THE PERFECT *canvas*

SURROUNDED BY NATURE, THE FAMILY HOME OF A MELBOURNE ARTIST IS AS CREATIVE AS IT IS COLOURFUL

Story JACKIE BRYGEL Styling MICHELLE HART & JULIANNE BULL Photography SUZI APPEL

For as long as she can remember, Christine has been in love with emerald hues. And to the artist, who shares her light-filled home with her filmmaker husband Jesse and their teenage son Harry, waking to the greenest of landscapes has always been good for the soul.

So it's no surprise, then, that Christine was captivated from the moment she set eyes on her Bayside Melbourne home's glorious garden, richly layered with a seasonal show of perfumed blooms, leafy canopies and sun-dappled hideaways. For this is truly a home that wears its green heart on its sleeve, having previously belonged to the owners of a local nursery. And now Christine feels a certain joyous responsibility to nurture and replenish the garden, much of which was lovingly brought to life from the ground up by its former caretakers.

"It was summer when we bought the house two years ago, so everything was in bloom," she says. "There were colourful flowers in every corner of the garden, and the home had a tropical feel. We thought the garden was amazing and, really, that was what sold us on the house. We did feel as though we were taking on quite an obligation, but luckily we do have a bit of a green thumb so we love spending time working on it."

Inside and out, the artfully transformed 1950s brick home pays homage to Mother Nature. Even the front gate is festooned with foliage, a clear nod to the abundance of verdant delights that unfold beyond the suburban footpath. Beckoning from the light-bathed core living space via floor-to-ceiling retractable glazed doors is the alfresco deck and rear garden. Meanwhile, within the walls of the home, a thriving assortment of potted flora lends a further sense of colour and tranquillity.

"I'm absolutely crazy for indoor plants and love looking after them," says Christine. "They bring so much life to a home and they're good for us too. Everyone who comes here says it feels like a resort, which may also have something to do with the fact that there's always food – and sometimes cocktails – on offer!"

When Christine and Jesse first inspected the property, they delighted in the fact that it was move-in-ready. "The previous owners renovated about 10 years ago, adding the family room, new kitchen, alfresco deck and pool," explains Christine. "Most of the features they introduced are pretty timeless. So, really, we haven't had to do anything to the house except decorate it."

And decorate Christine certainly has – to gorgeous effect. Throughout the home, her beautiful paintings – along with the works of many other contemporary Australian artists – are perfectly showcased, as are curated vignettes of treasured glass and resin decorator pieces. Cushions, throws and rugs in complementary tones and textures warm an eclectic collection of furniture, unified by all shades of watery hues.

"I've loved the colour green, and also blue, forever," says Christine. "I always paint in those tones, as they remind me of the outdoors. To me, they're such soothing colours and ones that help make the house into a feel-good home."

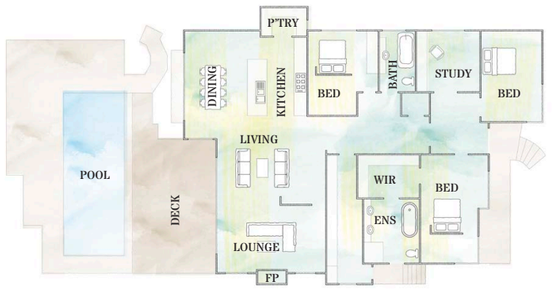
Indeed, this is a decidedly bright and welcoming family abode – one that bears its current owners' creative imprint while continuing to celebrate nature at its inspirational best.

WORK OF ART As vibrant as one of her paintings, the family home of artist Christine, of Art Design Mint, is brimming with colour and texture. "I'm definitely not afraid of colour," says Christine (pictured opposite), adding with a laugh, "and I'm not afraid of scatter cushions either!" In the open-plan family room, one of Christine's paintings – 'Violet Hills' – takes its colour cues from the 'Juno Florence' velvet sofa chair in Blossom from Globe West. The Sacha Design handcrafted red-gum table was given to Christine and her husband Jesse for their wedding 20 years ago. >

KITCHEN From the expansive island bench, clad in Caesarstone Snow, to the famous TH Brown bar stools – which Christine snapped up at the Mornington Antique Centre – and the bespoke trio of striking metal pendants, there are many things to love about this entertainer's delight (below). Not least of these is the blend of 2-pac joinery in zesty Dulux Mangrove Leaf vividly contrasted against crisp overhead door-fronts in Dulux Natural White. "I really love the green cupboards," explains Christine, taking some time out in the kitchen (opposite far right). "It was a brave move of the previous owners, but I think it works very well."

