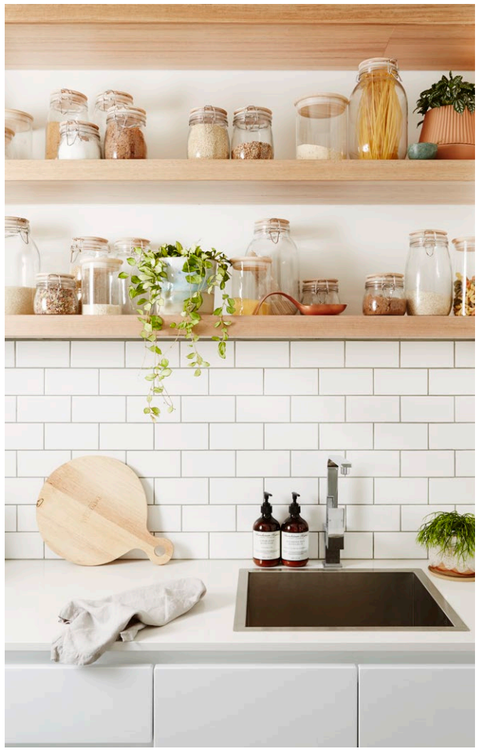
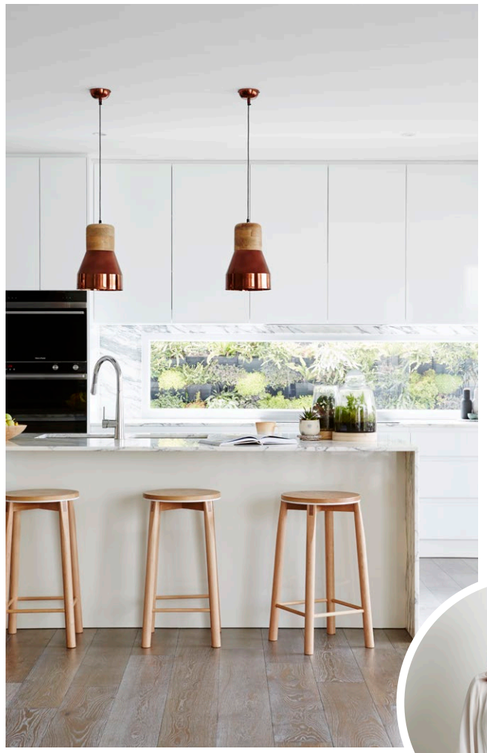
FAMILY *friendly*

A young family worked with Michelle Hart of Bask Interiors to inject warmth and personality into their Melbourne home. The result – a beautifully textured interior that's hard-wearing enough to withstand the toddler factor.

PHOTOGRAPHY ANNETTE O'BRIEN / **STYLING** ALANA LANGAN / **WORDS** CASEY HUTTON





MICHELLE HART

"A lot of the furniture and artworks were made in Australia, by Australian brands and artists."

FRONT ENTRY Carla Fletcher's 'Bliss' artwork sets the tone in the front entrance for the neutral colour palette throughout, and the predominantly Australian brands and designers' products featured. Grey pot and plant from Ivy Muse.

KITCHEN "The only requirement for the kitchen were new stools," says Michelle. "I've used the 'Crop' stool from local company Relm on a few projects, and my clients always love them. The oak worked perfectly with the other pieces in the open plan living/dining area and the four legs made this a really sturdy stool which is important when you have young kids."

For the family, moving from a Federation-style home to a freshly renovated, 1950s house in Melbourne presented a challenge – how to furnish it.

Their new place was ideal for a family, but lacked warmth. "It was basically a white blank canvas," the family explains. Local interior stylist Michelle Hart was enlisted with a clear brief – make the home inviting, but keep it practical for a family with young children.

The more traditional decor from their previous home didn't suit their new space, so they opted to keep only a few artworks and two beloved silk rugs.

"The family were drawn to the Scandinavian style with light timber finishes and pastel colours, but were very adamant about not making the living space appear overly feminine," Michelle recalls. "the interior style also crosses over to a more flowing, bohemian feel, so their home is quite unique to them – and quintessentially Australian. A lot of the furniture and artworks we selected were customised and made in Australia, by Australian brands and artists."

In the living room, a palette of navy, light grey and white, warmed with blush accents and tan leather, keeps the space soft but grounded. "I didn't want our living zone looking too feminine, as my husband would feel out of place," the client explains.

The room is anchored by a neutral Wilfred linen sofa and armchair, and a navy Andy armchair (all by Jardan), atop a woven rug from Halcyon Lake. Michelle mixed materials – a marble-topped Fenton & Fenton coffee table, timber Mark Tuckey side table, tan leather ottoman from Jardan, soft cushions and throws, and living greenery – to create a laidback, textured look.

The living room is part of an open-plan dining room and kitchen. Though it's a large space, Michelle says it was also the most challenging, as two long, thin windows along one wall interfered with the placement of a sideboard – "it ended up being halfway in the living room and halfway in the dining room, looking like it didn't belong to either". To solve the problem, she commissioned a large artwork by Australian artist Michael Bond, to unify the two zones. She then dispensed the sideboard and instead installed a Fenton & Fenton bench with a woven leather top. >

Open plan design

COMFORTABLE LIVING "My favourite room would have to be our living zone where we spend most of our time," says the client. "The sofas are so soft and comfortable and the colour palette of navy and neutral tones has created a very peaceful vibe." Sofa, armchairs, leather ottoman and wooden side table from Jardan; coffee table from Fenton & Fenton; Mark Tuckey 'Egg' stool; rug from Halcyon Lake.

DINING Two beautiful silk rugs were incorporate these into the new home. Michelle chose to ground the dining space with one of them which also beautifully tied in with the overall colour palette. Dining table and chairs from Huset; art by Michael Bond; pendant light from HK Living; bench seat from Fenton & Fenton; navy bowl from Jardan; plant stand from Ivy Muse.

< Michelle styled the master bedroom as a restful retreat for tired parents. She lightened the space by switching the bedside lampshades from black to a white-and-oak combo, and installing a custom-made bed upholstered in light grey fabric from MuBu Home. A photographic work – *At Peace* by Aussie photographer Joanne Piechota – adds another layer of tranquility.

The home's casual style flows out into its alfresco space, which is furnished with unfussy layerings of white, blue, and timber. The family chose to install lush, self-watering, vertical gardens (by PAPS Vertical Gardens) outside the kitchen window – and as a showstopping backdrop to the pool.

The family is thrilled with the transformation of their home. "Michelle has this very relaxed and calm aura that translates into her styling," the client says. "I couldn't be happier!"

