



rom the other side of the world in sunny California, expats Kelli and David sat down with a map of Australia and drew a circle around Melbourne. Keen to make the move back to their native country, but never having lived too far from the bustle of the southern capital, the couple made the adventurous choice to short list potential homes in suburbs they only knew via word of mouth. "We were living about an hour out of San Francisco where David was working, so we thought we could live about an hour out of Melbourne," says Kelli, her relaxed tone belying the monumental logistical challenge of relocating a family of four across the Pacific Ocean. "We felt it was time to come home, we just didn't know where home was."

That changed with the discovery of a 1970s property nestled amid the undulating landscape of Mount Martha on the Mornington Peninsula. Kelli had only seen the home via a video link, pausing the footage frame by frame to determine whether the family's collection of furniture and art would fit. They trusted their instincts and snapped it up. Ten years later, Kelli, David and their sons Jack, 17, and Sam, 14, have created a dream home where a sophisticated mix of earthy hues and natural materials projects warmth and welcome – all with a more masculine edge.

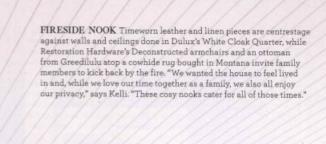
It wasn't always such a striking haven, though. After their move, the homeowners faced unappealing evidence of their home's original era, as well as an early 2000s extension. Undaunted, Kelli and David teamed up with local designer Kate Walker of Kate Walker Design (KWD) to bring together a home that reflects their family's life. >



FLOOR PLAN



ENTRY Well-travelled four-legged friends Teak and Raffy greet visitors alongside Kelli (pictured, top left). Engineered European oak wide board floors introduce the light-grey tones that are key to the home's natural palette. DINING ROOM The striking artwork 'Many Stars' by Ildiko Kovacs (top right) picks up the hues of a soft grey linear wool rug from Roger Oates, offsetting the rustic beauty of the custom dining suite by Coastal Living.



## "I'M NOT A BIG ONE FOR FOR FOR - I FEEL LIKE YOU NEED TO GO WITH YOUR GUT" - KELLI



KITCHEN Designed to be aesthetically pleasing while cleverly concealing mess, the kitchen (below & opposite top right), with its hidden appliances and reverse-sided butler's pantry (opposite below right), perfectly serves the family. The designer, Kate, selected the Calacatta marble for the benchtops and splashback (its hints of caramel highlighted by Coco Republic leather bar stools) as the mountain-like shapes and patterns reminded her of the family's years living in alpine regions in the US. "If you drew a heat map of the house you would see we spend a lot of time around this space in the summer months – when the doors are flung open, the inside and outside collide in the most beautiful way," says Kellii of the custom, steel-framed glass doors that flood the room with natural light.





What started out as a modest plan to update chrome door handles quickly evolved into a full-scale makeover. The removal of a few walls and a palette change launched a chain reaction of renovating that would span two years, leaving no room untouched. Briefed on the family's love of alpine regions and the beach, KWD set about combining the twin passions to deliver a home for all seasons.

While 'sludgy' hues and woolly textures layer the home with warmth in winter, sprawling decks invite the family to bask in the summer sun. "While I adore all of the hard and soft finishes selected, it was the considered space planning and the joinery design that made the biggest differences to this home," says interior designer Kate. The beating heart of the home is the kitchen, where tones of deep green shift with the ever-changing light. It's a natural gathering place for the family - though cooler temperatures call for a migration upstairs, where an eye-catching, leather-clad fireplace and rich ochre accents set the scene for the ultimate cosy retreat.

Luxurious stonework sits alongside ambient custom lighting, but it's the art collection, lovingly acquired over a lifetime, the family most prizes. "Some of the rooms have been designed around the art," says Kelli. "It feels like you are living amongst these artists."

As much as this coastal home tells the tale of a well-travelled, curio-collecting and art-loving family, the design of each space also reveals how they have embraced Australian shores once again. "We've made it our place," explains Kelli. "It's taken us 10 years to work out how we really want to live in it. And this is us."

UPSTAIRS LOUNGE Dark joinery (top left) handpainted in Porter's Paints Caraway is the perfect foil for the white-panelled ceiling, while a wicker coffee table from Weylandts and a Coco Republic chair (atop a KWD custom rug) add some extra texture and depth.

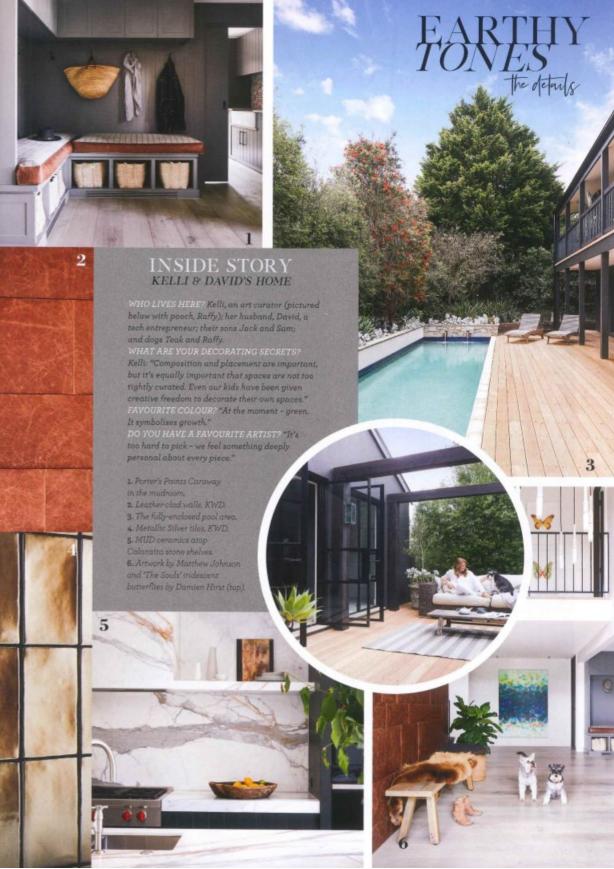
BUTLER'S PANTRY Tucked behind the kitchen is a pantry as luxe as the main event. Laminex 'Battalion' doors (right) and handmade KWD subway tiles provide a style and scheme to match the rest of the home. >











COLOUR DECORATING Special



## COOL, CALM & CURATED

A STRIKING RENOVATION PAYS DIVIDENDS FOR A FAMILY WHO SEAMLESSLY COMBINE THEIR LOVE OF COASTAL AND ALPINE REGIONS ON THE MORNINGTON PENINSULA

Story & Styling JULIA GREEN Photography ARMELLE HABIB