



## CHEAT SHEET

**Who lives here:** Founder of 360 Marketing Communications, Rachael Barker; her husband Todd Montgomery, a trader; and their daughters Isobel, 5, and Edith, 1.

**Style of house:** A three-bedroom, two-bathroom Victorian-era house with a modern extension.

 The renovation took eight months to complete.

 The house's update cost around \$400k.

**EXTERIOR (opposite)** Owners Rachael and Todd committed to a wall of black steel-framed windows and doors. **DINING AREA** Around the Jordan table are Thonet chairs while behind the setting is joinery that hides a bar area and a wine fridge.

VASE AND BOWLS, THE SHELLEY PANTON STORE, SHOPHELLEY.PANTON.COM



# PITCH PERFECT

A couple turned to a trusted confidant (and renowned interior designer) to update their beloved family home

WORDS CATHERINE McCORMACK STYLING HEATHER NETTE KING  
PHOTOGRAPHY ARMELLE HABIB



**LIVING AREA** A pair of Jordan 'Nook' sofas define the space. "They wipe up really well!" says Rachael. "I was a bit nervous but I'd recommend them for young families." Bringing in colour is the Ali McNabney-Stevens artwork. **EXTERIOR (opposite)** The couple played up the character of the home's facade by contrasting soft grey tones - Dulux Silkworth on the wall and Dulux Stepney on the picket fence.



**W**hen embarking on a renovation, it helps to have a friend you can call on for advice and support. If they have a great eye for colour and design – and judgment you trust implicitly – all the better.

For Rachael (pictured above with her daughters Isobel and Edith) and Todd, owners of this three-bedroom home, that someone was Terri Shannon. As the founder of Bloom Interior Design & Decoration, Terri understands her clients' needs; and after almost 20 years of friendship with Rachael, she was able to translate the couple's desire for a hardworking family home with touches of Scandinavian style.

"I have a lot of trust in Terri and her ability, and I've seen her grow and evolve in her business," says Rachael. "I've always gone to her for advice and she is really good at tapping into what my style and my taste is."

When Todd and Rachael bought the Port Melbourne property in 2006, they knew it had potential. A freestanding Victorian-era house with a more recent extension at the back, it had a pretty facade and was positioned on a large corner block close to the city and the seaside. "We're at the beach in five minutes," says Rachael. "It takes about 15 minutes to walk to South Melbourne markets and we're so close to the city."

After a few years living in the house – and pregnant with their first daughter, Isobel, now five – the couple started to chat casually with Terri about their ideas. In 2013, they made things formal, with Terri collaborating on the project with Bloom head designer, Emma Hunting. When works commenced, in April 2014, Rachael was pregnant with second daughter, Edith, now one.





**BRIGHT IDEA**

The smooth stretch of merbau decking extends the back living hub, creating an expansive entertaining space. The deck has been left unstained so it can naturally weather over time.



“We were obviously a growing family, so more space and greater functionality were really important to us,” says Rachael of the brief to the Bloom team. “We also love entertaining and wanted to be able to open the back doors and really push our lives out of the kitchen area and into a gorgeous backyard.”

Rachael and Todd engaged local draftsman Ian Kidston of All Extension Design Services, who had extensive knowledge of the area. Ian altered the floorplan to incorporate a third bedroom, an ensuite and a study nook within a smaller living area.

At the back of the house – where the previous owners had already created an open-plan space – Terri and Emma specified an all-white kitchen with a timber-framed, marble-topped island bench as the statement piece. The pair worked with BM Building Solutions to design and create the cabinetry throughout the home. A pair of cupboards beside the dining table hide a wine fridge and bar area, while bespoke joinery and Jordan sofas cosy up the living space. “It’s calm and relaxing to come home and hang out now, and I think that’s due to the colours and tones Terri has brought into the house,” says Rachael.

The back wall of black steel-framed windows and doors was the couple’s idea. “We had done a lot of research,” says Rachael. “We drew the doors and took photos to show Terri what we wanted. It was all about bringing black into the scheme and playing up the green in the garden.”

To carry the look throughout the house, black-framed sliding doors were also installed in the corridor and ensuite. Combined with white walls, matt black fixtures, pops of colour in artworks and accessories, and the warmth of stained Tasmanian oak floors, the finished look is everything the couple wanted and more. “We loved all that gorgeous character at the front, but we also wanted a modern living space where we could relax and entertain,” says Rachael. “There’s nothing we’d do differently.”

And Terri? “I loved working on Rachael and Todd’s home. Being best friends, I really understood their needs and the way they like to live and entertain. It’s so rewarding seeing them enjoy living in their home every day.” **10**

For more on Terri and Emma’s work, visit [bloominteriordesign.com.au](http://bloominteriordesign.com.au). Visit [allexensions.com.au](http://allexensions.com.au) and [bmbuildingsolutions.com.au](http://bmbuildingsolutions.com.au).