"IN THE *warmer* MONTHS WE SPEND A LOT OF TIME ON *the deck* - THE DOORS RETRACT AND IT *becomes* PART OF THE HOUSE" ~ *CHRISTINE*

FLOOR PLAN



DINING AREA Making the most of the lush garden vistas, the sunny dining space (top left) features a recycled messmate table from Alex Earl, teamed with a set of mid-century style upholstered chairs – for similar, try 'Joshua' chairs from Castlery. A handmade graphic floor rug from Najaf Rugs adds a cosy, delightful pattern underfoot. On the wall above, more of Christine's beautiful art – the aptly-titled 'When Colour Comes' – steals the show.

LIVING AREA Overlooking the deck, the family room (right) is warmed by a geometric rug from West Elm – "I'm definitely a lover of rugs," concedes Christine with a smile. The Globe West 'Juno Florence' armchair is plumped up with a cushion from Hale Mercantile. >

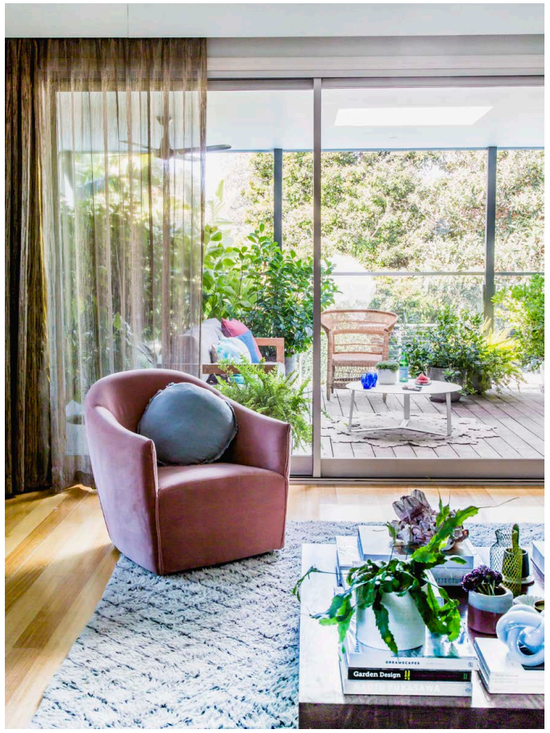
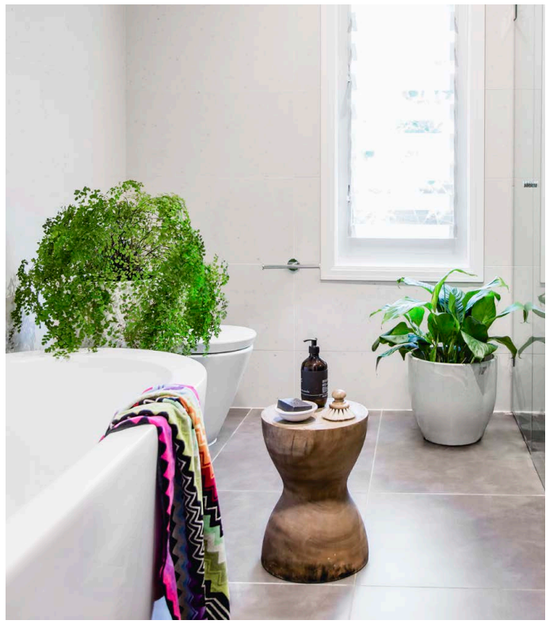


ILLUSTRATION **KENZEDESIGN.COM**

MAIN BEDROOM In a corner of the couple's bedroom (above), a dresser found at the Mornington Antique Centre lends a touch of old-world glamour. Christine adorned it with vintage vases, one speckled pinch bowl by glass artist Renee Marie McDonald (front centre) and resin-ware by Dinosaur Designs. Christine found the circular bamboo mirror at Safari Living. **ENSUITE** Christine and Jesse's plant-laden pamper zone (below) is a statement in luxury, which is emphasised by the Decina 'Cool' bath – perfect for a long soak. The colourful towel is by Missoni, while the curvy Globe West timber stool provides a handy resting spot for bathing essentials.



WE LOVE...
wall whimsy

Proof that eye-catching art can take many forms, this handmade Juju hat (below) – made with feathers stitched into a raffia basket, and traditionally worn by tribal dancers – provides a perfectly outside-the-box wall decoration. "I love things that are a little bit different and tell a story," says Christine. Find similar at Temple & Webster.

