanctuary," says Melinda. Tolomeo wall lamps by Artemide are as functional as they are stylish, while the Zuster 'April' bed has been dressed in Sheridan 'Reilly' linen in Carbon. Amping up the room's comfort factor is the wool loop pile carpet in Granite from Chaparral Carpets. **HALLWAY** "This sunny little spot [above left] was a bit of a surprise – like a gift with purchase!" says Melinda, who found the ottoman a few years ago at Grazia & Co. For the wall above, she chose the limited-edition 'Winter Wandering' photographic work by Katie Carmichael. **STUDY** Practicality reigns in the home office (above right), where a curvy 'Orient' pendant by Jo Hammerborg from Cult makes a statement. Added touches of black are delivered in the Laminex Fossil workspace and the 'Series 7' chair by Arne Jacobsen. >



LAUNDRY

Washing, drying and ironing is a fuss-free experience inside Melinda and Stephen's home, where you would struggle not to find a place for everything behind closed doors. Attention to detail shines through within the white subway tiles on the splashback, the Caesarstone Sleek Concrete benchtops and in the Laminex cabinetry in Fossil. "I do love these dark tones," says Melinda.

CONTACTS

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"I JUST COME HOME
 AND FEEL SO *happy*"
 ~ MELINDA



NEW NEUTRAL



INSIDE STORY
MELINDA & STEPHEN'S HOME

Who lives here?
 Melinda, a medical practice manager; and Stephen, an account executive and part-time musician.

What's your favourite room in the house?
 Melinda: "Probably the living room with the fireplace. Outside, I love my vegetable garden."

What's your favourite piece in the home?
 "It would be between the 'Togo' lounge suite and the 'Stella' dining table from Zuster."

What's your top tip when designing a home?
 Fiona: "Think about space planning first and foremost. If you get that wrong, no matter how many beautiful finishes and pieces you have, it's always going to be wrong."

How do you bring warmth into a home?
 "It comes from layering and detailing, such as the texture of the bricks, the timber of the floor, the wall lights and the marble on the benchtops."



ACTUAL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

1. The expansive front door, paired with a 'Big O' timber handle by In-teria.
2. Melinda in her carefully cultivated vegetable garden.
3. The sunny guest bedroom.
4. A 'Togo' sofa ensures everyone gets a comfy seat in the lounge.
5. The stylish kitchen bar.
6. The roomy butler's pantry with cabinetry in Laminex Fossil.
7. Grey Aether marble from G-Lux encases the island bench.

