

ΤΕΑΜ EFFORT

Collaboration got this new build on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula off the ground in a spectacular way and the result attracted attention from the other side of the world

> WORDS STEPHANIE HOPE PHOTOGRAPHY ARMELLE HABIB STYLING JULIA GREEN AND WHITE PICKET INTERIORS



she says, Muuto 'Nerd' bar stools, Huset. EXTERIOR (opposite) Andrew Stark Garden Design was responsible for the gardens, which were designed around an existing acorn tree. Two tones of Dulux Black Caviar paint were used on the exterior, resulting in a striking backdrop for the

cheat sheet

Who lives here Brooke Davies Casanova and her husband Christopher, with their two rescue dogs: Swanson and Cholula. Style of home A new build with four bedrooms and four bathrooms, designed with a modern-farmhouse look and feel to reflect its surroundings.



Building began in October 2019 and was completed by November 2020. **\$\$\$\$** The project cost \$1.2 million.

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ount Eliza on the Mornington Peninsula, south of Melbourne, recently welcomed a new addition to one of its quiet, in-demand suburban streets, and it caused quite a stir – for all the right reasons.

With its black facade and fresh green gardens, the striking single-storey home is called Sable Lodge and is the inaugural showpiece of up-and-coming firm Project 718, headed up by property developers Mark Godek and Steve Ditterich. They took great pains to create something that stood out from the real-estate crowd. "Our aim was to build a home that we would be over the moon to live in," says Mark. "As well as creating somewhere that was easy to live and entertain in, we also wanted to deliver something that people hadn't seen before."

Working in collaboration with interior-design studio Kate Walker Design (KWD) and building designer Rod Hannah, Project 718 has produced a home that is comfortable, functional and jam-packed with beautiful features. "Our goal was to shock the local market, change things up and show what is possible with some innovation, experimentation and a commitment to design execution," says Kate.

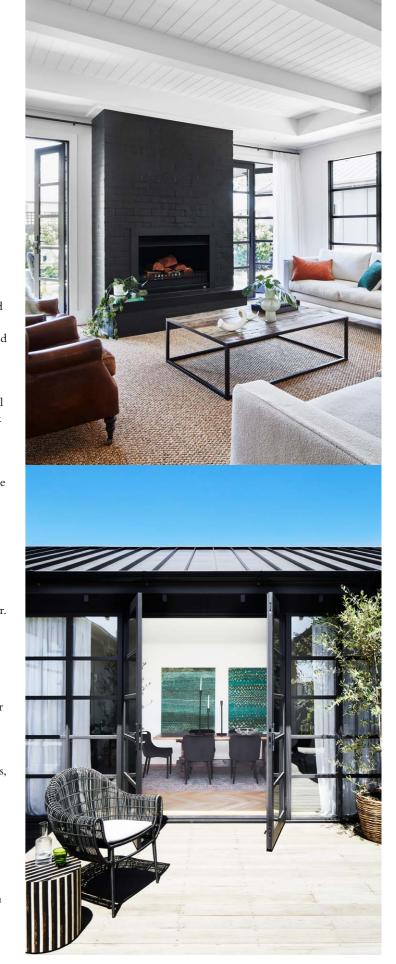
From the outset, the dark colour scheme, modern-farmhouse design and landscaped gardens built around a 60-year-old acorn tree make an impact. Then, stepping through a solid-oak entry door, expertly curated interiors delight at every turn. "The home itself isn't overly large, so we wanted to make a visual impact with tactile elements," says Kate, who selected – and, in some cases, custom-designed – all of the home's finishes. From the shiplap walls and ceilings to the timber, tiled or plush carpeted floors, each surface brings its own unique textural layer.

The cleverly devised layout places the primary living areas and main bedroom at the front of the property, and a second living zone and three additional bedrooms to the rear. "This whole back end can be shut off if needed, keeping the heating and cooling to the areas that are most used," says Steve. An open-plan kitchen, dining and living room flows to the outdoor entertaining area, gardens and lawn.

We all know that kitchens sell houses and Sable Lodge's doesn't disappoint. Black Shaker-style cabinetry conceals a bar, appliance cupboard, breakfast cupboard and integrated appliances, while the central island has deep drawers and a built-in dishwasher and sink. A black-tiled rangehood and splashback lends an almost jewel-like finish. "We actually questioned this tile choice twice with Kate, but she assured us it would look amazing – and she wasn't wrong," says Steve.

The bathrooms have received the same degree of care and diligence. "It was really important that each bathroom became an extension of the living areas, rather than just being utilitarian spaces," says Kate. The main ensuite overlooks the gardens, where a deep bathtub sits in front of floor-to-ceiling windows framed by sheer autumnal curtains. In the main bathroom

MAIN LIVING AREA (top) Spacious and light with a garden view, this is one of KWD's hallmark projects. "We are always looking to bring the outside in," says Kate. Sofas by Guests Furniture and KWD. Coffee table, White Picket Interiors. Cushions, Tigger Hall Design. Open firebox fireplace, Jetmaster. **DECK** (above) The dining zone opens to a blackbutt timber deck featuring a chair and side table from White Picket Interiors. **KITCHEN** (opposite) "We wanted to steer away from the Hamptons look prevalent in the area and instead went with a dark aesthetic for a cocoon-like feel," says Kate. The Shaker-style cabinetry is Porter's Paints Black Ice, while glossy charcoal Zellige tiles conceal a Smeg rangehood. Normann Copenhagen 'Bell' pendants, Huset. Kaz Morton bowl, Greenhouse Interiors.









Lighting Co. The separate WC (above) off the wet area has a concrete washbasin on a steel stand in powdercoated Dulux Cove by KWD & Co.





The temperature at Sable Lodge is controlled via three Daikin reversecycle units – one for the main bedroom, one for the kitchen, dining and living zone, and another for the back bedrooms. That way, you can heat or cool individual areas or not have the aircon operating at all. There is also underfloor heating in the main ensuite.

ENSUITE (top left and opposite) A skylight illuminates the shower nook in this bathroom, and Manhattan Stone White ceramic tiles from KWD & Co adorn the walls and floors. "There's nothing standard in this house," says Project 718's Mark Godek. Kate selected rust-coloured curtains from Lynch's Window Fashions to mirror the look of autumn leaves. "They help to create different moods when they're open and when they're closed," she says. Timber-veneer vanity (topped with Bianco Carrara marble), Farmers Doors. Kado 'Lussi' bath, Reece. Yokato bath mixer in Aged Iron, Brodware. Timber stool, Coco Republic. Towel, Lüks. MAIN BATHROOM (top right and above) Textured handmade Norwich wall tiles by KWD & Co link this space with the outdoors. "The floor heating is a plus on chilly Melbourne mornings!" says homeowner Brooke. Basins, Rogerseller. Mirrors, Restoration Hardware. Thomas O'Brien 'Hulton' wall sconce, The Montauk



there's a bath and large shower nook, plus a double vanity with ample storage. But it's the smallest bathroom that Mark and Steve are most pleased with. "The powder room features black shiplap walls, marble mosaic flooring, a timber-and-stone vanity and a custom mirror – it's pretty cool!" says Mark.

Of course, he and Steve need no convincing of the property's many charms, but the real confirmation came when Sable Lodge attracted the attention of a buyer on the other side of the world. Brooke Davies Casanova, an Australian who grew up in Mount Eliza, was living in LA with her husband Christopher when the home popped up in her daily property search. "A terrible hobby of mine is looking at real estate in both Melbourne and Los Angeles – I like to know everything that's on the market at all times," says Brooke. "Sable Lodge was so unique compared to other houses, and we were so excited to see it. We returned to Australia from the US and arranged to view the house within four days of exiting hotel quarantine, and a day later we made an offer!"

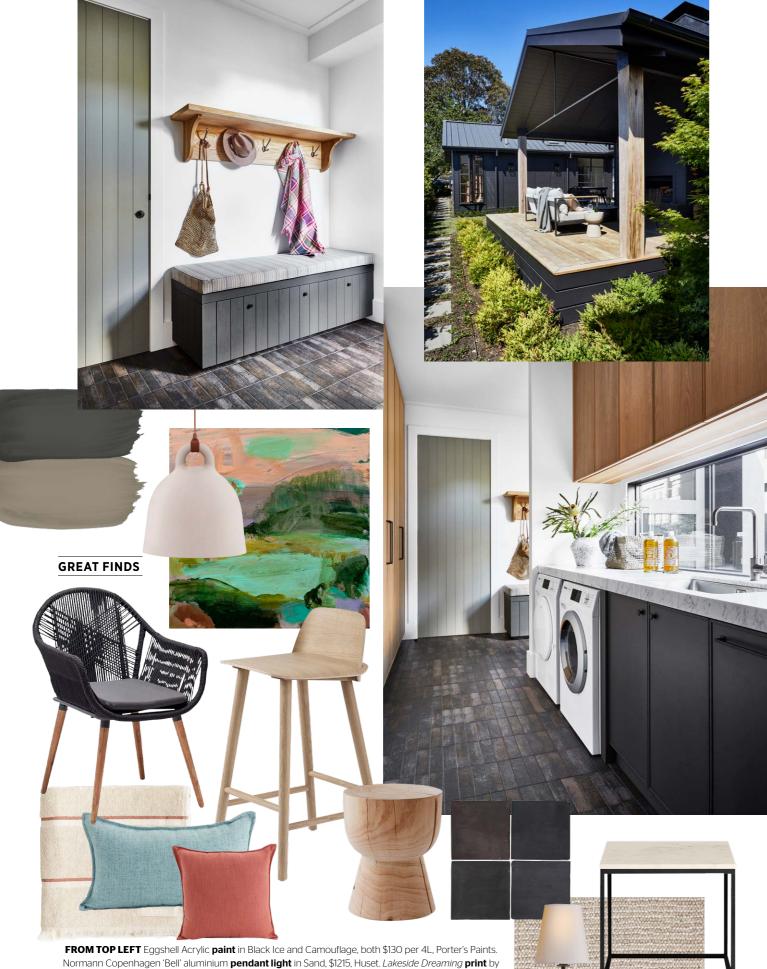
She lists the incredible attention to detail as one of many reasons why she and Christopher jumped at the sale. "The layout has been carefully designed for entertaining, there's ample storage, and the quality of finishes went above and beyond what we had seen in other properties," says Brooke. Other drawcards were the extra rooms for guests, a kitchen island with bench seating for entertaining, and a work area for two that makes use of a thoroughfare between the living area and back bedrooms.

"The house has a beautiful, calm, welcoming feel when you walk in, and it's clear that no detail has been missed," says Brooke. "We can't wait to sit on the back deck among all that green foliage and read our books by the fire." Follow Project 718 on Instagram @project_718. Kate Walker Design is at katewalkerdesign.com.au, kwdandco.com.au or @ katewalker_design. Rod Hannah is at rodhannahandassociates.com.au. The builder was Marc Toussaint Constructions at mtcon.com.au, and the landscaping was done by Andrew Stark Garden Design at astarkgardendesign.com.au

MAIN BEDROOM (this page and opposite) "This space needed to feel really 'nooshy," says Kate. "So we specified one of KWD & Co's handmade wool carpets in Manhattan Beige – it's 27mm thick and you feel like you're walking on clouds." Bench seat, Zenn Design. Armchair, White Picket Interiors. Table, SK Designer Living. Artwork by Amanda McColl. Behind the wall painted Dulux Snowy Mountains is a wardrobe area fitted with a tallboy, which can be used as a make-up station or layout space for jewellery and accessories. Slimline Shaker-style joinery in a natural finish, and shiplap cladding in Dulux Snowy Mountains. Sydney handles, Hepburn Hardware. Mirror, KWD & Co. Bedhead, White Picket Interiors. Linen, Bed Threads. Vintage throw, Greenhouse Interiors. Side table, Oly Studio. Lamp, Milk & Sugar. Vase, Marmoset Found. Artwork by Belynda Henry, through Greenhouse Interiors.



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Kate Pittas (35cm x 35cm), \$330 (unframed), Greenhouse Interiors. Emerson eucalyptus-and-rope outdoor dining chair, \$269, Domayne. Muuto 'Nerd' oak bar stool, \$825, Living Edge. Flax towel, \$149, Købn. Basic linen cushions in Light Blue (30cm x 50cm), \$39, and Rust (55cm x 55cm), \$44, Domayne. Eggcup radiata pine stool, from \$650, Mark Tuckey. Zellige glazed clay tiles in Charcoal (10cm x 10cm), \$329 per sq m, Tile Republic. Cubby marble-topped bedside table, \$529, Domayne. Manhattan handmade wool carpet in Beige, \$160 per sq m, KWD & Co. Hulton sconce by Thomas O'Brien, \$594, The Montauk Lighting Co. ADDITIONAL PRODUCT SOURCING: KATE HASS

TERRACE (this page and opposite, top right) The covered entertaining area can be used year round, thanks to the Jetmaster open fire. Sofa, Coco Republic. Chairs, coffee table and stool, White Picket Interiors. **MUD ROOM** (opposite, top left) "This is a house full of detail, from front to back," says Steve. Case in point is this space, with shoe drawers built under the planked oak bench and hanging space courtesy of Hepburn Hardware wall hooks. Manhattan Slate Black floor tiles, KWD & Co. Door painted Porter's Paints Camouflage. **LAUNDRY** (opposite, bottom right) Access from the garage to here, the mud room and the butler's pantry is easy, which makes carrying in groceries from the car a breeze. Appliances, Siemens.

lessons learnt

"DON'T BE AFRAID TO CLASH TEXTURES"

KATE WALKER, INTERIOR DESIGNER "We went to town with textural elements, especially in the ensuite. From the subtly patterned tiles to

the timber joinery with Carrara marble benchtops, the beautiful aged-bronze wall sconces and the sheer, rust-coloured curtains, it's a lot – but everything adds to the overall sanctuary feel of the space."