

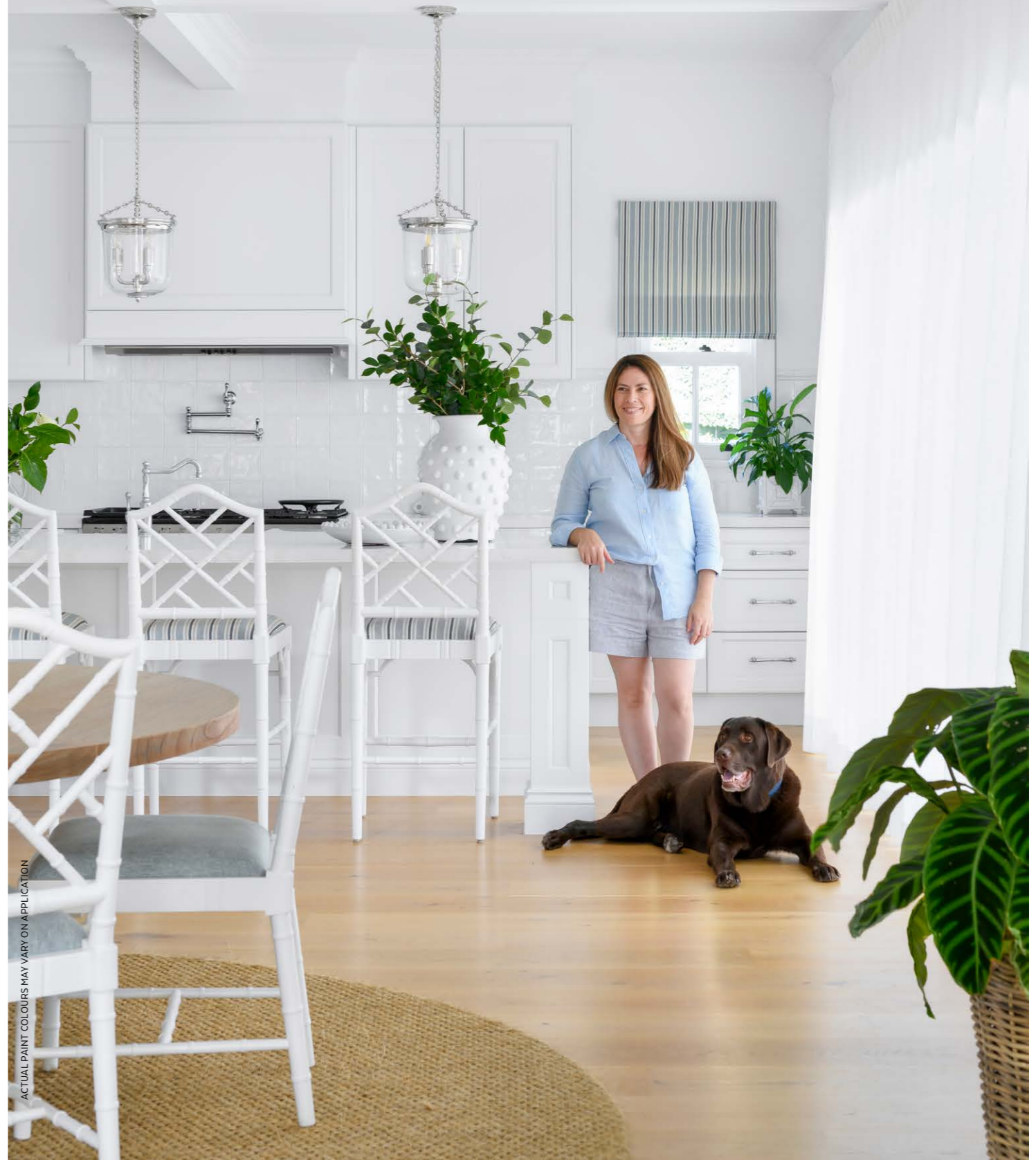
ENDURING ELEGANCE

THIS SMALL BUT MIGHTY PREWAR HOME IN BRISBANE WAS LIFTED AND EXPANDED, TOP AND BOTTOM, TO PRESERVE ITS CHARACTER AND ACCOMMODATE A GROWING FAMILY

Story KYLIE JACKES Styling TAHN SCOON Photography MINDI COOKE



FIRST IMPRESSIONS When engineers Lorena (below) and Sergio bought their prewar two-bedroom Brisbane home, they knew it would need an impressive renovation to make it spacious enough for them and their sons Alejo, Tomas and Guido, plus Frodo the chocolate Labrador. Leaning on the expertise of Baastudio Architecture, the couple agreed to plans that lifted and extended the existing structure to make room for a new level of living space underneath, creating a modern family home that retained the heart and character of the original house. The bay windows and roof were preserved, while the stucco render was replaced with timber cladding painted in Dulux Lexicon Half. For a pop of fun, the new custom front door was painted in Dulux Angora Blue. “I like that the home is very private from the street,” says Lorena. “You don’t get a sense of how big it is.” >



