

Herald Sun home



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Joining the dots

A sense of connection between spaces is the secret of this residence's makeover success



Opposite page Pam's framed family holiday photos are a design element – and a celebration of togetherness. Left The combined living and meals area has a relaxed and inviting feel. Below, far left A formal lounge mixes soothing taupe tones with soft luxurious textures. Below, centre left Warm reds and oranges appear throughout the home, adding to its sense of unity (artwork: *Who's the Fairest of Us All* by Linda Courtney). Below left This tram roll poster brings local flavour. Bottom A Tsar custom-designed rug reflects the home's colour themes.



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Photography Laurent Villeseche

All the statistics point to kids staying put in the family home longer than ever before. But in the Lewis household, which includes three older boys, there's room enough for everyone.

When a kitchen and bathroom renovation snowballed into an overhaul of the whole house, Pam and Terry Lewis's home became the ultimate family haven – and a stunning, character-filled one at that.

The initial brief to architect Nathanael Preston, from Preston Lane Architects, was to rejuvenate the home's crumbling '80s-era extension (including the kitchen) and to beautify its "hideous" bathroom.

"Then, before we knew it, it had got to the stage where we did the whole house," Pam recalls. "It just evolved. The more we talked, the more we saw possibilities for other rooms in the house."

As the project expanded, Pam decided to engage an interior designer to help pull everything together.

"I've got a fair idea of what I like, but when it became so huge I didn't want any mistakes," she says.

Enter Carolyn Burns-McGrave, from Retail Therapy Interior Design. It was a dream job for Carolyn.

"Doing the whole house in one go gave us the opportunity to tie the front of the house into the back – everything was married in and we made sure there was some connection between all the finishes," Carolyn says.

The front of the house received a contemporary upgrade, while retaining its character-giving Victorian period features.

"Nathanael knew when to stop; he showed a lot of restraint," Carolyn says. "We kept some elements that weren't perfectly slick, which indicated this is a family home to be enjoyed, not a show home."

The original floorboards were retained and stained to match the new flooring in the back of the house. A striking, modern





Love it
A stand-out feature in the kitchen is an intricate Mooodi pendant light

Mooodi Random pendant light hangs from the formal living room's pressed-metal ceiling, and the entrance hall combines original pressed-metal wall panels with a contemporary geometrical wallpaper.

A quirky take on a traditional crystal chandelier – a Mooodi papier-mache version – has great impact in the hallway.

As Carolyn explains, the idea behind the dramatic entrance was to create a sense of what's in store further inside the home. And indeed, around the corner in the new rear area of the house, there

is plenty of visual drama on display.

For starters, the bright and expansive living/dining/kitchen space is simply stunning. Then, huge bifold glass doors overlook a spectacular transparent-edged pool and a serene terrace surrounded by lush greenery.

"It's such a surprise when you enter the new space for the first time; there's a real wow factor," Pam says.

The sleek and stylish kitchen is all about clean lines, complete with a walk-in pantry, easy-to-clean induction stove and two ovens,

while the living area reflects Pam's love of ethnic homewares and travel.

A large white wall is partly filled with framed family-holiday photos – to beautiful effect. Burnished silver frames tie in well with Pam's many Moroccan pewter objects.

What makes this house the perfect family abode is its sheer amount of space, cleverly used to give a real sense of flow.

With five bedrooms and a separate, dedicated boys' zone, everyone has their own area. The Lewis boys – Ryan, 20, Sam, 17, and Jack, 14 – have their domain to one

Top left: The sunny meals area with views to the acrylic-sided pool
Above left: Ocean-blue tiles bring a Mediterranean tone to the ensuite



side of the house: a long study, complete with three work stations; and their own TV lounge area.

"It's just fantastic," Pam enthuses. "We all have our own space and we're not in each other's faces."

Because it was designed to cater for five adults, this beautiful home is set to comfortably house the Lewis clan for many years to come.

"The boys won't be going anywhere. Terry and I will probably move out before they do," Pam says with a laugh. 🏡



Left Textured grasscloth wallpaper adds to the serenity in the main bedroom Below left Moroccan homewares are scattered throughout Bottom left Unity is created through repeated design elements such as wallpaper



Postscript with Pam Lewis

(pictured below)

How has travel influenced how you've decorated your home?

I love bringing individual pieces home as a reminder of the places we have visited. There's nothing nicer than having things around you that transport you back to a particular place and time you so enjoyed.

What is your favourite room?

The large back room is probably my favourite, particularly since it includes the photos and items we've brought home from our travels. The outlook to the back yard and pool, the fireplace and the large amount of time I spend in the kitchen make me love being in there.

What do you do with your two ovens?

One of the ovens is pyrolytic (self cleaning), which I use for 'dirty cooking' such as roasts, and the other is just a normal oven. I always wanted two ovens as I enjoy cooking and do a lot of it. I'll very often have two or three things on the go – so it's invaluable.

What is your favourite homewares shop?

Alafia Gallery, in Elwood, stands out for me – I've bought a lot of things from there for the house. It's a fabulous shop for unusual and interesting gifts and homewares from around the world.



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