



BLUE-SKY THINKING

Placing complete trust in their interior designer paid off for the owners of this home in Mount Martha, Victoria. The result? A home they all love.

STORY *Judy Pascoe* | STYLING *Julia Green/Greenhouse Interiors* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Armelle Habib*

EXTERIOR The house is painted Dulux Oolong with roof in Colorbond Surfmist and windows in Dulux Vivid White. Sandblasted and tumbled limestone pavers, KWD & Co. Garden design by Heath Blair of Plume Studio. Plants include *Pyrus nivalis*, *Artemisia arborescens*, *Miscanthus sinensis* and *Lomandra confertifolia*. Outdoor setting, Classic with a Twist. Moroccan cushion, Greenhouse Interiors. Alpaca throw, St Albans.





“I just knew we had to change the colour to blue. The owners trusted me completely.” KATE WALKER, INTERIOR DESIGNER

FOYER Sandhurst wall light in Antique Silver, The Montauk Lighting Co. Bench, Provincial Home Living. Cushions, Walter G. Rug, Najaf Rugs & Textiles. V-groove panelling painted Dulux Snowy Mountains Quarter. Quinn chandelier and Como engineered-Italian oak floorboards, all KWD & Co (throughout). **EXTERIOR ENTRY** Interior designer Kate Walker. ▶



LIVING *This page and opposite* Armchairs, Arthur G. Sofa and side table, both Big Chair Living. Afghan Kandahar rug, Cadrys. Sheer linen curtains, Abundant Home. Sideboard, Rose St Trading Co. *Poplars* artwork by Chanel Sohier, *Ode to Summer* artwork by Chris de Hoog, Dinosaur Designs vase and The Clay Society vase, all Greenhouse Interiors. Dargo mohair throw, St Albans. On shelves, bowls and vases from Pottery Barn, Greenhouse Interiors and House of Orange.



Many people feel a little uneasy when taken out of their comfort zone but from a design perspective it is often the best place to be if you are going to achieve something wonderful. In the case of this family who were looking to move from their home in inner-city Melbourne to Mount Martha where they had holidayed happily for years, the house they inspected with a view to buying was hardly their dream property. But it was on a large block of land, close to the beach and the shopping village of Mount Martha.

Kate Walker of KWD had worked her magic on their previous home in Melbourne so they sought her advice on the new property. “Kate could see that the house had great bones and she immediately visualised what it could become with the right design direction,” says the owner. “It was a massive leap of faith for me because I didn’t have a sense of what we could create.”

Kate led the family on a journey of discovery – about themselves as well as the house. “She definitely took us out of our comfort zone and the things that I was most nervous and unconfident about are those I now love the most,” enthuses the owner. The family was on a tight renovation budget for the three-bedroom home but Kate delivered on every aspect of their wish list including three bathrooms, two living spaces and a self-contained guest suite. Having seen ‘Beechwood’, the property Kate had renovated for her own family some years ago, they knew they wanted a similar coastal aesthetic and the same design principles.

“I wanted to maximise the beautiful northern orientation of the property,” says Kate. “And it was important to ensure the home was zoned in such a way that it could grow with the family as their two young children become adults.”

With the good bones Kate had identified early on, it was possible to keep much of the house intact, including the roof pitch. “We amplified what was already there,” says Kate, “increasing the footprint by adding a guest house, a new entrance, main suite and laundry.”

But the real game-changer, according to Kate, was collaborating with landscape architect Heath Blair from Plume Studio to ensure the exterior married completely with the interior and integrated the pool and entertaining zones. Heath says the garden is low maintenance and robust for the coastal environment and is enlivened by perennials such as purpletop vervain (*Verbena bonariensis*) for seasonal colour.

“The garden is a perfect extension to the home,” says Kate. “Every single room has a view over it, filling the home with natural light and the high fence creates a feeling of ▶



**THIS IS
THE LIFE**

The kitchen, living and dining area is the heart of the home where the family gathers. "Sitting around the log fireplace in winter is so lovely," says the owner. But equally important is the lawn area at the front. "In summer, the children love playing soccer and it's a wonderful place for the adults to relax while they run around. It has really enhanced the way we enjoy the property."

KITCHEN/DINING/LIVING Custom Shaker profile joinery, handpainted in Porter's Paints Blue Pewter (kitchen) and Dulux Snowy Mountains Quarter (dining). Carrara marble benchtops. Splashback in Zellige Bianco Matt tiles, KWD & Co. Green Oaks pendant lights, Boyd Blue. *Poplars* by Chanel Sohier (on bench) and Kaz Morton Ceramics fruit bowl, both Greenhouse Interiors. Scalloped vase, At Home with Georgia Ezra. Stools, Fenton & Fenton. Dining table and sofa, Big Chair Living. Grace dining chairs, Rachel Donath. Drawing by Ida Montague. Custom cushions in GP&J Baker 'Nympheus'; fringed cushion, Lucy Montgomery. Dargo mohair throw, St Albans. Afghan Kandahar rug, Cadrys. Vintage coffee table with ceramics from House of Orange and Pottery Barn. ▶

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privacy.” Certainly the home’s street appeal is one of its many assets and Kate describes it as “a real head turner”, enhanced no doubt by its dramatic exterior colour. Originally intended to be black, Kate says, “One day I went to the site and I just knew we had to change the exterior colour to blue. The owners trusted the change completely.”