ACTUAL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

For Brisbane couple

Lorena and Sergio, both engineers who hail from Argentina, the only way to go was up after buying a character home at auction four years ago. “When we saw the home and its outlook to mountain views, I thought ‘this is it,’” recalls Lorena. But while its location near the inner city was ideal, the two-bedroom floor plan was not. It required major changes to transform it into a family home robust enough for the couple and their sons Alejo, Tomas and Guido. “We needed more space for our teenage children, who love to have friends over, and for Sergio and me, who work from home a few days a week,” says Lorena.

The clever solution, devised by Baastudio Architecture and executed by Saunders Building Company, was to raise the house 9.5 metres and build an entire new level below it. The lower floor now features a spacious home office, gorgeous kitchen, and living and dining areas that flow onto a generous alfresco area and pool. Upstairs, the home’s original layout has been reconfigured and extended to accommodate a tranquil main bedroom and ensuite at the rear of the house.

For the home to have a cohesive feel, it was essential to meld new and old. Fortunately, the decorative plaster ceilings and bay windows were retained in the newly designated boys’ bedrooms, while the couple added character details, such as intricate cornicing and Art Deco-style ceiling roses, to the upper-level spaces. Downstairs, the classic white kitchen features beautifully crafted coffered ceilings and traditional-profile custom joinery, making it a serene backdrop to family life and a convenient place for the couple to catch up for lunch mid-week. “I’m fortunate to have the larger downstairs office and Sergio works upstairs, so on days we’re working from home and not in the city, we can easily meet up for a chat,” says Lorena.

With the home’s area effectively tripled, there was more space than ever to fit-out and furnish – a task Lorena set about tackling during the build. “I looked at endless houses on Pinterest, making sense of what worked and what didn’t, and creating many boards,” she explains. “Ultimately, I opted for a timeless style with lots of white – almost like a blank canvas so I could add pops of blue and original artwork.”

While the couple were confident with key interior selections, stylist Tahn Scoon helped with the finishing touches, including art, custom cushions and decorative pieces that bring the whole look together. “I love it here,” says Lorena, referring not only to the house, but also their 10-year tenure in Australia. “This is home.”

LIVING ROOM Custom joinery by Burgess Kitchens & Cabinet Makers provides practical, elegant storage and display shelves in the living area. At night, the shelves are brightened with ‘Barclay’ wall lights from Emac & Lawton, which add ambient lighting for a cosy effect and shine a spotlight on accessories from Florabelle Living. A Pearce roll arm sofa from Pottery Barn is matched with occasional chairs upholstered in Warwick Fabrics ‘Arlington Dove’, all set atop a European Tortoiseshell sisal rug from International Floor Coverings. The Stradbroke Bobbin timber coffee table from Abide Interiors adds organic warmth and texture to the room’s otherwise cool and contemporary colour palette. >



WE LOVE...
statement lights

Luxurious light fittings complement this home's heritage. "When researching designs for the house, I came across an article about lighting. [It explained that] it can make a space, and now I understand how," reflects Lorena. While plenty of thought and deliberation went into each selection, Lorena's favourite light is the Aerin 'Jacqueline' chandelier from The Montauk Lighting Co above the dining table.

KITCHEN Lorena's must-haves for the white-on-white kitchen (below) included a big cooker – they chose a Falcon 'Nexus' dual-fuel appliance – a sizeable island, and a pantry to hide mess and meal prep. Cabinetry in Dulux Lexicon Quarter is the perfect match for the 'Vintage' splashback tiles in Oslo White from Classic Ceramics. And although it was a challenge to align the trio of Thomas O'Brien 'Merchant' lanterns from The Montauk Lighting Co above an island bench topped by Stoneville Calacatta Venezia, the result was worth the effort. 'Chippendale' counter stools from Abide Interiors. >



BACKGROUND (OPPOSITE) OTTOLINE OLIVIA FABRIC IN BLUE

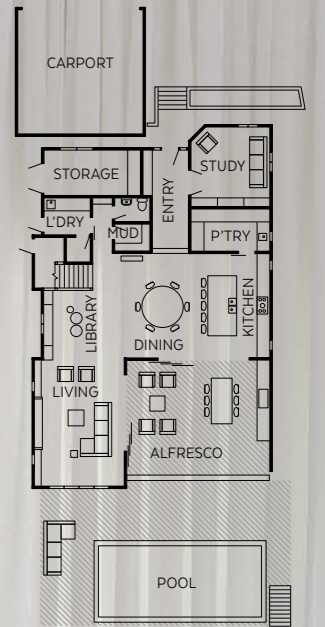
Beautiful HOMES

ALFRESCO AREA Wide stacking doors between the kitchen and lush outdoor dining zone facilitate a seamless connection between the indoor and outdoor living spaces. The alfresco area, which overlooks the pool and greenery beyond, features a dining table that travelled here with the family from Argentina. It was updated with paint to complement 'Henley' outdoor dining chairs from Highgate House. "Many aspects of the design were inspired by the kids," says Lorena. "They love to have friends over, so the pool area gets a lot of use, and the outside area has a television to watch sport." >

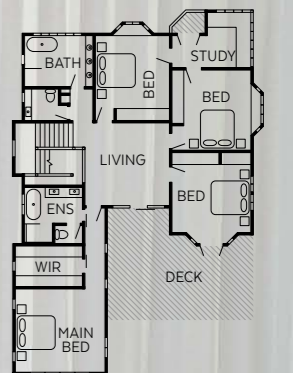


FLOOR PLAN

GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR





“WITH SO MUCH *natural light* THE HOUSE IS *very bright*. YOU NEVER HAVE TO *turn on any lights* DURING THE DAY” LORENA

ARTWORK (ABOVE) DESIGNER BOYS PASTEL 'SEAWEEED II' FROM STYLE MY HOME
ACTUAL PAINT COLOUR MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

MAIN ENSUITE Lorena fell in love with the Spanish-made Ape Grupo Fiorella 'Martia' tiles featured on the couple's ensuite floor (top left). They chose Dulux Posey Blue for their custom vanity, which is topped with YDL Stone's Rosemee engineered stone. Tapware is from the Astra Walker 'Olde English' range. **BEDROOM** In Alejo's room (top right), the French Linen Stripe wallpaper in Chambrey was sourced through Murrays Interiors. It's complemented with Sheridan 'Abbotson' linen and an 'Elliot' bedside table from Style My Home. **BATHROOM** The builder restored the original casement windows in the boys' shared bathroom (right). The 'Marietta' freestanding bath is from Schots Home Emporium. **MAIN BEDROOM** With windows overlooking the pool and verdant yard, the main bedroom (opposite) stays cool during Queensland summers with a Beacon Lighting Fanaway 'Veil' ceiling fan and light. A Pottery Barn 'Scroll Tile' rug centres the 'Levi' Chesterfield linen bedhead from Style My Home, which is layered in a Bianca Lorenne quilt and comforter from Bhumi. >





Source book

Architect: Baastudio Architecture, baastudio.com.au.
Builder: Saunders Building Company, saundersbuilding.com.
Joinery: Burgess Kitchens & Cabinet Makers, burgesskitchens.com.au.
Interior decorating (office & second living): Tahn Interiors, tahninteriors.com.au

POOL It was Sergio's idea to create the cabana by the pool. It provides shade, privacy and the perfect spot for an outdoor sofa plumped with custom cushions, which are upholstered with 3Beaches fabric. It's now a favourite spot for the family to gather, and the area is in constant use throughout the warmer months. The coffee table is from Freedom.



INTO THE BLUE

INSIDE STORY
Lorena & Sergio's home

Who lives here?
 Lorena and Sergio, both engineers, and their three sons, Alejo, 17, Tomas, 15, and Guido, 12, plus Frodo the Labrador.

Best renovation decision?
 Lorena: "A big pantry. When we entertain, we leave everything there so the kitchen and dining areas are clean."

Favourite weekend rituals?
 "Saturdays involve lots of kids' sports. Sundays are quieter. My husband has Italian heritage, so the day is often spent cooking and doing meal prep for the week, all homemade with love."

Best perk working from home?
 "The zero-commute time to travel to the laptop. Also, I get to pat my dog every time I get a cup of tea."

What's your next home project?
 "I would love to create a herb garden."



- ACTUAL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION
1. The spacious back deck, with Highgate House 'Avalon' chairs.
 2. A second living area, decorated by Tahn Interiors, has clever custom storage beneath the bench seats.
 3. Books and marble accessories from Florabelle Living in the chic living room.
 4. The multi-functional outdoor space includes a television for big sports games.
 5. Ceramics from Provincial Home Living.
 6. Lorena works from home a lot and wanted a pretty office, so she asked Tahn Interiors to decorate this space, adding a rug, desk, accessories on the shelves, and commissioned art by Ingrid Bartkowiak.
 7. The new entry foyer features a clever built-in banquette and a family of custom scatter cushions from Tahn Interiors.