

American appeal

With its *grand facade*, refined appointments and classic detailing this reinvigorated home in Sydney's eastern suburbs boasts *unimpeachable* design credentials.

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Sydney HOME

This page The exterior of the house presents a fresh facade painted in Dulux 'Vintage Linen' with timber doors and windows in Dulux 'Blackwood Bay'. Quosai 'Byron' wall sconces in Imperial Bridge from LightCo. Bold foliage and textures by landscape designers Stokes & Stokes create lush layers of green, with architectural plants in pots providing structural elements. Opposite page The client loved the original panelling in the formal areas of the home so designer Alexandra Kidd replicated it in the entry, giving extra gravitas to the dramatic stair with timber treads tinted in a rich chocolate hue. Oly 'Phillippe' table from Coco Republic. Visual Comfort & Co. 'Zyl' chandelier in Antique Brass from Laura Kincaid. Artisans 'Hampton' wall sconces in Antique Brass from Boyd Blue.

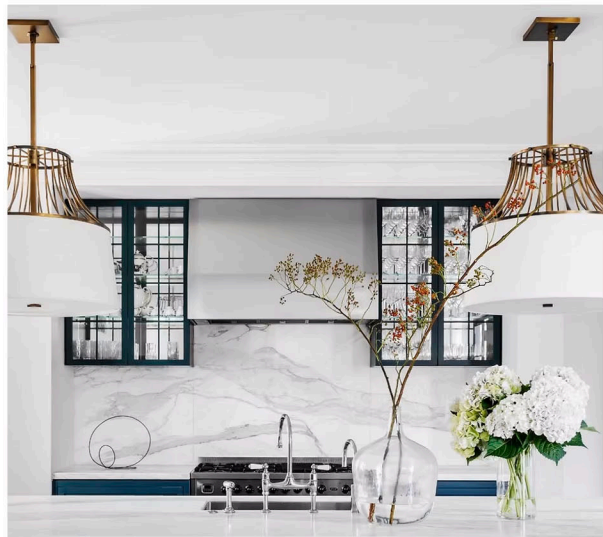


It's amazing what a difference one feature can make to a house. In this case it was two columns in the kitchen that the owners had lived with and found awkward for more than 15 years. So, when they embarked on an upgrade of their expansive Georgian-style home in Sydney's eastern suburbs under the guidance of Alexandra Kidd of Alexandra Kidd Design, the columns were first to go. "When they renovated previously they had made some compromises that impacted the floor plan," says Alexandra. "The two columns were structural posts that divided the kitchen from the family room, and removing them became the starting point for reimagining the space, opening it up and making it work harder."

With their children grown and living in various locations around the world, the owners felt it was the perfect time to address the imperfections in the home and create a comfortable and luxurious base for their new family dynamic. Inverate travellers, they had fallen in love with the gracious, generously scaled mansions located on the US East Coast. A reference to the Obamas' post-White House residence, which had featured in a magazine, was the inspiration for the aesthetic. They wanted Alexandra to capture that feeling of relaxed living, timeless elegance and classic detailing.

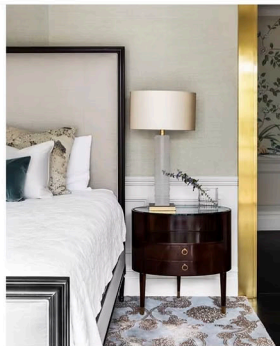
The house was generous in size but the family was not utilising most of the living area, confining themselves to the kitchen and family room. The connection between spaces was poor with small door openings that didn't facilitate flow. "The house was big but felt small due to small-scale joinery, low head heights and openings," says Alexandra.

A thorough internal gutting was called for, and everything was made bigger to create a sense of space – full-height joinery, furniture on a grand scale and larger room openings – while bulky timber doors were replaced by slimline steel in keeping with the lighter, more contemporary feel. "We opened up most rooms to the exterior," says Alexandra, "which made a huge difference. As soon as I walked into the original home I had an overwhelming desire to open the doors and let in air and light." To enhance the connection between indoors and out, she added terraces that flow onto the level lawn or overlook the »

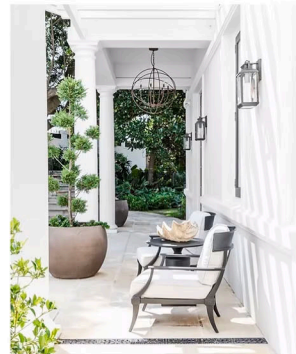


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This page Kitchen joinery painted in Dulux (Deep Aqua) speaks to the clients' love of colour and the Baker 'Dressmaker' chandeliers in brass from Studio Coast. Add a decorative Haverly, Calacatta Gold marble benchtop from Neriko Marble. Brushed stainless-steel rangehood from Astar Metal Finishes. Perro & Howse tapware from The English Tapware Company. Opposite page, from top: A cool neutral palette in the family room with 'Manhattan' sofas from Faunt upholstered in Mokum 'Seal' in Pebble. Bolter 'Domestic Arch' coffee table from Studio Coast. 'Swanson' tiered spot table from Max Sparrow. Arteriors 'Norman' floor lamp from Boyd Blue on a custom Persian 'Crimulus' knot rug from The Rug Establishment. Cushions are a mix of fabrics, including: Jim Thompson 'Herring Gardens' from Milgote and Rubelli 'Victoria' from South Pacific Fabrics. Alexandra repurposed many of the client's existing pieces such as the side table and the armchair, which was reupholstered in Pierre Frey 'Tournelle' embroidered silk from Milgote. Porta Romana 'Tapering Harrier' floor lamp. 'Highgate' console from Max Sparrow. Curtains made by Simple Studio in Zimmer+Rohde 'Luce' from Unique Fabrics. Ellis 'Vintage Leather' wallpaper.