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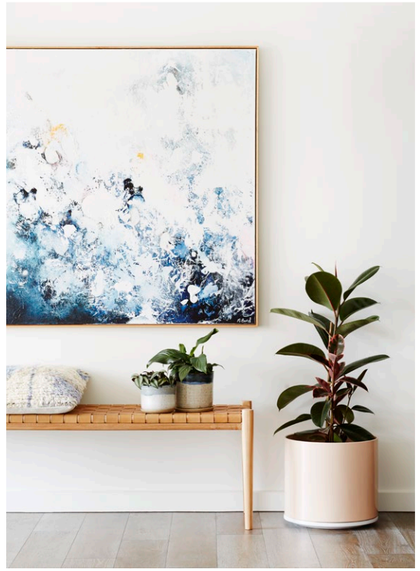
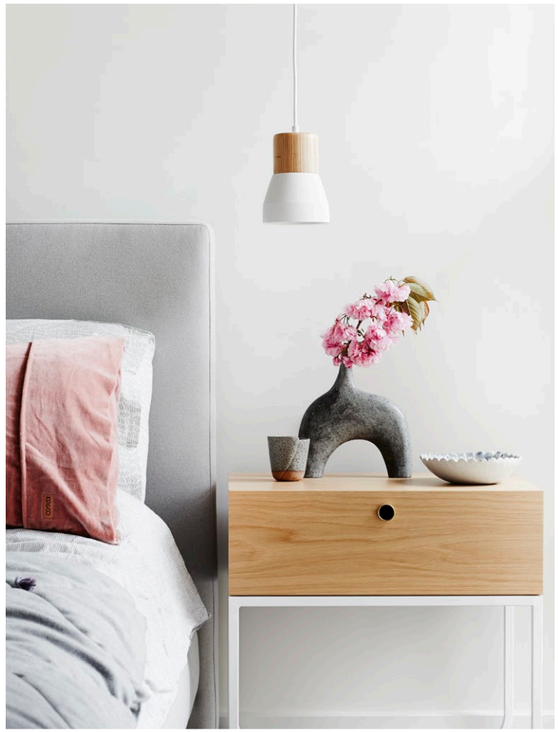
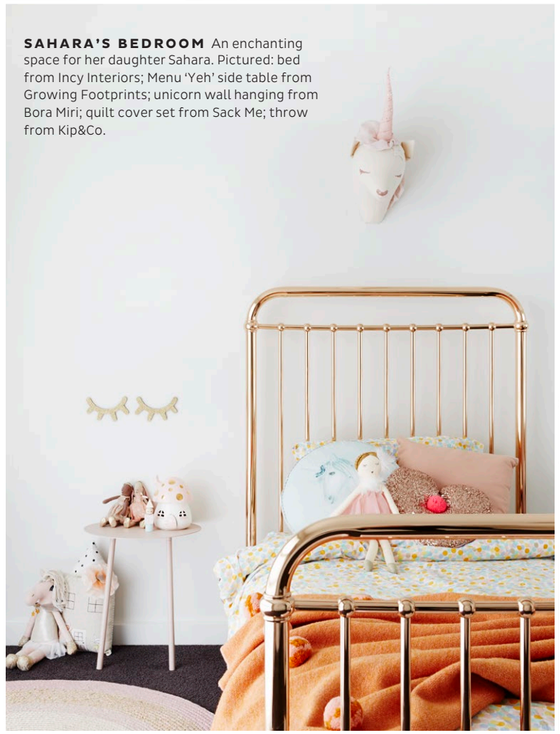
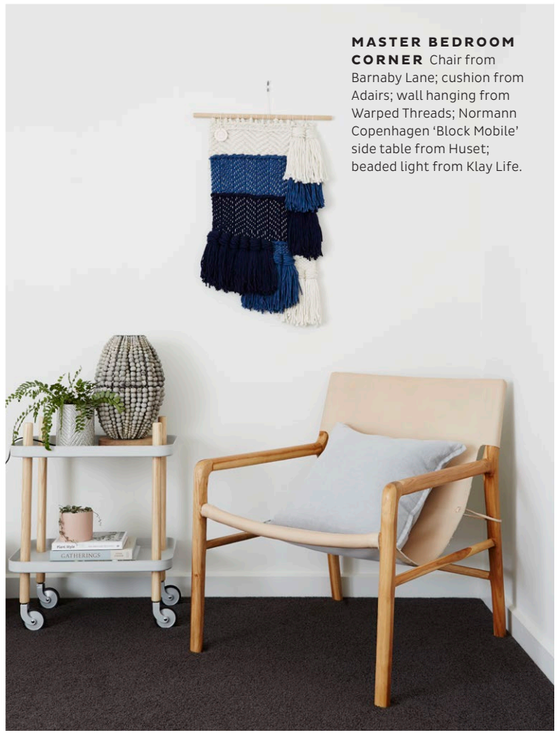




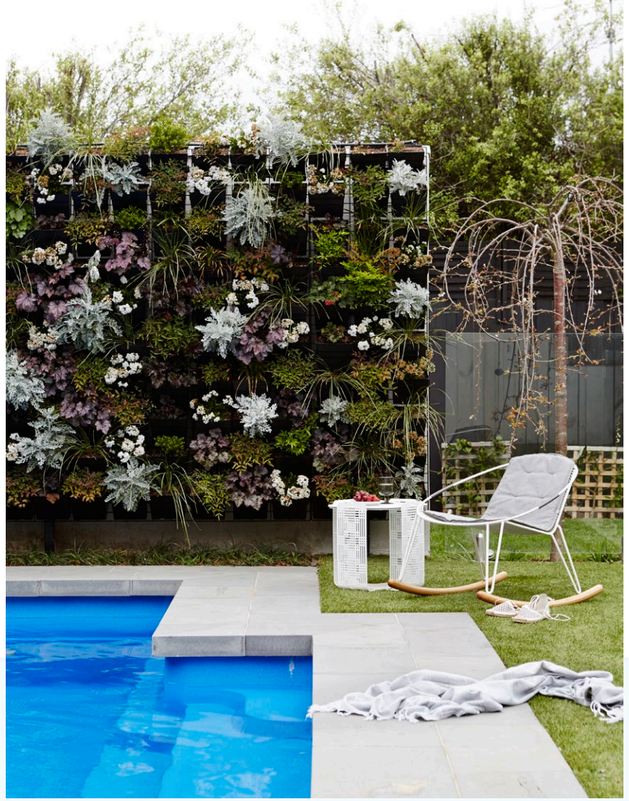
SAHARA'S BEDROOM An enchanting space for her daughter Sahara. Pictured: bed from Incy Interiors; Menu 'Yeh' side table from Growing Footprints; unicorn wall hanging from Bora Miri; quilt cover set from Sack Me; throw from Kip&Co.



