

THE MAKEOVER

everyday
ELEGANCE

AFTER 15 YEARS OF RENOVATING TO SELL, GLOBETROTTING COUPLE VICKI AND XAVIER HAVE FINALLY SETTLED, TURNING AN OUTDATED BUNGALOW INTO A LIGHT-DRENCHED FOREVER HOME

Words VANESSA KEYS Styling ALANA LANGAN Photography SHANIA SHEGEDYN



FORMAL LIVING

A 'Jay' 2.5-seater lounge in Charles Parsons Jake 'Silver Streak' fabric and 'Maxim' chairs - all from Boyd Blue - are grouped around a soft custom ottoman. The home's original fireplace provides a stunning stand-out feature in the space, while Seneca cushions pick up the hue of the ottoman.



THE DREAM

WHO? Vicki and husband Xavier, daughters Maddy, 25, Olivia, 22, and Jemima, 19, and Jasper the labradoodle.

WHERE? Melbourne, VIC.

THE DREAM A bright family home that balances modern cool with period style.

WHY IS THIS YOUR FOREVER HOME?

Vicki: "The period features mean the house will never date. There's so much potential as our lifestyle changes over the next decade."

OUTDOORS When Vicki and her husband bought their home southeast of Melbourne back in 2015, they were immediately struck by the lush garden and bright facade (top & above right). "When we walked inside, we couldn't believe how much natural light there was," explains Vicki (pictured with Jasper). **HALLWAY** With beautiful period features dating back to 1906 (above left), spacious rooms and ample natural light, designer Jennifer of Eat Bath Live could immediately see the home's potential. Original characteristics such as the facade, front door and skirtings (opposite, in the lounge) were kept, while a fresh coat of Dulux Natural White paint on the walls and modern furnishings created gorgeous spaces to enjoy. >



When Vicki and her husband Xavier returned to their home town of Melbourne after living interstate and overseas for 15 years, their first priority was to put down roots. Xavier's job as an executive in the gaming industry had meant four-year stints in both Sydney and Brisbane, and six years in Las Vegas. "Each move would follow the same pattern," says Vicki. "We'd rent for a few months, buy something, renovate and, just as we were feeling settled, we'd have to move again. When we decided to return to Melbourne, I just knew I wanted to create something more permanent."

And, just three months after coming home, Vicki and Xavier set eyes on their forever home, a sprawling bungalow within a bayside suburb south-east of Melbourne. With only two of their three daughters still living at home (the eldest stayed in the US), the couple initially wanted something a bit smaller with a low-maintenance garden. "Famous last words!" says Vicki, laughing. "This home has everything we decided we didn't need, but we immediately fell in love with the bright facade, the period features and the high ceilings." While the home had great charm, the interior was dark and tired, with a bathroom and kitchen that were stuck in the '90s. Vicki sought the help of designer Jenefer Gordon of Eat Bath Live, who suggested a complete overhaul of the kitchen and bathroom, new flooring throughout and a cohesive colour scheme. The result is a space that says: "We're here to stay."

"WE KNEW THIS WAS OUR forever home, SO WE WERE LESS BOTHERED BY BUDGETS AS IT FELT LIKE THE HOUSE DESERVED THE BEST" ~ VICKI, HOMEOWNER



formal living Situated at the front of the home, the formal living area (top left) is rarely used by Vicki and her family, but still has an important role to play. "It's the first thing you see from the front door," says designer Jenefer, "so it needed to set the tone for the whole home." The brief was to create an additional living space that was comfortable, but had a more structured feel. Inspiration for the colour scheme came from the teal and copper tiles used in the ornate fireplace, which Jenefer brought to life with a custom-made ottoman, cushions in a Seneca velvet fabric and amber handblown glass pendant lights from Mark Douglass.

dining room After more than a decade spent renovating homes and having to leave them, Vicki decided she would only fill this one with things the family truly loved. "The dining table and chairs (left) were one of the few things we kept from Las Vegas," she explains (for similar, try Interiors Outline's 'Maurice' chairs and Stratford table from Max Sparrow). "I've been trying to move away from the Hamptons look, but I really loved the dark wood. It's so important to be surrounded by things that make you feel like home." A painting entitled 'Sky Dream' by Sarah Bolton adds the perfect dash of colour to the elegant space.

FORMAL LIVING, DINING & KITCHEN

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

DINING Art: \$2400. Furniture: \$5210. **TOTAL: \$7610.**

FORMAL LIVING Furniture and accessories: \$7545. Lighting: \$640. **TOTAL: \$8185.**

KITCHEN Appliances: \$10,360. Benchtops: \$3330. Cabinetry: \$14,700. Furniture: \$1256. Island benchtop: \$13,600. Lighting: \$1200. Sink: \$770. Tapware: \$50. **TOTAL: \$45,266.**

kitchen Tucked away in the corner of the open-plan living area, the kitchen was previously defined by square terracotta tiles. "As soon as we ripped those tiles out and polished the floorboards underneath, the whole space just opened up," explains Jenefer. Next, they removed the existing L-shaped benchtop and island bench. "Vicki fell in love with a huge slab of Calacatta marble with the most beautiful vein running through it, so we covered the island in that and used engineered stone from Silestone for the other benchtop," says the designer. One of Vicki's must-haves was an island that could double as her work space, so Jenefer added two drawers to hold stationery and files, and carefully hid powerpoints near the seating area, which features Skal kitchen stools from Satara. Three glass pendant lights from Custom Lighting complete the statement look. High-end appliances, including the LG fridge and Sineg oven and cooktop underneath the pre-existing rangehood, make entertaining a dream. >

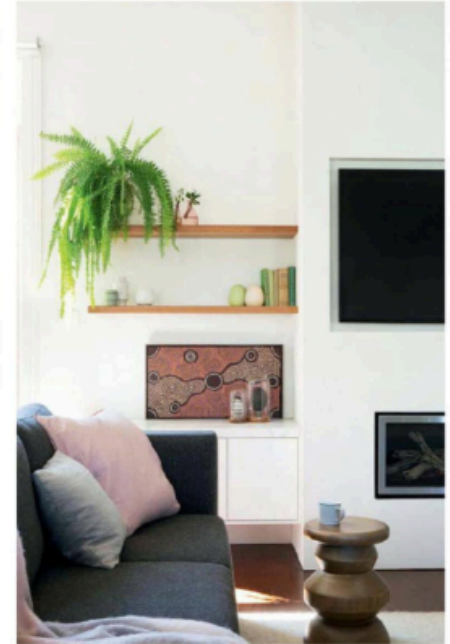
PAINT ON WOODWORK
Vivid White,
\$42.99/L. Dulux.

ISLAND BENCH
Calacatta marble,
from \$8000/sqm
(depending on
stock). CDK Stone.

"USUALLY bench tops GO TO 900MM, BUT WE WENT FOR 950MM. WE'RE ALL QUITE TALL AND IT JUST MAKES THE SPACE MORE COMFORTABLE TO USE"
~VICKI, HOMEOWNER



RUG
'Kalahari' in
Natural & Pumice,
from \$420,
Armadillo & Co.



"MODULAR SOFAS HAVE A MORE relaxed feel THAN TRADITIONAL SUITES, WHICH TEND TO LOOK STRUCTURED AND FORMAL"

—JENEFER, INTERIOR DESIGNER

living room The living room's enormous proportions sent Vicki on a frenzied hunt for the biggest sofa she could find. "I wanted a high back, which I know isn't the most modern look, but I went for comfort over style," she explains of the custom model by Sofas Direct, using Warwick Lindeman fabric in Coal. "We can fit 15 people on it comfortably." The 'Kalahari' jute rug in Natural & Pumice sourced from Armadillo & Co grounds the space and creates contrast between the grey sofa and dark floorboards. "A sofa of that size is an investment piece," says Jenefier. "Vicki loves moving things around and playing with the space, so we chose base elements that are easy to work with, then added colour and interest through artwork, books and greenery." Splashes of colour come by way of a custom commission by Helen Di Tomasso (left) and 'Seven Sisters' by Elsie Edimintja (above). >

LIVING ROOM

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

LIVING ROOM Art: \$5400. Entertainment: \$1295.
Fireplace: \$5900. Floor coverings: \$2500.
Furniture: \$8680. **TOTAL: \$23,775.**



BEST ADVICE

"At the very beginning of the project, our builder said, 'This is a great house and you need to do it justice,'" remembers Vicki. "My initial approach was to change a few things and keep the expenses low, but he convinced me that any money we spent would be worth it. I'm glad I didn't compromise on anything and did exactly what I wanted to do."

bathroom Vicki's must-have in the main family bathroom (left) was storage. "You can imagine how many bathroom products we accumulate with three girls," she laughs. Designed by Jenefer of Eat Bath & Live and made by Williams Cabinets, the cabinetry with Kaboodle stainless-steel bar handles has six big drawers and is topped by a Parisi Ovale basin. "We updated the tapware to a more classic shape to give a nod to the room's period style," says Jenefer about the Clide English taps by Astra Walker. "So while the cabinetry and large format tiles (Statale 9 in Nero Carbone by Urban Edge Ceramics) are contemporary, we pulled it backward with traditional tapware." The tub was part of the original fit-out – for similar, try Vitzini's 'Violins Slipper' acrylic claw foot bath from Temple & Webster.

