

**EXTERIOR**

Kristy persuaded the owners to have off-street parking by coming up with a design that was sympathetic to the home's facade. "The landscapers found a really clever way to build a roller door that looks like a picket fence," says Naomi.



**DREAM IT. DESIGN IT. DO IT.**

# SPACE & GRACE

A busy family embraced light and space with a stunning first-floor addition to their Sydney cottage, making sure to honour the heritage features of the existing home

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**LIVING AREA**

This space has access to the rear deck and is quite neutral. The sofa is by Jordan and the chairs and showstopper coffee table are from Coco Republic. Loulou vase in Smoke, Maison Balzac. Kristy also helped to select the outdoor furniture, in this case a setting from MCM House.



## cheat sheet

**Who lives here** Naomi and Michael with their three children: Annabelle, 14; Jonathan, 12; and Phoebe, 10.

**Style of home** A California bungalow that has grown into a four-bedroom, four-bathroom home.

**Location** Sydney's east, on land once inhabited by the Birrabirragal clan.

**🕒** From the initial consult to work completion, the project took 18 months.

**💰** Approximately \$1.5 million.

**KITCHEN**

"Naomi and Michael were after a white kitchen, but something with a point of difference," says Kristy. "It was all about the attention to the detail in the textures of the finishes, such as the fluted Carrara marble on the curved island and the finely crafted joinery pulls." Whispair extractors (opposite), Winnings. Pink artwork by Rick Carino.

**wishlist**

- + More natural light
- + Open-plan living space
- + New kitchen
- + New family bathroom
- + Three double bedrooms for the children
- + Separate guest accommodation



**DINING/BAR**

Naomi asked Kristy to create a bar in the dining room. "It was designed to look like a bookshelf and then you pull it open to find a little bar," says Kristy. "Naomi wanted an area where you open the door and it's super glam, with veneer panels, brass mesh, gold joinery and jungle wallpaper." Dining table, Jordan. Chairs, Coco Republic. Side table, clients' own.

**N**aomi and Michael faced the classic challenge that many couples in Sydney's eastern suburbs encounter: their charming California bungalow was just too small for their growing family. The couple, who have three fast-growing children, looked at lots of solutions over the seven years they owned the house – selling up and buying a bigger home elsewhere, doing a knockdown/rebuild, or opting for a renovation.

They knew they wanted to retain some of the house's heritage features and its family feel, so Naomi and Michael finally decided on a substantial renovation. Working with interior designer Kristy McGregor as well as the design team of their builders, Cape Cod Australia, they ended up adding a first-floor extension and reconfiguring the existing ground floor to create an open-plan living, kitchen and dining space.

Now living in a spacious, gracious home, Naomi says the renovated house is set up brilliantly for the family. "There's lots of room and all of us fit. We have a very, very comfortable family living area, which we use every single day."

**dream it**

The couple had never built or renovated before, so approached their designer friend Kristy to help with the project and incorporate their wishlist into the build. A key part of the brief was to retain the charm of the existing house.

"We wanted to preserve the original features that are difficult to replicate in modern builds," says Naomi. "The high ceilings, the thick walls, the beautiful sandstone on the base of our home. Barbara, our designer from Cape Cod, came back with a beautiful design that integrated these older features into a new home that was fresh and still had a lot of character."

"They really wanted to keep the family feel of the house, but it just didn't have the accommodation they needed for the three





**FORMAL LIVING**

Naomi and Michael wanted a space that doubled as an adults' zone. The built-in shelving by Bondi Kitchens & Joinery houses some of the couple's book collection. Sofa in Emerald Velvet from Coco Republic. Black table, Coco Republic. Moooi pendant, Space. Artworks by Elsbeth Shaw (wall) and Tom Hyde (shelf).

**ENTRY**

Naomi says the size of the entry hall took her by surprise. "We now have a really generous space, which I wasn't expecting, even though I saw it on plan." Huggy swivel armchair by Sarah Ellison. Side table, clients' own. Glass vase, Maison Balzac.