MASTER BEDROOM CORNER Chair from Barnaby Lane; cushion from Adairs; wall hanging from Warped Threads; Normann Copenhagen 'Block Mobile' side table from Huset; beaded light from Klay Life.



TRANQUIL BEDROOM "The artwork we selected from Forman Picture Framing is titled 'At Peace' by Australian photographer Joanne Piechota. Her photographic art is absolutely perfect for creating a sense of serenity and calmness in bedrooms," says Michelle. Bed from MuBu Home; pendant light from Beacon Lighting; bedside table from Grazia & Co; ceramic vessels/vases from Clay Canoe and ceramic bowl from Bridget Bodenham; Cakebread bed cover and round cushion from Fenton & Fenton; pillowcases from The Pillowslip Store and Kip&Co.



VERTICAL GARDEN Vertical garden installed outside of the kitchen window earlier in the year to hide the fence. The family loved the look it created, so decided to also do the same in the pool area. This particular system by Paps Vertical Gardens features a timed self-watering system with low maintenance plants of different colours and textures which makes for a beautiful backdrop. Outdoor chair and side table by Tait.

OUTDOOR PATIO Michelle chose contemporary outdoor furniture from GlobeWest and Tait to complement the furnishings inside the living/dining room, as this space opens up to the outside alfresco area. Outdoor sofa and coffee table by Tait; pots from Ivy Muse; rug from Armadillo; blue cushions from Basil Bangs; sun lounges from Huset.

OUTDOOR DINING "Not only is our outdoor dining area great for entertaining, but also doubles as my oasis for work whilst on the laptop gazing out at the pool and garden. I love how the dining table automatically directs your focus to the garden, no matter where you choose to sit," explains the client. Table and chairs from GlobeWest; towel from Fenton and Fenton; outdoor rug from Tribe Home.

VIGNETTE (PICTURED OPPOSITE PAGE) From left to right: Leaf and Thread ceramic planter from Ivy Muse, vase from Lightly, planter with legs by Bridget Bodenham.

CREATE AN INTERESTING VIGNETTE USING BOOKS, VASES AND PLANTERS.

Style TO STEAL

Love this home's contemporary Australian style? Get the look with these stylish finds.

COLOUR PALETTE

PRINT 'Bliss' limited edition print (80x80cm) by Carla Fletcher $750 carlafletcher.bigcartel.com / **PENDANT LIGHT** Clickon Furniture 'Duo' pendant light in copper $209 clickonfurniture.com.au / **RUG** Tribe Home 'Como' rug in charcoal (1.6 x 2.3m) $1,196 tribehome.com.au / **ARMCHAIR** Barnaby Lane 'Smith' armchair in blush $1,099 barnabylane.com.au **COFFEE TABLE** Fenton & Fenton 'Woodrow' marble oval coffee table $1,200 fentonandfenton.com.au / **PILLOWCASE** Castle baby pink velvet pillowcase $49 castleandthings.com.au **SOFA** Sarah Ellison 'Zephyr' 3.5 seater sofa $3,395 clickonfurniture.com.au / **CUSHION** Cakebread 'Blue Moon' cushion $340 fentonandfenton.com.au / **CARAFE** Maison Balzac 'J'ai Soif' carafe (with medium glass) in smoke grey $79 bastilleandsons.com.au / **TOWEL** 'Pom pom' 100% cotton Turkish towel (extra large) $89.95 ilovelinen.com.au / **POT** Zakkia 'Podium' flat pot $39 plantedmagazine.com.au / **STOOL** Relm 'Crop' bar stool (66cm) $495 relm.au