



HEART & SOUL

INSPIRED BY LONG-CHERISHED VALUES OF QUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY, AN INTERIOR DESIGNER BREATHES LOVE AND LIFE INTO HER 1950S SYDNEY COTTAGE

Story **KARINA MACHADO** Styling **SARAH YARROW INTERIORS** Photography **THE PALM CO**

Beaming as she opens her front door, homeowner Sarah's smile radiates warmth and welcome, echoing the signature aesthetic that defines the thoughtfully curated interiors beckoning beyond the threshold. The 1950s cottage in Sydney's southern suburbs that Sarah, an interior designer, renovated together with her builder husband, Tim, is a testament to their credo of, as she puts it, "creating something that's going to stand the test of time".

When the couple bought the home in 2014, it had been in the same family for three decades and "looked tired and rundown", says Sarah. She had searched for nine months for a single-level home on a lovely street with a north-facing backyard. "Those were the key things," she says. "We knew that, with our skills, we could change the rest of it."

Sarah and Tim rented it out until they began renovating in 2018, when they gutted the interiors and reconfigured the layout to include a fourth bedroom (used as a home office) and second bathroom.

Just completed, the renovation is a total about-face that nonetheless honours the home's sturdy bones and historical significance. "I didn't want it to feel like it had lost its 1950s-cottage feel," explains Sarah. "All the windows are brand new but they're timber and the same profile

that the original house had. It didn't interest me to put aluminium in here. I wanted it to feel like it was a newer version of the original."

Her deconating ethos is informed by the same attention to detail, with a focus on "buy well, buy once and then treasure it". Sarah credits her "very creative and resourceful" mum, Judy, and late grandmother, Eileen, for instilling the values she cherishes.

Her mother also lit the spark for her passion for interiors. Growing up as an only child in NSW's Blue Mountains, Sarah – and her imagination – had the run of a rambling property. "I had my own little playroom and vividly remember, from such a young age, taking everything out, rearranging it and putting it back in," she says. "I would see my mum do this around our house so I would replicate it. Without even realising it, I was teaching myself spatial planning, proportion and scale, and how things work together."

Sarah's own home is a mirror of her experience and philosophy of sustainability and substance – from the beloved and battered recycled timber dining table that has "evolved with us" to the "vision board" in her office, where a snapshot of a farmhouse in country NSW signals her dream to find a rural property to love back to life. Just as she and Tim have done with this home. "I don't know how it's going to happen," muses Sarah, flashing a friendly smile, "but it will, I know."

RAW & RUSSET A sense of comfort and calm permeates the living area of a cottage lovingly revived by interior designer Sarah and her builder husband, Tim (pictured opposite, with Mala the cocker spaniel). "I like anything nature-driven, earthy and grounded," says Sarah, who has layered the interiors in muted tones and textures that cast a warm glow against a backdrop of panelled walls in Dulux Natural White. A "super-relaxed and casual" linen-covered lounge from MCM House invites rest, amid cushions including a terracotta favourite from The White Place in Orange, NSW, one of the couple's favoured country-getaway destinations. A trio of original oil paintings by John Emmett that had adorned the home of Sarah's grandmother for 50 years sing a new song here, alongside a contemporary piece from Pampa. "I like the juxtaposition," notes Sarah, who also appreciates how a solid-brass wall light from Emac & Lawton spotlights the art. "I wanted something that had a bit of character and personality," she says. The floor cushion is from Jordan, the log stool from Inartisan and the rug is vintage. >



WALL LIGHT (THIS PAGE) FAT SHACK VINTAGE ACTUAL PAINT COLOUR MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

WE LOVE...
star splashbacks

A striking splashback from Di Lorenzo Tiles ensures wow-factor in the kitchen. "I didn't want it to be a standard white subway tile," says Sarah of the handpainted tiles, which echo the lovely detail in an 80-year-old Turkish runner (seek similar at Pamoto). "I wanted to inject personality without going over the top." Visit dilorenzo.com.au.



