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# KITCHEN CRAFT

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MAR 2014 \$7.95 (NZ\$8.50) (PUB GST)

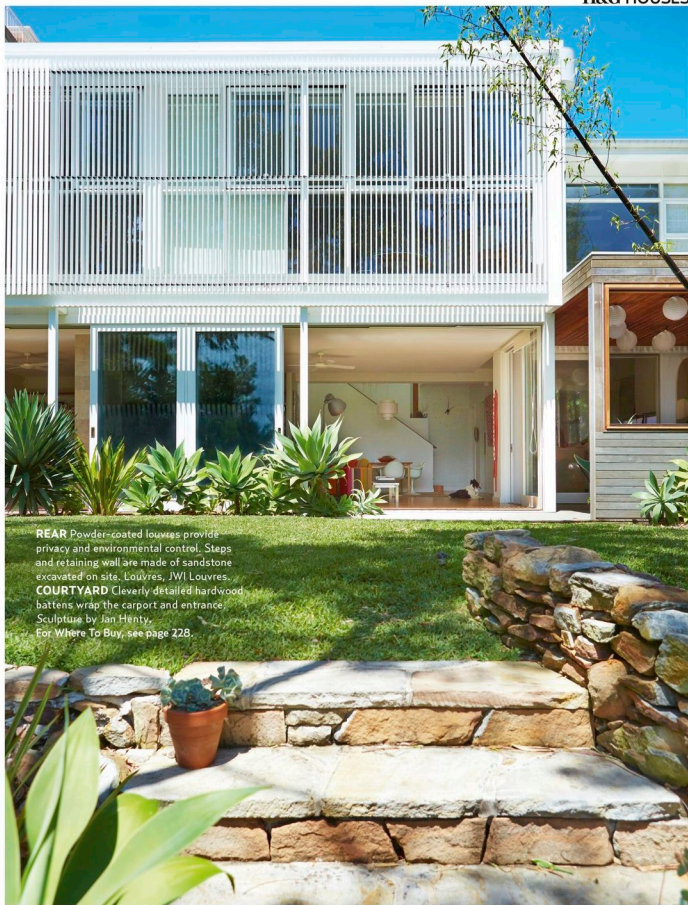
### *This is the life*

For a family of five, plus an exuberant border collie, this relaxed home offers a variety of zones where people can come together or do their own thing. Besides their bedrooms, the children hang out in the large upstairs playroom or amuse themselves – still within earshot of their parents – in the informal living area, located just behind the main living area – a stone-clad blade wall.

# *Between* THE LINES

An architect owner digs deep and brings a whole new level of easy, family-friendly living to this 1970s beachside home in Sydney.

STORY JUDY BAROUCHE ♦ STYLING JANET JAMES ♦ PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN PAUL URIZAR



**REAR** Powder-coated louvers provide privacy and environmental control. Steps and retaining wall are made of sandstone excavated on site. Louvres, JVI Louvres.

**COURTYARD** Cleverly detailed hardwood battens wrap the carport and entrance. Sculpture by Jan Henty. For Where To Buy, see page 228.

## *Inside information*

Flexibility, utility and privacy are the key to an effective layout in a family home, says Patrick. "Create areas of openness and compression to allow for both intimate and extroverted occasions," he says. Patrick also emphasises the power of good lighting to transform spaces. Even after the project is finished, allow two years to complete a home after you move in. "Layering over time, with meaning, is the key to authentic design."





For a family totally into surfing, it doesn't get any better than living within cooee of Sydney's Bondi Beach. Patrick and Alex Nicholas, together with their children – Sophie, 12; Sam, 10; and Jim, eight – are all beachy keen. Exhibit A? A surfboard collection that numbers eight and is still expanding.

So when Patrick, now director of architecture firm AN+A, saw a three-bedroom 1970s house for sale, situated down a sloping driveway on a large battleaxe block in a beachside suburb, he didn't hesitate to snap it up. But where conventional renovating wisdom would have required adding an extra storey in order to capture beach views, Patrick chose to swim against the tide.

"The lower level had never been excavated," he says. "We decided to scoop out the undercroft and relocate the living spaces to the ground floor, in order to give them garden access, and then used the unearthed sandstone to level the garden for a real indoor-outdoor connection."

The alterations and additions that Patrick devised, with colleagues Vanessa Edema and Erin Colgrave occurred in two stages. Major structural work was carried out in 2006, with the interior fit-out and outdoor room addition finished in 2012.

"We kept elements of the old house," says Patrick. "We liked the fact that there was a big carport alongside a courtyard garden at the entrance. But, as it was open to the sky, we covered it with hardwood battens topped with fibreglass roofing for weather protection."

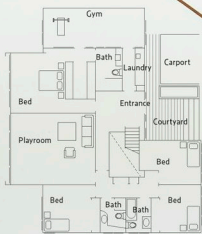
The old kitchen was transformed into a welcoming entrance foyer, with a new staircase tucked to one side. A skylit, double-height >

**'WE BEGAN COLLECTING ART WHEN WE STARTING DATING, 13 YEARS AGO.'** PATRICK

**KITCHEN** Patrick with Jim and Sophie. The benchtop is Caesarstone. Stools, Thonet. Big Red artwork by Brett Coehlo.

**OUTDOOR ROOM** This recent addition is the owners' favourite spot in the house. "For parties we put coloured globes inside the paper lanterns," says Alex. Striped cushion, Maison Montage. Skateboard deck, Skater HQ.

**LIVING** A blade wall in cross-cut travertine gives the room a strong focus (and sets off border collie Pip's coat). Lamp, Ikea. Heater, Jetmaster. Throw, Maison Montage. Grey cushion, Jordan. Candleholders, Country Road. Paper ball, Lewyn Fine Woodwork Gallery. Shaft artwork by Elwyn Lynn. Flowers from Poho Flowers. Designer buy: Norman+Quaine Hudson sofa (in striped fabric), from \$4583, Living Edge. For Where to Buy, see page 228.



GROUND FLOOR



LOWER GROUND FLOOR





'THE OLD LIVING ROOM IS NOW THE KIDS' PLAY AREA. WE DIDN'T HAVE THE HEART TO CARVE IT UP.' PATRICK

**MAIN BEDROOM** This peaceful space fuses contemporary and antique elements. Quilt cover and pillowcases, Country Road. White cushion, The Country Trader. Orange cushions, Maison Montage. For similar throw, try St Albans.

**PLAYROOM** Jim and Sophie love having their own getaway space. Vintage Knoll table, Sofa, Schamburg+Alvisse. Cushion (on chair), Camilla.

**MAIN ENSUITE** Light flows into the space from a skylight above the shower. Splashback tiles, Skheme. Floor tiles, Bisanna Tiles. Grohe mixer tap, Cass Brothers. Foliage from Poho Flowers.

**DINING** Vintage chairs complement an oak table and vintage sideboard. Rug, Robyn Cosgrove. Pendant light, ECC Lighting+Furniture.

**Designer buy: Moller table, \$6950, Great Dane Furniture.** For Where to Buy, see page 228. >





< void delivers morning light deep into the new downstairs kitchen, dining and living spaces. Upstairs, the main bedroom gained valuable space from a former balcony. The children's bedrooms were retained, including the original windows.

"The former living room has become the kids' playroom. We didn't have the heart to carve it up," says Patrick.

The home's early 1970s' pedigree, combined with the couple's admiration for Californian mid-century architecture, informed the shading solution for the west-facing rear exterior. A white screen with adjustable aluminium louvres protecting the full facade is the pièce de résistance. By way of contrast, a laidback new outdoor room, built from spotted gum, softens the home's glass and steel geometric lines. Throughout the interiors, curated collections of found pieces sit alongside a wall-mounted skateboard deck, heirloom vintage maps, ceramics, sculptures, indigenous artefacts and street art. Contemporary and mid-century paintings form coordinated compositions – some serious art and some fun pieces. The warmth of the interior is due to the rich palette of natural materials, including the cross-cut travertine featured around the fireplace.

While it may be nonconformist, this home, with its easy-breezy coastal vibe, perfectly satisfies this family's ethos. "We've filled it with items that we love and we use," says Patrick.

**H&G**

Architects: AN+A, Surry Hills, NSW; (02) 8353 9500 or [www.anplusa.com](http://www.anplusa.com). Builder: Southern Belle Constructions, Church Point, NSW; (02) 99976217 or [southernbelleconstructions.com](http://southernbelleconstructions.com).

**'ON SUNDAYS WE SIT AND READ IN THE OUTDOOR ROOM, AND SOMETIMES DOZE OFF THERE.'** PATRICK

**CARPORT** This functional area of the property now performs multiple duties as a storage space and covered play space.

**BACKYARD** Angophoras, strelitzias, agave and bamboo all thrive in the lush, tropical-style garden. The existing pool was retained and a new spotted-gum deck built around it. Landscaping by More Than A Garden.

**OUTDOOR ROOM** Well-worn pieces, including sofas and kilim, give this space relaxed appeal. Patrick made the coffee table by fixing legs to an old drawing board. Red-and-white cushion and throw, Country Road.

Smart buy: For similar rug, try the Persisk Kelim Gashgai rug, \$399, Ikea.

For Where to Buy, see page 228.





Resene Milk White  
(living)

Resene Foggy Grey  
(main bedroom)

Resene Blended  
Pink (main  
bedroom)

Dulux Mint  
(bathroom  
cabinetry)



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Patrick's home.