Inspired by the proximity to Port Phillip Bay, that blue sings throughout the home, from the front door to the custom kitchen joinery, from the living room sofa to the mudroom tiles and imparts a wonderful sense of serenity.

Resolving the interior spaces pivoted around the need for functional family living. The new entry leads directly into the living, kitchen and meals area, as well as to the mudroom and laundry, which is also accessed from the garage. Above the garage is the spacious and private guest suite. The main bedroom is to the back of the property, while the children’s zone, including

bedrooms, a bunk room and casual living area, span across the width of the property. “We are so happy with the spatial planning,” says the owner. “Kate created such a wonderful flow in the home.”

Having lived in a house “that they didn’t like at all” for 12 months while awaiting plans and building permits, the family is so appreciative of the dramatic upgrade to their property. “Kate has given us the dream home we never imagined we would have,” says the owner. “I was nervous at so many points of the renovation process but Kate backed herself and she was 100 per cent right every time.” For Kate, seeing her clients so happy is the ultimate reward. ▶

KWD, Mount Martha, Victoria; (03) 5974 1800 or katewalkerdesign.com.au. Plume Studio, Windsor, Victoria; (03) 7018 3240 or plumestudio.com.au. Montique Construction, Mornington, Victoria; (03) 5940 0033 or montiqueconstruction.com.



LIVING Joinery painted Dulux Snowy Mountains Quarter. Sofa, Big Chair Living. Afghan Kandahar rug, Cadrys. Fireplace, Woodpecker. Artwork above fireplace, *Open Heart* by Angela Hawkey, on shelf, *Ode to Summer* by Chris de Hoog, and above console, *Poplars* by Chanel Sohler, all Greenhouse Interiors. HK Objects ceramic twisted vase, House of Orange. Armchairs, Arthur G. **KITCHEN** Custom Shaker profile joinery handpainted in Porter's Paints Blue Pewter. Joinery handles from Domino Brass. Manhattan tapware in Rumbled Brass, Brodware. Stools, Fenton & Fenton.

THE PALETTE

Dulux Oolong (exterior)

Porter's Paints Blue Pewter
(kitchen, ensuite joinery)

Dulux Snowy Mountains Quarter
(main walls, main joinery)



MAIN ENSUITE *Above left and left* Joinery handpainted Porter's Paints Blue Pewter. Kado Lussi freestanding bath, Reece. Manhattan tapware in Rumbled Brass, Brodware. Flannel Flower terrazzo tiles, KWD & Co. Plantation shutters, Abundant Home. Dresser glass rod light, The Montauk Lighting Co. Carrara marble vanity top and Casablanca Cloud subway tiles, KWD & Co. Towels, Adairs. **CHILDREN'S ROOM** *Above right* Bunk beds and V-groove joinery handpainted Porter's Paints Mariner. Sisal rug, Floorspace. **WALK-IN WARDROBE** *This image* Custom joinery by KWD, handpainted in Dulux Snowy Mountains Quarter, DMA Kitchens. Door hardware in Aged Brass, Domino Brass. **MAIN BEDROOM** *Opposite* Drift sisal carpet, KWD & Co. ▶

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HOMEOWNER

POOL Java Blue ceramic pool tiles, KWD & Co.
Outdoor setting, Classic with a Twist.





1

THE SOURCE

Include tones from the full spectrum of your favourite hue to deliver interest without losing cohesiveness.



2



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1 Arteriors 'Ingrid' pendant light, \$10,130, Boyd Blue. 2 Pending Drama of a Storm artwork by Chanel Sohier, \$680, Greenhouse Interiors. 3 The Grace counter stool, \$980, Rachel Donath. 4 Australian House & Garden table lamp in Douglas Green, \$99.95, Myer. 5 Hopetoun buffet and hutch, \$2499, Provincial Home Living. 6 India Mahdavi book, \$130, Dymocks. 7 Vera Wang 'Sequin' crystal Champagne saucers, \$199/pair, Wedgwood. 8 Barbados rattan coffee table, \$699, Space. 9 Boss occasional chair, POA, Fanuli. 10 MissoniHome 'Allan 21' bath sheet, \$250, Spence & Lyda. For Where to Buy, see page 192. **H&G**