

KITCHEN MASTERCLASS:

IT'S ONLY NATURAL

TO THE DELIGHT OF A SYDNEY FAMILY, THEIR KITCHEN AND BATHROOM RENOVATION JOINS FORCES WITH NATURE TO DELIVER SOFT, SERENE AND FUNCTIONAL SPACES

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Since the brief for their new kitchen was “simple, tidy and clean-looking” homeowners Steph and Rick pictured a pared-back look of fresh white cabinets, but when interior designer Sarah Yarrow ushered colour into the mix they were enchanted by an exciting twist that still ticked all the boxes. Sarah, who renovated the home alongside husband Tim (Yarrow Build) says, “The family swapped inner-city Sydney for more space in its southern suburbs, where the two children could roam free among the gorgeous gum trees outside, and I wanted these surrounds to be our inspiration.” Sarah’s muted tones reflect “the colours seen through the windows and in the trees” and championing nature’s palette is the simple green cabinetry in Laminex in Possum, complemented by lighter joinery in Raw Cotton. For the splashback, Sarah chose Moroccan ‘Zellij’ tiles in Whitehaven from Earp Bros. “They are white, but being handmade, they vary in tone and are individually beautiful – ‘perfectly imperfect’, just like nature,” she says happily.

Before the ground floor of the home was gutted, the kitchen was tiny and boxed in. Now it’s three times larger and “flows into the living area, with lots of functional storage, seating and bench space.” Sarah adds, “I’m so happy Steph and Rick trusted me to create something bespoke and considered for them. It feels lovely to be in this space: it’s warm, soothing and inviting.”

The downstairs renovation also featured a small bathroom, designed to pay homage to the kitchen and create a cohesive style throughout the interiors. “I wanted it to feel warm and welcoming in the same way the kitchen did,” says Sarah, who kept it simple due to size, cleverly maximising and streamlining the space and turning an ugly duckling into a practical bathroom with a creative flourish.



“THE HOME ISN’T OVERLOOKED SO, INSTEAD OF WINDOW COVERINGS, I SIMPLY ALLOWED THE GREENERY AND LIGHT TO ENHANCE THE SPACE”

~ SARAH YARROW, INTERIOR DESIGNER

EMBRACE THE DETAILS

The rangehood, plastered and painted to match the lighter joinery, complements the gentle scheme and works with the textured tiles. “I balanced this visually with horizontal blackbutt shelves, which also offer a natural warmth” says Sarah, who curved their edges for extra softness. “The open shelves allow the family to personalise the kitchen with decorative pieces, but this area also created context for the Emac & Lawton ‘Mayfair’ sconce, which allows the family to swap bright lights for a warm glow in the evening, once they’ve cleared up after dinner.” The artwork on the top shelf is by Ozlem Savelle. >



MIRROR THE DETAILS

Repeating design features in adjoining spaces is key to creating a streamlined style. In the nearby lounge, Sarah echoes the kitchen in a shelving unit, cleverly built into the back of the kitchen bench (left). “I worked with the joiner to balance everything,” says Sarah, who had the shelves custom made from Polytec Woodmatt in Prime Oak. “While it’s a different material to the Blackbutt and Laminex shelves in the kitchen, there’s consistency in thickness and style.”

CHOOSE YOUR HEROES

Allowing some elements to shine and others to play a supporting role is the secret to this warm and inviting kitchen (opposite). “I kept the profile of the drawers and cupboards simple because it’s all about the colour – a lovely ‘dirty olive,’” says Sarah, describing the elegant Laminex cabinetry in Possum. “I wanted this to be the hero of the space, along with Havwoods ‘Amendo’ oak floorboards, which have lots of character and beautiful knots.” The walls in Dulux Whisper White provide a blank canvas and the Talostone 20mm Neutral White benchtop is understated in its beauty. “The benchtop is a secondary element and covers a large area, so I steered clear of veins or patterns,” explains Sarah. “Steph and Rick wanted a clean-lined kitchen so these factors allowed me to use a warm colour and stick to their brief.” Eschewing white for the contrasting joinery, Sarah chose Laminex Raw Cotton, another muted hue, to complement the green and complete the look.

STYLE ESSENTIALS



1. ‘Luna’ brass pull, \$34, Lo & Co. 2. Mini hand-painted canvas in Vanilla Cream, \$139, Urban Road. 3. ‘Dua’ antique smooth pot, \$350, Clo Studios.
4. ‘Boston’ library lamp in Aged Brass, \$829, Magins Classical Lighting. 5. Breville Barista Express manual coffee machine, \$729, Harvey Norman.
6. ‘Vincenza’ handmade look tiles in Grey Gloss, \$121/sqm, Perini. 7. Clay by Khoa stoneware side plates, \$38 each, Koskela. 8. Expona Superplank flooring in Blond Oak, Polyflor. 9. Lifestyle Traders mango wood round serving board, from \$44.95, Temple & Webster.



DESIGNER TIP

“Using cabinetry hardware that enhances the kitchen design brings harmony to the space,” says Sarah, who chose Lo & Co’s ‘Luna’ brass pulls. “I needed a warm metal to complement the colour palette and circles and half-circles to break up the straight lines.” >

CONSIDER YOUR LIFESTYLE

Sarah’s “command centre” is a true ‘aha moment’ in kitchen design. Not only does it house a coffee machine and open shelves to “make it easy to grab the cups”, the right side is an inspiration in practicality. “I like to design a personalised storage area that prevents things from being scattered among the food areas,” says Sarah. “This is where the family keeps its laptop, phones, notes from school, and charging station, too. The drawers keep it tidy, and I designed four pigeonholes above, one for each member of the family, to help them to stay organised.”



DESIGNER TIP

"In a small room, a neat ledge in the shower makes the perfect place to pop a few products. For me, it's more useful and stylish than a recessed niche," says Sarah. "Also, hide the power points in one side of the shaving cabinet, so you can open one door and still use the mirror on the other side."

FINESSE YOUR FINISHES

"The bathroom is small, so I opted for simple but textural tiles and an 'almost terracotta' grout to enhance the earthy tones," says Sarah, referencing the handmade 'Craquel' tiles from Earp Bros and the natural stone tiles sourced by Tim; both chosen to work back with the kitchen. "This bathroom didn't need to be super-practical, like a family bathroom, so the lovely little 'Prism' basin from Nood Co brings that perfect pop of personality and a touch of green," says Sarah. A timber towel rail and toilet roll, along with aged bronze tapware by Phoenix "bring extra warmth to the space".



STYLE ESSENTIALS



- 1. Methven 'Krome' showerhead in Black, \$259, Harvey Norman.
- 2. 'Prism' basin in Mint, \$730, Nood Co.
- 3. Waffle bath towel in White, \$49.95, Aura Home.
- 4. 'Plato' basket, \$89.95, Freedom.
- 5. 'Ales' tile in Light Grey, \$103.74/sqm, Beaumont Tiles.
- 6. Walnut 'Classic' single towel rail, \$259, Scandiluxe.
- 7. 'Absinthe' tiles in Snow Subway, \$229/sqm, Perini.
- 8. Shampoo and conditioner, \$20 each/100ml, Aēsop.

BE SMART ABOUT SPACE

A boxed in shower and dated vanity hogged the room in the original bathroom, so Sarah's challenge was to streamline the space, while accommodating a window. "We created the sink and shaving cabinet inset by stealing space from the adjoining guest bedroom," says Sarah, who had the genius idea of halving the depth of the wardrobes. "It worked really well; it doesn't encroach on the window and the wall is flush as you walk in." A model of space-saving simplicity, the glass shower screen is long enough not to require a door.

"THE BLACKBUTT SHELVES ADD CHARACTER, MAKE THE ROOM MORE SPACIOUS AND REFLECT THOSE IN THE KITCHEN"

~ SARAH YARROW, INTERIOR DESIGNER

SOURCE BOOK

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