MAIN BEDROOM Christine and Jesse's bedroom is proof that blue and green should always be seen (below). Adorning the Haymes Paint Stormy Blue feature wall, Christine's 'Story In Blue' (on left) shares the limelight with Helen McCullagh's still-life painting 'Lisa'. On the MuBu Home bed, a blue linen quilt cover from H&M has been layered with a chunky emerald throw from Behr & Co. The 'Attila' brass and marble table lamps were found at MRD Home. >

EXTERIOR

The resort-style front garden (below) belies the fact that the home is located in a bustling bayside suburb of Melbourne. "Harry attended the kindergarten four doors down from here when he was little, and we often used to walk past and say, 'The garden looks so gorgeous – we'd love to see inside'," says Christine. "One day, the home came on the market, and we went to look and absolutely fell in love the second we saw it."

CONTACTS

Artwork

Christine Minter, Art Design Mint, artdesignmint.com.

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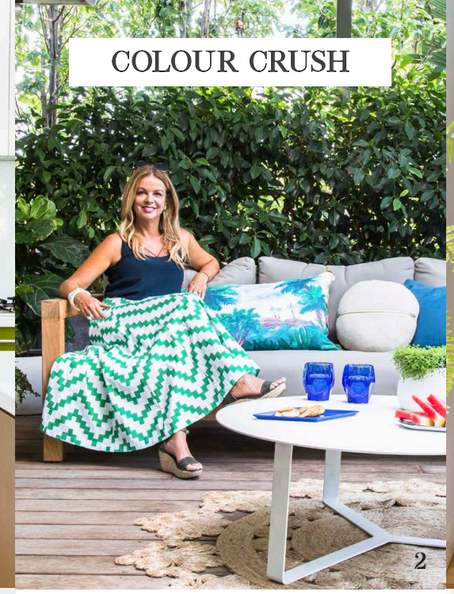

COLOUR CRUSH

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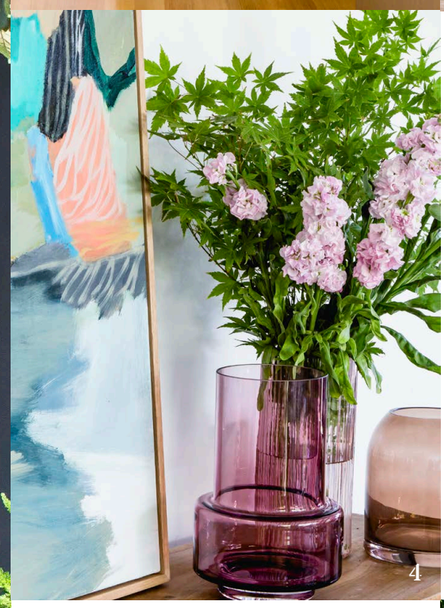

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INSIDE STORY

CHRISTINE & JESSE'S HOME

Who lives here?

Christine, an artist; her husband Jesse, a filmmaker; their son Harry, 14; Tom the cat.

How would you describe your decorating style?

Christine: "It's definitely eclectic. I love to mix vintage pieces with Danish furniture and contemporary items. To me, there are no rules when decorating. The only rule is that you have to love what you're choosing – and then you'll be able to make it work."

What's your favourite piece in the home?

"I'd have to say the red-gum coffee table in the family room, as it has such sentimental value to us. It's definitely a forever piece."

Best tip for buying artwork?

"Invest wisely in a piece that is timeless, rather than worrying about it being on-trend. And go as large as you can for greater impact."

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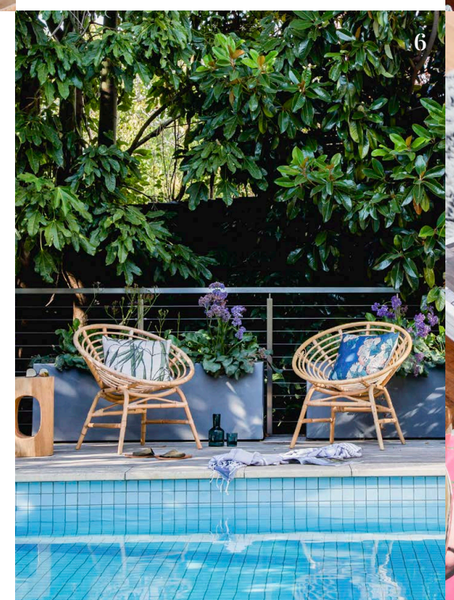

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ACTUAL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

1. *Green 2-pac kitchen cabinetry in Dulux Mangrove Leaf.*
2. *Christine relaxes on a Globe West 'Sonoma' sofa on the merbau deck.*
3. *Christine's 'When Colour Comes'.*
4. *A hurricane vase by Ro Collection and Christine's 'April Reflection'.*
5. *The 'Juno Florence' occasional chair by Globe West in Blossom.*
6. *Wicker chairs beckon poolside – for similar, try Home Republic 'Milo Bahama' rattan chairs from Adairs.*
7. *A colourful collection of decorator pieces and books on the coffee table.*