

# Light TOUCH

The building was ideal, the location spot on. Now an interior designer has helped this Melbourne home tap into its inner beauty.

STORY JUDY OSTERGAARD / STYLING TERRI SHANNON / PHOTOGRAPHY ARMELLE HABIB

**KITCHEN/DINING** / This area's enviable indoor-outdoor connection was one of the home's biggest drawcards for Rebecca and Tonci Mardesic, pictured with son Roko. Pendant light, Space. Dining table and bench, Journey East. Bentwood chairs, Thonet. Stools, Luke Furniture. Pitti quartz-composite benchtops and splashback, Stone Italiana. Tapware, Astra Walker. Tasmanian oak flooring (throughout). FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 188.



**This is the life**

Rebecca and Tonci Mardescic briefed interior designer Terri Shannon of Bloom Interior Design & Decoration to use animal- or cruelty-free materials wherever possible. "Rebecca and Tonci prefer organic and recycled materials as well as natural products such as linens and wools," says Terri. "We enjoyed researching and sourcing products in the textile and building industries that were produced in accordance with the Mardescics' ethos."



**LIVING /** "My favourite spot in the house is the settee near the fireplace, where I sit and read to Roko," says Tonci. Fireplace and wood box, Wignells of Melbourne. Cleo (grey) sofa and Iko side table, Jordan. Ottoman, Molmic. Floor lamp, Euroluce. Rug, Halcyon Lake Rugs and Carpets.

**Designer buy:** Ligne Roset Togo small settee in Shanghai fabric, from \$4825, Domo.

**COCKTAIL BAR /** A cocktail bar, complete with wine fridge, is built into a nook between the kitchen and dining area for easy access when entertaining. Vintec wine fridge, E&S Trading. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 188.**



Owners Tonci and Rebecca Mardescic say that one of the main things that attracted them to this two-bedroom home in Melbourne's south-west was the open-plan kitchen/dining/living area and its connection – both visual and physical – to the lush back garden.

The sandstone Federation-style house was built in 2000 by the previous owner to replace a weatherboard cottage. When the Mardescics bought the house in 2012, it was decorated with a Balinese theme – dark timber cabinetry, purple feature walls and greyish-pink tiles in the bathrooms.

In 2013, having lived in the house for a year, Tonci and Rebecca decided it was time to make their mark on the property and asked Terri Shannon of Bloom Interior Design & Decoration to improve the layout and freshen up the interior. "We wanted the house to feel brighter and more natural," says Rebecca. "We loved the structure as it was but we thought we could make better use of some of the spaces."

The front door opens to an L-shaped hall that leads past a study, their two-year-old son Roko's bedroom, the main bedroom and main bathroom before opening up to the bright and airy open-plan kitchen/dining/living area. Here, floor-to-ceiling glass doors give access to the garden, the centrepiece of which is a mature palm tree. "The palm tree is home to several families of rainbow lorikeets and is perfectly positioned to shade the backyard from afternoon sun," says Rebecca.

In the kitchen, extra storage was top of the wish list. "Previously, the benches were too low to be used comfortably and all the storage was beneath them so ▶



*'We were lucky enough to stay in some beautiful beach resorts while we were in Asia and we wanted to capture that feeling here.'* *Rebecca Mardesic*

**STUDY /** "The house has been designed to take advantage of the natural light, so it feels summery year-round," says Rebecca. Sofa, Domo. Side table, Jordan. Rug, Halcyon Lake Rugs and Carpets. Curtains in Dalton linen, Unique Fabrics (throughout).

**OFFICE NOOK /** Having several work spaces means the couple can use whichever is brightest, coolest or warmest. Swivel chair, Cult. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 188.**



THE LAYOUT



THE PALETTE

*Dulux Natural White*  
interior, throughout

Add a dash of

*Haymes Paint Twin Flower*

*Taubmans Finale*

Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.







*‘Having so much storage is wonderful. The house feels clean and uncluttered – even with a toddler!’* Rebecca

**MAIN BATHROOM** / The same vertical joinery detailing is used throughout the home for visual harmony. Wall tiles, Lifestiles. Floor tiles, Signorino Tile Gallery. Pitti quartz-composite benchtop, Stone Italiana. Tapware, Astra Walker.

**ROKO’S ROOM** / A chocolate freckle-like rug from The Rug Establishment is a fun textural element in Roko’s room. Cot, Baby Bunting. Charlecote wallpaper, Elliott Clarke. Custom-made pendant light, Bloomingdales Lighting. Print, Castle and Things. Floor lamp, Cult.

**Smart buy:** Sven armchair, \$950, and footstool, \$385, Meizai.

**LAUNDRY** / Concertina doors in the hallway conceal a small but perfectly formed laundry. Washing machine, LG. Baskets, Bloom & Co. Tapware, Astra Walker. Joinery, Werribee Joinery & Cabinet Works.

**MAIN BEDROOM** / Exbury Star wallpaper, Elliott Clarke. Bed, armchair and side table, all Jardan. Bedhead upholstered in Unique Fabrics Grange. Bedside table, Zuster. Wall light, Dunlin. Custom-made pendant light, Bloomingdales Lighting. FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 188.

### Summer retreat

Each room in the house is designed to reflect the home’s idyllic location, a short walk to the beach and opposite the local botanical gardens. “There are lovely views wherever you sit and the ambience is so light and relaxing, like a beach resort,” says Rebecca. She nominates her ensuite as a favourite retreat. “I just love my new walk-in shower with rain showerhead. It makes me feel like I’m on holiday and staying in a luxurious hotel.”



“we added overhead cupboards and deeper benchtops to give us more prep and serving space,” says Rebecca. “The island bench is now a feature of the room, rather than an element,” says Terri.

The subtle driftwood and white colour scheme was chosen to create a light, beach-resort feel – a nod to the home’s location as well as to the couple’s time spent living in Asia. “We were fortunate enough to stay in some beautiful beach resorts while we were in Asia and we wanted to capture that feeling,” says Rebecca.

The eye-catching Ligne Roset Togo settee, the star of the living zone, was acquired during their time in Singapore. “We immediately fell in love with it – the colours and pixel pattern on the fabric are so striking,” says Rebecca. “Terri took the colours from the settee to incorporate as accents in the overall decor.”

Renovation complete, the Mardesics couldn’t be happier. “Before the makeover, the dark walls and fixtures made the house feel closed in, but now it feels so inviting and relaxing,” says Rebecca. “We just love coming home.”

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