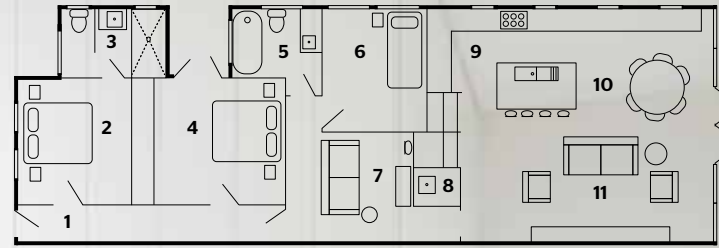
**KITCHEN** “Todd and I enjoy time in here,” says Rachael, who calls the island bench with a granite benchtop and a built-in breakfast bar the heart of the home. Bespoke timber handles and sculptural Workstead lamps add a sense of gravitas. “They were Terri’s idea and are probably one of our favourite features,” says Rachael.



**TIMELINE**

2006-2011	2013	2014
<p><b>2006</b> Todd and Rachael purchase the house for its location and its potential.</p> <p><b>2011</b> Rachael and Todd start chatting with friend and interior designer Terri Shannon about ideas for the house.</p>	<p><b>2013</b> The couple formally engage Bloom to assist with the renovations.</p>	<p><b>Late April</b> Right before commencing building works, Rachael and Todd find out they are pregnant with their second child.</p> <p><b>July</b> The black-framed doors and windows are manufactured locally.</p> <p><b>October</b> The doors and windows are installed.</p> <p><b>November</b> Fit-out of kitchen and bathrooms begins.</p> <p><b>December</b> Eight months later, renovations are complete - over time, but just in time for Christmas and baby Edith’s arrival one week later.</p>





- 1. Entry
- 2. Master bedroom
- 3. Ensuite
- 4. Bedroom
- 5. Bathroom
- 6. Bedroom
- 7. Lounge/ study nook
- 8. Laundry
- 9. Kitchen
- 10. Dining area
- 11. Living area

**LOUNGE/STUDY NOOK** Interior designers Terri and Emma turned this small area into a study nook with a cosy lounge. Custom shelving was intentionally installed high on the wall. "We wanted to make it a little bit dramatic and play with the height," says Emma.

SIDE TABLE, FENTON&FENTON, FENTONANDFENTON.COM.AU



**STAR PERFORMER**

The success of this home is due to smart use of space and refined details. The bathroom is a great example with a tub in front of a private courtyard for a day spa feel and black Astra Walker taps for a modern twist.





**ENSUITE** Sliding steel-framed doors hide the shower and toilet and a Caroma 'Lab' sink sits atop a marble-topped vanity. **MASTER BEDROOM (opposite)** In keeping with the era of the original part of the home, this room was given a more traditional look with a padded bedhead and panelled wardrobes.

5 GREAT FINDS



**1**  
Embellish #18 painting by Lola Donoghue, \$2400, Bloom & Co., bloomandco.com.au.



**2**  
'No. 89 Le Corbusier' cane chair with black finish, from \$423, Thonet, thonet.com.au.



**3**  
'Scanda' marble and leather vase, \$95, Curious Grace, curiousgrace.com.au.



**4**  
'All Circle' dining table, \$2800, Douglas And Bec, douglasandbec.com.



**5**  
Woven palm laundry basket, \$85, After Online, afteronline.com.au.

ADDITIONAL PRODUCT SOURCING: NATALIE JOHNSON



**FOCUS ON BLACK STEEL DOORS**

Terri Shannon, director of Bloom Interior Design & Decoration, shares her advice on using steel-framed doors and windows

**The pros:** "They open up the space and bring the inside in, while also giving a contemporary feel. Using them for internal doors also allows lots more natural light to flow through the home. For this home, we designed the windows and doors and had them made by a quality steel manufacturer."

**The cons:** "They're substantially more expensive than aluminium or timber windows and doors, so budget considerations are important. For external versions, we would always suggest using double glazing for insulation, as it can be a large expanse of glass."



“IT'S CALMING AND RELAXING IN HERE – IT'S SUCH A BEAUTIFUL BEDROOM” RACHAEL BARKER, OWNER

**PAINT PALETTE**

'Clean & Protect' low sheen interior paint in Love Note, \$56.90/4L, British Paints, 132 525.

'Clean & Protect' low sheen interior paint in Bullet Proof, \$61.60/4L, British Paints, as before.

'Clean & Protect' low sheen interior paint in Distant Shore, \$56.90/4L, British Paints, as before.