**the best bits**

+ **Courtyard** Naomi says her favourite spot changes with the seasons, but she loves the small courtyard in front of her old bedroom, which is now the formal living area. "I open the new French doors and go out onto the little pebbled courtyard to just sit and read my book, or have a gin and tonic at night."

**the moodboard**



**CLOCKWISE** (from top left) Parrot Jungle wallpaper in Black, \$195 per roll, Milton & King. Telbix Moran G9 pendant light in Antique Gold, \$229, The Blue Space. Fluato Curve Carrara honed tile, \$910 for 26 tiles, Perini. Handmade subway tiles in Crackle Dove, POA, Surface Gallery. Elysian Minimal mixer and spout in Brushed Brass, \$294.80 for set, ABI Interiors. Cavendish Pebble curtain, from \$108, Tuiss Blinds Online. Dulux Wash&Wear low-sheen acrylic paint in Milton Moon, \$95.50 per 4L, Bunnings.

kids growing up," explains Kristy. "I wanted to create a space where they could have family and friends over, have family to stay, and then also have separate zones so everyone wouldn't be living on top of one another."

**design it**

After Cape Cod Australia had signed up for the construction side of the renovation, the couple worked with Kristy to source the furniture and interior-design elements. "It was about planning for a big family home that could accommodate everyone," says Kristy. "It was decided that we would renovate the house and get it exactly how they want it to be."

"One of the things they were excited about was having a formal living space for the adults," she adds. "The owners are keen readers, so they really wanted a great big bookshelf full of all the books they've read. Michael plays the piano, and Naomi surprised Michael by planning separately to fit a baby grand piano into the room. It was fun to design that space specifically for them with the furniture and joinery."

**do it**

The work undertaken by Cape Cod was extensive, involving gutting the existing house to create a new open-plan living, kitchen and dining area, plus a study/guest bedroom on the ground floor. The first-floor addition comprises a main bedroom with a generous ensuite and walk-in wardrobe, as well as three extra bedrooms and a family bathroom. The rear garage was also reworked to provide guest accommodation and bathroom facilities next to the pool.

ADDITIONAL PRODUCT SOURCING: PALOMA GARAY





**BATHROOMS**

All have a similar muted palette of soft greys with rosy pink touches. The ensuite includes a feature wall of glossy tiles from Surface Gallery laid vertically for added interest. Floor, Terrazzo Australian Marble. Vanity, Carrara marble. Kado bath (opposite), Reece. Wall lights, Articolo.



