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INSIDES

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RENOVATE



DREAM IT. DESIGN IT. DO IT.

open minds

The priority for the owners of this Brisbane renovation was a luxurious home where they could fully enjoy their outdoor space


WORDS JACKIE BRYGEL PHOTOGRAPHY CATHY SCHUSLER


INSIDE OUT | 97

cheat sheet

Who lives here Mike, a forensic accountant; his partner Tom, a quantity surveyor; and their miniature schnauzers, Oscar and Harvey.

Style of home A four-bedroom early 20th-century timber Queenslander in riverside Brisbane that has been restored and extended.

 This renovation took two years, from design to completion.

 The budget was between \$750k and \$1 million.

Home may well be where the heart is, but for former apartment dwellers Mike and Tom, the heart of their home has long been their miniature schnauzers Oscar and Harvey. It's only fitting, then, that providing the gorgeous pooches with room to roam was the motivation for the renovation of the pair's ageing Queenslander in Brisbane.

The man who realised their dream is architect Aaron Peters of Vokes And Peters. "Mike and Tom's pups are at the centre of their lives, and finding a place with a generous backyard for them was really important," says Aaron. "It's also fair to say that they're very passionate about design culture and were excited to embark on an architectural project."

Yet when Mike and Tom first stepped over the threshold, they quickly found out that their future home could comfortably claim the title of 'worst house in the street'. "It was badly affected by termites," says Mike. "There were holes in the floors, the back of the house was partly demolished and it was completely uninhabitable. Pleasingly, Aaron told us that he had worked with houses in a worse state than this."

Undeterred by the challenges and scale of the project, Aaron and his architectural partner Stuart Vokes, along with interior designer Georgia Cannon, embarked on the revamp and an addition that houses new sleeping and living quarters with an easy link to the outdoor area and new pool.

Today, all four family members are clearly delighted with their transformed abode. "It has that relaxed feeling, while being true to its heritage at the same time," says Mike.

dining area

"Mike and Tom have lots of extended family and wanted everyone to feel comfortable when they come to stay," says interior designer Georgia Cannon. They paired the table, chairs and sideboard from their previous apartment with an imposing black Lightyears 'Orient' pendant from Cult. In the adjoining sitting room – another favourite area of Harvey the dog – a Project 82 'Louis' sofa rests opposite a pair of Matt Prince Design armchairs from Design Tasmania. The floor on this top level is the original hoop pine.

MUUTO SILENT VASE (ON TABLE) & E15 HABIBI TRAY TABLE (IN BACKGROUND), LIVING EDGE, JONATHAN ADLER CERAMIC LION, COCO REPUBLIC, YPPERLIG FLOOR LAMP, IKEA. TRANSPARENT BILLBOARD 2017, ARTWORK BY GEORGE BYRNE



kitchen

Architects Vokes and Peters designed the custom shelves for much-needed storage. The benchtops are a sleek Artedomus 'Maximum Ice' porcelain. As in the living area (opposite), new casement windows provide ventilation. The custom banquette cushion is covered with patterned Georgia Cannon X Style Revolutionary 'Boulder' fabric in Mist/Putty.

the moodboard



Smoked **oak flooring**, from \$93.50 per sq m, Royal Oak Floors. Icon A69.05 brushed platinum **wall set**, \$543, Astra Walker. Maximum 'Ice' **porcelain**, POA, Artedomus. Silver Grey **laminex**, \$81.07 per sq m, Laminex. Falcon Professional+ 90cm upright **cooker**, \$8844, Andi-Co.



Mike & Tom's wishlist

- + **A seamless in-out connection** "From the kitchen, you can now see the majority of the house both upstairs and down, as well as the garden and pool," says Mike (seated right, with Tom, Harvey and Oscar).
- + **A place for everything and everything in its place** "Mike and Tom already had an amazing collection of artworks and furniture," says Georgia. "They were keen to work out which pieces would come with them from their previous home, exactly where they would be placed and where the gaps were. It was about finding the right spots in the home for everything they love."
- + **A tranquil garden oasis with a pool** "We wanted to be able to watch the dogs playing outside, and we wanted to enjoy the garden and swim in a pool," says Mike.

VISTA SOFAIN FOREST, JARDAN. LUNAR COFFEE TABLE, STELLAR WORKS. AGRA RUG IN MIDNIGHT, ARMADILLO&CO. QASAIR RANGEHOOD (OPPOSITE) FALCON PROFESSIONAL+ FXP COOKER, ANDI-CO. PILLAR COFFEE TABLE, GRAZIA & CO. ARTWORK BY SAMANTHA HOBSON



DREAM IT.

Mike and Tom's brief to architects Aaron and Stuart was simple. "It was to design a beautiful home that primarily maintained and renovated the classic old features of our Queenslander house," says Mike. "We also wanted good indoor and outdoor areas, and a backyard for Oscar and Harvey to play in."

He and Tom had followed the work of Vokes and Peters for several years and admired their renovation of a nearby cottage. "We actually made an offer to purchase that house," says Mike. "It wasn't accepted, but from that date we worked with them to find a Queenslander from which they could design a beautiful home for us. We were lucky that this property came along pretty quickly, and we had Aaron and Stu look at it before we attended the auction. Architect Emma Robinson, also from Vokes and Peters, was central to the project, too."

Engaging interior designer Georgia to take charge of the interiors, Mike and Tom discussed their vision for the finishes and fittings. "We wanted a house that was full of beautiful things, as well as spaces we could relax in," says Mike.

For Georgia, it was a joyous project from the outset. "Mike and Tom wanted the home to feel comfortable but sophisticated," she says. "Helping to achieve that was exciting."

living area

"We wanted a mix of high-end pieces with more obtainable ones," says Georgia of the La La lamp by Helen Kontouris Design and Vitra 'Slow' chair and ottoman from Living Edge. The artwork is Michael Cook's *Undiscovered* #3. This is part of the new lower level, which features blackbutt flooring throughout.



DO IT.

With the repair work done – and termite and water-damaged walls, floorboards and ceilings replaced – attention turned to the addition.

"At the rear, we added a new living room and an outdoor patio overlooking the backyard," says architect Aaron. "The old house was already raised above the ground on timber stumps with two unattractive flats below, which we demolished. We raised the house slightly more and built two extra bedrooms, a bathroom and a laundry-garage below the original house. We also reconfigured the upper floor to house two good-sized bedrooms, a walk-in-robe, a bathroom and a powder room."

The home now pays homage to its roots while showcasing a contemporary sense of light, space and beautiful materials. "We wanted to celebrate some of the original features, as Mike and Tom deliberately bought an old Queenslander cottage because they love that style's feeling and sense of history," says Georgia.

Adds Aaron: "A lot of the new cabinetry and shelving is made from white-painted pine. Our intention was to create new elements that used the traditional language of painted, Queenslander-style timber carpentry. While much of the paint palette is neutral, we used clear-finished timber elements, natural stone and brass to provide highlights."

Certainly, the result reflects the personality of its residents. "It is beyond our hopes and expectations," says Mike. **ID**

Find out more about Vokes and Peters' projects at vokesandpeters.com, and about Georgia Cannon's work at georgiacannon.com

DESIGN IT.

Mike and Tom did their homework when it came to honing their design philosophy. "We bought lots of magazines along the way," says Mike. "We also looked at Instagram and other architects' work for inspiration. We then decided to involve an interior designer fairly soon after the work commenced. By that stage, we knew the house would be beautiful and wanted to ensure that the furnishings and interior design matched the quality of the home."

Georgia spent time with Mike and Tom in their apartment while this home was being repaired and renovated. "It enabled me to get a feel for how they like to live and the pieces they like to live with," she says. "They've travelled extensively and their style is influenced by those travels, with beautiful mementos of their time away."

It was agreed that crisp white walls should provide a neutral backdrop throughout, while striking pendants would capture attention in key rooms. Bold colour would prevail, courtesy of vibrant works of art and furnishings. "A lot of people shy away from colour but Mike and Tom were very open to it, which was exciting," says Georgia.

bathroom

Square glazed-ceramic wall tiles in white and black from Metro Tiles are part of a festival of shapes that includes hexagonal honed-bluestone mosaic tiles on the floor.



main bedroom

This cosy space is painted Dulux 'Whisper White', complemented by an &Tradition 'Utzon' pendant light from Cult. The pelmet, shelf and cabinetry are all new, while the items on the shelf have been collected by Mike and Tom on their travels. A Traditional Hardware Co brass shelf bracket gives a glint of sparkle.



lessons learnt

"Prepare for the worst. Our biggest hurdle was the termite damage. I found out on the day of my 50th birthday that the cost to repair the damage would be double the original estimate. But by the time we received the bill that night, it was actually triple the original quote!"

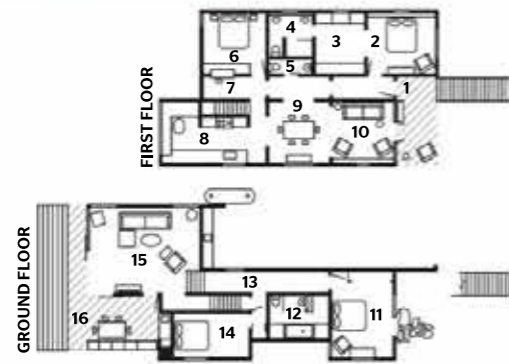
MIKE, HOMEOWNER

PARISI TWINSET 425 BASIN (OPPOSITE), ASTRA WALKER ICON WALL SET



exterior

"We sought to preserve and honour the existing house and establish a connection with the outdoors that allow Mike and Tom to enjoy the best parts of living in a lush, sub-tropical city," says architect Aaron Peters. Dulux Whisper White and Resene Black contrast in equal measures.



- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Entry | 10 Sitting room |
| 2 Master bedroom | 11 Bedroom |
| 3 Walk-in robe | 12 Bathroom |
| 4 Ensuite | 13 Hall |
| 5 Powder room | 14 Bedroom |
| 6 Bedroom | 15 Living area |
| 7 Study | 16 Rear deck |
| 8 Kitchen | 17 Pool |
| 9 Dining area | |



rear deck

Shaded for sun protection but screened to capture the breeze, there are no prizes for guessing where Mike, Tom and their guests spend many hours in summer. The sliding doors reveal a handy outdoor kitchen, and the Kristalia 'Thin-K' table from Fanuli conveniently extends to almost three metres in length. Cushions upholstered with Mokum 'Antigua' fabric in Azure cover the Tait 'Volley' chairs and spotted-gum bench.

the best bits

- + **Banquette seating** "In the kitchen, there's a beautiful dining nook with a banquette, which makes for very relaxed dining and entertaining, or just to read a book," says Georgia. Adds Mike with a smile: "It's also a favourite place for Oscar and Harvey."
- + **Light-drenched open-plan living** "When the new roof went on the downstairs living area, the tremendous height and volume of the room became obvious," says Mike.
- + **Bathroom tiles** "Originally, we chose subway tiles, which we really liked, but decided to change to square tiles after consulting with the architects," says Tom. "We weren't sure how they'd end up and were super-stoked when the tilers finished installing them."