This page, clockwise from above in the vestibule of the master bedroom, de Gournay 'Askew' wallpaper from Milgate provides a romantic touch, coupled with the Milling Road '20th Century' bench from Studio Cavit upholstered in Brochier 'Leonida' from South Pacific Fabrics. 'Monaco' gold-leaf cigar table from Regency Distribution. Behind the Hickory Chair 'Candler' bed from Laura Kincode is a wall upholstered in Phillip Jeffries 'Monia Hieng' from The Textile Company. Baker 'Oval' night table from Studio Cavit. Pottery Barn 'Crystal Stratz' column lamp, with shade from South Pacific Fabrics. Custom 'Elegance' rug from The Rug Establishment. On the outdoor terrace, 'Kilmar' chairs and 'Foucault's Orb' outdoor chandelier, all from RH. The powder room opens to the garden. Carrara marble benchtop from Nefika Marble on a 'Woodstock' timber veneer vanity from Biggs Veneers. Armani Casa 'Refined Structures Versailles' wallpaper from South Pacific Fabrics. 'Silver Cast' stone tiles from Shilb Stone. Porra Romano 'Oleider' wall light, with shade from South Pacific Fabrics. Custom mirror by Alexandra Kidd Design. Blind in Zimmer+Rohde 'Lilo' from Unique Fabrics. Opposite page in the formal dining room a Baker 'Larchmont' table is attended by Baker 'Atelier' chairs, all from Studio Cavit. 'Windy' rug in Winter Mass from Robyn Cosgrove. 'Hyères' ceiling lamps from Regency Distribution. Custom mirrored panelling by Alexandra Kidd Design.



SPEED READ

» Wanting to upgrade their expansive Sydney eastern suburbs home, the owners called on Alexandra Kidd of Alexandra Kidd Design to reimagine the property. » Despite the home being large, it felt small, due to disconnected rooms, low entryways and small-scale joinery. » Rejigging the layout to open up the rooms to each other and to the outdoors through new slimline steel doors and windows was the masterstroke, admitting sunlight, air and views into the formerly stuffy interior. » A fresh, airy palette underlined the sense of space, with pops of colour and pattern included to honour the owners' love of vibrant hues.



« lush landscaping from upstairs, and opened up the kitchen to the front of the block allowing afternoon sun to stream in. Even the laundry had a glamorous update. No longer a dark space hidden at the back of the house, it connects to the family room and links with the garden.

«We created a large terrace off the family room and kitchen so the owners could enjoy sun-drenched breakfasts there. The construction of the terrace allowed for a covered loggia on the lower level that now serves as an outdoor room, creating shade and a cool retreat on hot days», says Alexandra. This lower, previously unused level is now a guest wing with a games area and cinema. «We spent time getting to know our clients and their requirements, how they live and what would genuinely improve their lives», she says. «Our response to this allows every room of the house – in fact, the whole site – to be utilised.»

The changes have clearly resonated with the owners. «Marrying the inside with the outside has brought a whole new dimension to our home and a new way of living for us. We're rarely without a glimpse of the beautiful outdoors», they say. «We love the sitting area under the pergola and have our morning coffee there most weekends.»

Throughout the house Alexandra has created an ambience of quiet luxury and sophistication, interwoven with contemporary details. She used mirrors to bounce light around, reflect the view, bring the outdoors in and play with the sense of space, especially in the formal dining room where walls are panelled with handmade antique bronze mirror. «And, more simply», she says, «we lightened the palette significantly so everything feels bigger and brighter.»

From the exterior which is washed in Dulux 'Vintage Linen' to the inside walls painted in Dulux 'Ghosting Hall', the backdrop is fresh and light, but Alexandra honoured the owners' love of colour with a splash of vibrant aqua in the kitchen joinery, reupholstering furniture in rich hues and adding accent wallpapers by de Gournay, Élitis and Phillip Jeffries in the bedrooms for drama and contrast. «The architecture remains the hero with interest coming from luxe textures and beautiful fibres», she says. Much of the clients' original furniture was repurposed and reupholstered which fosters a sense of permanence.

A measure of the renovation's success is that having been back in the house for 14 months, the owner says, «We are usually frequent travellers, but we have not wanted to leave our new home for even one night away!» **IN alexandrakidd.com; crickandcrick.com.au**

These pages the property enjoys a serene outlook onto lush landscaping by Shida & Simon. Scraggly trees and climbing vines complement the existing mature trees and climbers, which include wisteria, bougainvillea and star jasmine, created serenity and depth in the garden. The exterior is painted in Dulux 'Vintage Linen' with mouldings in Dulux 'Ivory White' and timber doors and windows in Dulux 'Blackwood Boy'. Steel windows and balustrades are in Dulux 'Duralloy Black Matt 1039'. Outdoor furniture is 'Kilimanjaro' from RH. The path leads to the swimming pool.