FRIDGE (THIS PAGE) SMEG OVEN & BOSCH SKYLIGHT VELUX DOOR HARDWARE RESTORATION ONLINE WALL LIGHT EPAC & LANTERN WHITE AGO ON CHAIR (OPPOSITE) SARAH TARDON INTERIORS

KITCHEN & DINING AREA Sunlight from the north-facing yard pours into the adjoining kitchen and dining areas, where crockery that Sarah commissioned from a potter in Indonesia (below) is always in reach on open shelving in the galley kitchen (opposite). Shaker-profile cabinetry in Ghostgum amplifies the sense of space. "We don't need to have stuff stored away for a special occasion," says Sarah. "Every day is a special occasion." A Coco Republic dining table also attests to her "buy once, buy well" motto. "It was our first purchase together as a couple, so it feels sentimental," she says. "I know where the red-wine stain came from and then it makes me remember that fun dinner party." Above the table, a cotton pendant light from The Society Inc by Sibella Court "perches like a little cloud" and partially hides a black Spence & Lyda light. Sarah also upcycled a vintage mirror that was formerly her mum's, painting the brass-coloured frame black. Engineered boards from Preference Floors pay homage to the home's history. "You can see knots in the timber - they've got character," says Sarah. The bentwood chairs are all vintage and have been collected over many years. >



MAIN BEDROOM A headboard designed by Sarah and custom-upholstered in a handpainted fabric from Utopia Goods steals the scene – and hints at spring – in the couple's bedroom, which features cosy linen from In Bed. "There's that connection to everything that's Australian and it just feels warm and cosy and relaxing," says Sarah of her retreat. Dulux Herbalist on the wall is the canvas for the room's hero piece and extends Sarah's signature muted colour scheme. "The earthy palette is very derived from nature," she says. A vintage bedside table from an antiques store in Orange adds gravitas and the old-world feel Sarah loves, and is the ideal partner for a brass lamp from Emac & Lawton. The print is *Ghost Gums* by Kara Rosenlund and the vase with oriental symbols is a vintage find. **BATHROOM** "The floor tiles are the star and everything else is kept simple," says Sarah of the bathroom tiles from Di Lorenzo (opposite), which also appear as the kitchen splashback. They create a foundation for the smooth lines of a Forme 'Hilton' bath from Shire Bathware and offset Sussex Taps tapware in Antique Bronze. >



"I LOVE THAT THE TAPWARE IS aged and patinated. THAT GIVES IT THAT LIVED-IN FEELING"
 - SARAH

THREE-LEG STOOL (OPPOSITE) IN ARTISAN ACTUAL PAINT COLOUR MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

"EVERYTHING IN OUR HOME IS collected BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT WE'VE DONE OVER THE YEARS. IT'S NOT ALL BRAND NEW" - SARAH

HALLWAY The clean curve of a 'Solange' mirror from Warranbrooke (right) contrasts beautifully with panelled walls that enhance the authentic cottage feel throughout Sarah and Tim's home. Painted in Dulux Natural White, the panelling "adds a bit of warmth and texture", says Sarah. "It's what was originally in the house, and I just created a newer version. It's about honouring the past rather than putting up a plasterboard wall." A bench from T&C Furniture lends depth and is the ideal spot for Sarah's everyday essentials, while a Turkish rug from Ikea's handmade range lends a splash of crimson.

SARAH'S OFFICE Sarah's workspace adjoins with Tim's and is the hub of her business, Sarah Yarrow Interiors. Last November, the couple consolidated their skills and launched Yarrow Build. "It is anchored in our passionate beliefs about sustainability and supporting local makers and suppliers," says Sarah (pictured below at the vision board where inspirational images, photos, swatches and words are a daily reminder of the dreams she brews). "For me, if we're designing or building something, I want it to add value to the community. We want you to be able to pass it down."

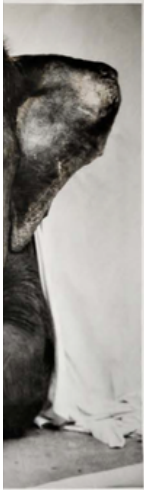


ILLUSTRATION: KENZDESIGN.COM. ACTUAL PAINT COLOUR MAY VARY ON APPLICATION.

LIVING AREA A bar trolley from West Elm doubles as a display for an eclectic collection that speaks to Sarah's love of pieces that tell a story. A vintage cocktail soda shaker picked up at a garage sale complements the glamour of a framed image of Hollywood leading man Roger Moore in his heyday by Peter Ruck titled *Shaken Not Stirred* (try photos.com). "He just oozed sexiness and cool," says Sarah. She bought the decanter as a wedding-anniversary gift for Tim, while Waterford Crystal goblets and glasses on the bottom shelf were a gift to herself. "If I'm going to sit down and have a drink, I want it to be special," she says. Nodding to the landscape in the Pampa *Donkey #1* artwork, a spray of magnolia leaves sits inside a resin vase from Dinosaur Designs, which in turn finds resonance in blue-hued touches such as a tartan blanket by The Grampians Goods Co, from bespoke-gift company Pago & Co. The patterned cushion "is an offcut from a rug from someone's floor in Turkey, and now it's in my house!". >



BREAKFAST BAR A pair of "iconic design" Grazia & Co 'Diiva' swivel stools Sarah had long coveted are positioned to gaze, coffee or cocktail in hand, towards the versatile north-facing deck and yard beyond. "We spend a lot of time outdoors, regardless of the time of year - it's a second living space," says Sarah. A burst of foliage on the benchtop throws to the garden a few steps away and adds a pop of emerald to the all-white interior. The poster is *Adele* by Love Warriors (try Desenio). The Adirondack chairs were discovered in a secondhand shop and catch the winter sun - for similar, try Temple & Webster.



SOURCE BOOK
INTERIOR DESIGN
 Sarah Yarrow Interiors,
 hello@sarahyarrowinteriors.com,
 sarahyarrowinteriors.com.
BUILDER
 Yarrow Build,
 hello@yarrowbuild.com.au,
 yarrowbuild.com.au.



COTTAGE COOL

INSIDE STORY
 SARAH & TIM'S HOME

WHO LIVES HERE?
 Sarah, an interior designer; her husband, Tim, a builder; plus Mala, the cocker spaniel.

WHAT WAS YOUR PHILOSOPHY GOING INTO YOUR RENOVATION?
 Sarah: "I didn't want it to feel like it had lost its 1950s-cottage feel. Including details such as the bronze bolts on the French doors honours that."

WHAT'S YOUR COLOUR PALETTE?
 "It has to be a colour in nature. You don't have to have high chroma. It's green, blue and orange, but they've been muted."

WHAT'S YOUR TOP DECORATING TIP?
 "Just wait and get the things you love. Let your home evolve. It doesn't all have to be perfectly finished now."



1. Log seating encircles a Bunnings fire pit in a corner of the backyard.
2. Sarah, Tim and Mala in the living area.
3. A basin from Natural Stone Bath Worx complements a blackbutt vanity (try Loughlin Furniture). 'Molecola' light by Il Fanale.
4. The laundry cabinets are painted in Dulux New Neutral.
5. A wall lamp from Emac & Lawton and Jordan coffee table add warmth to the living area. A vintage Parker armchair affords views through sheer curtains from Northside Blinds Awnings Curtains.
6. Floor-to-ceiling storage and bench seating elevate the laundry/mudroom.
7. Dulux Mt Aspiring in the facade contrasts a black roof in Dulux Monument.

FRAMED REFERENCE IN LAUNDRY: THIS RACE FINNHEEL. ACTUAL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION.