

KITCHEN A wall of cabinetry neatly contains all storage and appliances. Island bench in Savoy marble from Worldstone Solutions. Franke sink, Reece. Brodware tapware, Candana Bathroomware. Roman pendant light, Masson for Light. Joinery by JP Finsbury Bespoke Joiners (throughout). Grey ironbark flooring, Nash Timbers (throughout). **Designer buy:** Taburet bar stools, \$449 each, Life Interiors. **TV/GUESTROOM** An enhanced connection to the outdoors has increased the home's overall feeling of serenity. Custom sofa bed by Noble & Jones Furniture Designers.



LIGHT TOUCH

In Sydney, a sensitive revamp transformed a 1930s bungalow into a fabulously functional forever home.

STORY *Rachael Bernstone* | STYLING *Ricci Bloch* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Tom Ferguson*



LIVING/DINING The fireplace was strategically placed to block afternoon sun. Marset 'Aura' wall light and 'Soho' pendant light, both Est Lighting. Eames side chair and walnut stool, both Living Edge. Existing dining table. Molloy dining chairs, Cult. Drawing by Roze from Project 82. Curtains in Eliza linen fabric by Simple Studio. Cedar windows and doors, Longma Joinery (throughout). Rugs, both Perryman Carpets.

The Palette

Dulux Deep Aqua (front door)

Dulux Vivid White (interior, throughout)

Dulux Monument (exterior trims)

An original 1930s California bungalow on a pretty street lined with Mid-Century homes in a walkable neighbourhood in close proximity to Sydney Harbour... It's little wonder the owners - a couple and their teenage son - fell in love with this home.

Over time, however, they identified its shortcomings: the house was dark inside; it felt disconnected from the garden; and it didn't offer sufficient separation for their various needs, ranging from cooking and entertaining to working from home and studying.

So they approached architect and interior designer Ricci Bloch to discuss their options. Together, Ricci and her clients settled on a plan to retain the existing house but improve the way it functioned for the family.

"They loved the front part of the house, and didn't want to lose that cottage feel, so we ruled out extending upwards," Ricci says. "They didn't really need any additional space and they intend to 'age in place', so it made sense to keep it all on one level."

In a clever design move, Ricci suggested extending the house slightly towards the rear, and along ▶



Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as possible in printing processes allowed.



Rotating the layout of the kitchen 90 degrees improved separation between zones in the open-plan space.



the eastern boundary. Along the narrow and formerly under-utilised edge, she managed to insert external storage for bins and meters; a bath in the new family bathroom; a built-in desk in the third bedroom; a New York-style cocktail bar; a generous servery wall in the dining room; and a barbecue on the rear deck.

Ricci also overhauled the floor plan to create distinct zones, installing skylights and extra-high ceilings in key areas, to draw in natural light and create the illusion of more space. Bedrooms and bathrooms remain in the original cottage; service zones occupy the central section, and the rear section is given over to living, cooking and entertaining spaces.

Several rooms do double duty, such as the laundry which doubles as a scullery, extending the kitchen's functionality without adding a dedicated butler's pantry. "The family wanted a space which could be used as another bedroom occasionally, so the TV room at the front doubles as a guestroom," says Ricci.

To reduce overall costs, they kept the kitchen in the same location. Ricci did, however, rotate the layout 90 degrees to improve separation between the kitchen and the adjacent living zone. She also installed glass doors that open to a small side deck, connecting the kitchen to the green space beyond.

The open-plan living/dining room is the only entirely new part of the house, and features a welcoming focal point in the form of a gas-fuelled fireplace. Sliding doors open to a generous and inviting outdoor room with relaxed seating and a built-in barbecue - perfect for alfresco gatherings.

Wide stairs connect to the lush garden and revamped swimming pool, which the family uses more frequently post-renovation. The outdoor furniture is modular and can be easily moved around, including down to the pool area when required.

For Ricci, working with this family was an opportunity to demonstrate the value of careful and well-considered design interventions. "I'm not an architect who likes to demolish everything and start again; I'd rather each part of the home felt like it had always been there," she says. "I think we've achieved that." ▶

Ricci Bloch Architecture+Interiors, Double Bay, NSW; 0411 203 896 or www.riccibloch.com.au.



"We only extended the footprint slightly but the house feels a lot more spacious because there are glimpses of greenery from every room."

Ricci Bloch, architect/interior designer

KITCHEN/DINING/LIVING "We deliberately arranged the kitchen with its back to the living room so you don't see the stove until you walk into the kitchen," says Ricci. Existing dining table. Molloy dining chairs, Cult. Marset Soho pendant lights, Est Lighting. Built-in sideboard clad in Polytec Woodmatt Florentine Walnut. Custom sofas, Noble & Jones Furniture Designers. Coffee table, Domo. Rug, Perryman Carpets. Kitchen benchtops in Savoy marble, Worldstone Solutions. Stove, Ilve. Artwork above sofa is a family piece. **Designer buy:** Casa Handmade Zellige tiles (splashback), \$336/m², Onsite Supply+Design.



SIDE DECK A lush wall of bamboo screens out the neighbours. **SON'S BEDROOM** Opposite, top left and bottom Reducing the length of this bedroom allowed the family to squeeze in an extra bathroom. Aliya bedside table, Grazia & Co. Muuto 'Tip' table lamp, Living Edge. Hoffman chair, Thonet. Artek stool, Anibou. Artworks by Lucy Anderson (above bed) and Julian Meagher (bird study). **Smart buy:** Bondi Curly Bits framed print, from \$150, Aquabumps. **BATHROOM** A walk-through shower is a great space-saving solution in a compact bathroom. New Paradise hexagon floor tiles, Di Lorenzo Tiles. Brodware tapware, Candana Bathroomware.

THIS IS THE LIFE
 "The owners love to entertain so we wanted the garden to feel intertwined with the home, like one entity," says Ricci. "Before the renovation, the beautiful garden could only be experienced from the rear of the house. Now, new doors, windows and decks help make the house feel more open and spacious overall – even though we only extended the footprint slightly – because there are glimpses of greenery from every room." ▶

"I wanted each of the new elements to feel like they had always been there." Ricci Bloch



The Layout



ENTRANCE Landscaping by Starr Landscapes and crisp paint (Dulux Lexicon Quarter) has renewed the home's street appeal. Bluestone steppers, Eco Outdoor. Door handle, In-Teria. Tivah wall lights, Havit Lighting. *For Where to Buy, see page 198.* **H&G**