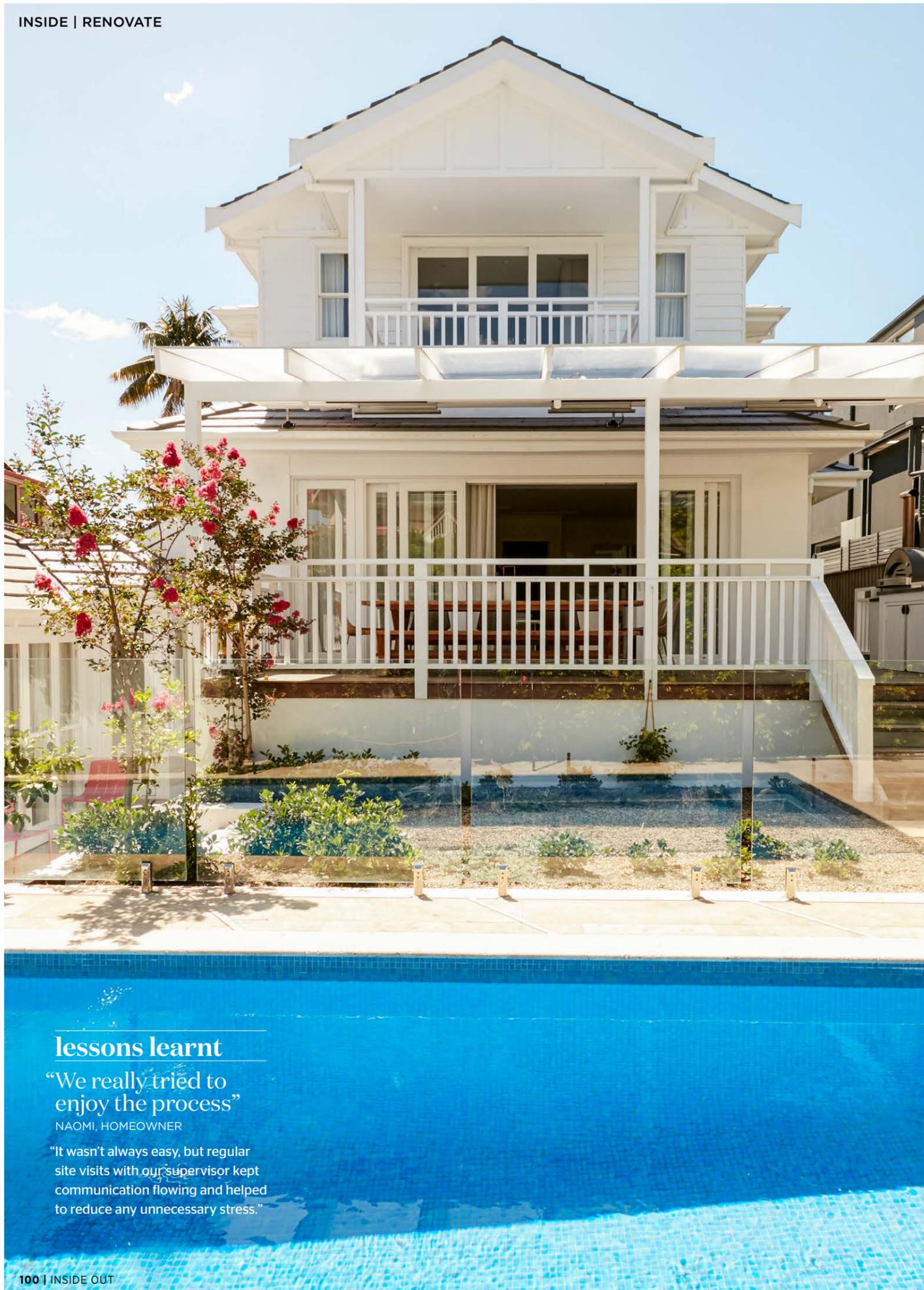
**MAIN BEDROOM**

The renovation added a generous walk-in wardrobe, created with custom joinery by Bondi Kitchens & Joinery. Rochford carpet in Zinia adds a luxurious touch. Side table, Grazia & Co. Lamp, Coco Republic. Curtains, Pip Casey Interiors.

The family moved out for the duration of the work, which took about 15 months. It was more substantial than just a renovation, says Naomi, but some pieces of the original cottage were retained. “It was a big job, but they were relatively quick. We call it a ‘renolition’ because we demolished most of the bottom storey. We kept all the original timber window frames where we could. There’s a beautiful stained-glass window that sits outside the front door, which we wanted to preserve, and Cape Cod found someone to replace a few of the coloured bits of glass. So, there was a lot of attention to detail.

“But otherwise, the inside just got completely gutted. We knocked down a tiny little bedroom that never really worked and knocked out all the ugly old wardrobes. We just replaced everything – all the joinery and window furnishings.” **LO**  
 Kristy McGregor Interior Design is at [kristymcgregor.com.au](http://kristymcgregor.com.au) and [@kristymcgregor](https://www.instagram.com/kristymcgregor). Cape Cod Australia is at [capecod.com.au](http://capecod.com.au)





### lessons learnt

“We really tried to enjoy the process”

NAOMI, HOMEOWNER

“It wasn't always easy, but regular site visits with our supervisor kept communication flowing and helped to reduce any unnecessary stress.”

### POOL HOUSE

The pool was largely unchanged during the renovation, apart from a little tidying along the perimeter by the landscapers from Goodmanors. It's heated, so is used by the family most of the year. The pool house (right) has accommodation for guests, and other onsite treats include a pizza oven and barbecue. Trees, crepe myrtle. Chair, clients' own.