"THE EXISTING claw foot BATH WAS STUNNING, SO WE KEPT IT"

– VICKI, HOMEOWNER

guest room While Vicki's younger daughters personalised their rooms with their own choice of linen and pendant lights, the guest room (right) – that also doubles as Maddy's room when she's home – mirrors the easy elegance of the main bedroom. The Rococo iron and clear crystal round chandelier from Restoration Hardware and the window seat create a classic look. "I spent a long time looking for the perfect grey carpet that wasn't too blue or charcoal," says Vicki, who finally settled on 'Montana Sands' in Spanish Tile from Carpet Court. The grey is offset by Adairs bedlinen in soft pinks and greens on the bed, which was brought over from the US. A large painting from No Place Like Home picks up the room's colour scheme.

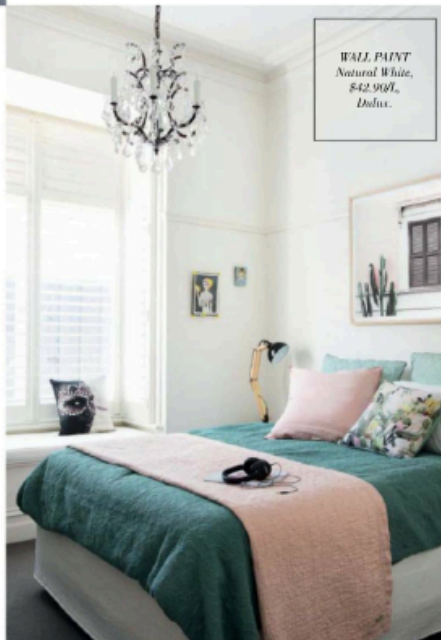
BUDGET BREAKDOWN

BEDROOMS & BATHROOM

BATHROOM Cabinetry: \$2200. Floor tiles: \$1800. Furniture: \$280. Handles: \$70. Shower: \$2100. Sink: \$390. Tapware: \$941. Tapware: \$551. Wall tiles: \$1890. **TOTAL: \$10,222.**

GUEST BEDROOM Chandelier: \$1350. Furniture: \$360. **TOTAL: \$1710.**

MASTER BEDROOM Carpet: \$1350 (for both bedrooms). Chandelier: \$2100. Furniture: \$8725. **TOTAL: \$12,175.**



WALL PAINT
Natural White,
\$42.90/L,
Dulux.

main bedroom Vicki and Xavier sought Jenefer's help to create a colour palette of varying shades of grey that would match their existing upholstered bedhead. The other must-have was a chandelier and, after searching high and low, they eventually had the larger Rococo iron and clear crystal round chandelier (right) shipped in from Restoration Hardware in the US (for similar, try the Timothy Oulton 'Crystal Chandelier' from Coco Republic). "It really brings period features in the space to life, especially the ceiling rose," says Jenefer. The My Side 'Series 6' mattress and base from Forty Winks, along with the ottoman bench from Boyd Blue upholstered by Geissel Road in Seneca 'Quin Onyx' fabric and custom-made curtains, create a hotel-luxe vibe.



DREAM IDEAS

Architect Joe Snell of Snell Architects shares his advice on choosing lights that are practical as well as decorative

1. Don't think about lighting as a stand-alone. Rather, think about what you are lighting: the objects, the materials, the space, and how you want to feel and the mood you want to create. This is not only practical, but allows you to bring out the decorative elements of your home.
2. Consider dimming. A light that has only one lighting level can only be used as either off or on, but by adding dimming you can adjust the light level to more adhere to the task at hand. This can also reduce the number of lights required and may even save your budget!
3. Use layers of light to give options for each room. By adding three layers – ambient, accent and task lighting options – you are allowing different ways of using the same space, depending on what you are up to. >



FLOOR PLAN



CONTACTS

Designer: Jenefer Gordon,
Eat Bathe Live, eatbathelive.com.au.
Cabinetry: Williams Cabinets,
williamscabinets.com.au.

outdoors The existing garden reflects the cottage style of the home, with lush plantings of pansies, alyssum and meticulously tended hedges (below). "Now that the interior is done, we're about to embark on the exterior," explains Vicki, pictured, relaxing with Jasper in the quaint space off the dining and living areas. Following the internal update, the family now plans to update the pool with blue tiles (below right) and create a dedicated barbecue area.

"MY FAVOURITE THING ABOUT THIS HOUSE IS THE CONNECTION WITH THE OUTDOORS. YOU CAN SEE VIVID GREENERY FROM EVERY ROOM"

— VICKI, HOMEOWNER



ILLUSTRATION: KENZIEDSIGN.COM. ACTUAL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION