



Christmas gets a makeover this year for this Melbourne family in their sunny weekender escape right by the sea

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home for the holidays

NAPKIN RINGS, NORSU.COM.AU; OPPOSITE: TOWEL (ON FLOOR), ZIPORAH LIFESTYLE; ZIPORAH LIFESTYLE.COM; TOWEL (ON LOUNGER) AND THROW (ON ROCKER), SHERIDAN.COM.AU; STRING LIGHTS, NORSU INTERIORS; AS BEFORE

cheat sheet

Who lives here: Couple Jennifer and Adrian, and their daughter Lilah, 5.

Style of house: A two-storey '90s build with four bedrooms in Mount Martha on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula. The home was purchased in early 2014.

🕒 An eight-month renovation to transform what had been an elderly couple's house into a beachy family getaway in time for Christmas.

\$\$\$ The whole house revamp cost just under \$400k and included a new kitchen, pool and bedroom.



POOL (opposite) Daughter Lilah can often be found out by the pool. A rocker from House Of Orange and a Basil Bangs 'Dome' umbrella by Lucas Grogan from Fenton & Fenton are outdoor essentials.

DINING AREA Centrepiece decorations from My Christmas, crockery from Bloom & Co and Sheridan napkins set the scene for Christmas lunch at Jennifer and Adrian's coastal escape.



pennant

Learn how to make this layered leather pennant on page 165.



BALCONY (opposite, far left)

Jennifer and Lilah enjoying the view on Eco Outdoor furniture.

ENTRY (opposite, left)

The Bespokery bonbons make a festive welcome on a console table from Jordan. **KITCHEN/DINING AREA** Panelling and pale timber create a relaxed Hamptons look with a GlobeWest dining setting adding a modern touch.



crown

Create your own customised crowns - turn to page 165 to see how.

Forget mistletoe and sleigh bells. Christmas in this part of the world revolves around two key things: family and the outdoors. It's that time of year when kids can shove their school uniform to the back of the wardrobe, grown-ups switch off the work email, and we all get to spend time with people we love in the beautiful weather.

In many ways, that's what prompted Jennifer and Adrian to invest in a weekend property. "We don't have anywhere for our daughter, Lilah, to run around in inner-city Melbourne," says Jennifer, "and we really wanted that, especially as both my husband and I come from the country."

A beach house on the Mornington Peninsula, just an hour by car, seemed the perfect solution but while Jennifer immediately began dreaming of a Hamptons-style getaway, it took a year of searching before they came across the house in Mount Martha. "Most of what we'd seen was set back from the beach, buried in shrubs, but this place is across from the public beach so there are no trees. It has such an amazing view, we really couldn't go past it."

Still, location aside, the property bore very little resemblance to the breezy bolthole Jennifer had envisaged. "There were olive-green feature walls, rustic-looking tiles, cherry wood floorboards - things I wouldn't associate with the beach. And there were only three bedrooms, which was nearly a deal-breaker because we wanted four."

Fortunately, having renovated before, the couple had an idea of what was possible - and enlisted interior designer Terri Shannon and her team at Bloom, who they'd worked with in the past. The brief was simple. "I wanted the exact opposite of our home in town," says Jennifer. "Terri's seen that, so she knows it's very 'Melbourne'

TOP LEFT: THROW AND CHOPPING BOARD, BLOOM & CO. BLOOMANDCO.COM.AU BOTTOM: CROCKERY AND CUTLERY, BLOOM & CO. AS BEFORE. BONBONS, MY CHRISTMAS, SHERIDAN, SHERIDAN.COM.AU NAPKIN RINGS, NORSU INTERIORS, NORSLUCOM.AU OPPOSITE: CENTREPIECE DECORATIONS AND CHAMPAGNE GLASSES, MY CHRISTMAS, AS BEFORE

and serious, with dark woods and marble. We love it, but for this, it's important to feel we're getting away from the city."

Collecting the keys on Anzac Day, they had a clear deadline: Christmas, when they'd play host to family from all over Victoria. "We got cracking straightaway," says Jennifer.

Structurally, they stayed within the footprint of the house, converting a large laundry into the fourth bedroom they wanted. Once the room quota was resolved, floors were replaced with white-washed oak, while the walls were given a clever treatment by builder Tim Rodgers-Wilson from TRW Constructions. "They're boards that have been grooved to give the effect of lining boards, which Tim came up with so we could stay within budget," says Jennifer. With the decor, Jennifer was happy to be led by Bloom. "They do the Hamptons look really well and I especially love the blue they've incorporated to tie in with the home's beach feel."

Meanwhile, the outdoor space also needed a major overhaul, as the existing pathways and rose gardens would require far more maintenance than could be managed living there part-time. Nor were they especially child friendly. Cue a pool, landscaped lawn and decking, all of which Lilah adores. "She's constantly outdoors picking flowers, practising gymnastics on the grass or putting on concerts on the deck, which she thinks is a stage," says Jennifer.

Of course, the big question is: was the project done in time for the festive season? "Tim promised we'd be finished on December 1, and we were finished on December 1," beams Jennifer. "He's hands-down the best builder I've ever worked with."

With that, the Christmas tree and decorations went up and the place was ready to welcome family from far and wide – although not everyone's a fan of Jennifer's rule of saving presents until after breakfast. "Adrian can't bear it," she laughs. "He's a big kid at heart and always manages to sneak a couple of early ones to Lilah."

Either way, Christmas last year was such a success that Jennifer is keen to play host again. There's just one problem. "It's not our turn," she says. "But I'll do my best to convince them it is." **10**

To see more of Bloom's work, visit bloominteriordesign.com.au. For more details on TRW Constructions, visit truconstructions.com.au.

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LIVING AREA On Christmas morning, the Jordan 'Nook' sofa with large cushions is where Jennifer, Adrian and Lilah will gather to see what Santa has delivered. The plush lounge's rich-blue tone draws on the coastal surrounds, while its tactile feel contrasts with the Armadillo&Co rug and the coffee table, also from Jordan.

WHITE WOODEN STAR: MY CHRISTMAS; WYCHRISTMAS.COM.AU
 CANDLE HOLDER AND WOODEN STAR: NORSU INTERIORS,
 NORSU.COM.AU; VASE: BLOOM & CO; BLOOMANDCO.COM.AU

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JENNIFER, HOMEOWNER



LIVING AREA A spruce Christmas tree from Julian Ronchi Garden Design and Nursery is dressed to impress, with Santa sacks from The Woodfolk underneath. Lilah is keen to get into the spirit of the season, hanging up this handmade bunting above the fireplace (**opposite**). A ‘Seymour’ chair from King Living creates an inviting reading nook.



bunting

You will need:

- 1 natural leather rectangle measuring 23cm x 15cm
- Pen
- Ruler
- Sharp scissors
- 4 x natural leather rectangles measuring 15cm x 13cm
- 4 x pale blue vinyl rectangles measuring 13cm x 8cm
- 4 x metallic gold leather rectangles measuring 12cm x 6cm
- 1 metallic blue leather square measuring 20cm x 20cm
- 1 gold leather square measuring 20cm x 20cm
- Craft glue
- Utility knife/scalpel
- Blu-Tack/pins
- Snowflake templates downloaded from the internet
- 120cm of gold leather thonging

1. Fold the 23cm x 15cm natural leather rectangle in half lengthways. Mark a dot 18cm down on the back of the outer edge. From this mark, cut a straight line to meet the bottom of folded edge.
2. Repeat this process for the other rectangles, using the following measurements: 15cm x 13cm natural leather - 10cm down; pale blue vinyl - 8.5cm down; gold leather - 7cm down.
3. Trace the snowflake templates onto the back of the metallic blue and gold leather squares.
4. Cut out the shapes. Apply glue to the leather snowflakes and attach to the natural leather flags.
5. Glue the thonging to the back of the flags to form the bunting. Attach to the wall with Blu-Tack.

OPPOSITE: TREE TOPPER, MY CHRISTMAS, MYCHRISTMAS.COM.AU; TREE DECORATIONS, THE WOODFOLK (THEWOODFOLK.COM.AU); THE SHELLEY PANTON STORE (SHOP.SHELLEYPANTON.COM) AND NORSU INTERIORS (NORSU.COM.AU); COFFEE TABLE, CANDLE HOLDER AND WOODEN STAR, NORSU INTERIORS, AS BEFORE; VASE, BLOOM & CO. BLOOMANDCO.COM.AU; THIS PAGE: PAPER STAR, NORSU INTERIORS, AS BEFORE



gift
topper
& tassel

Turn to page 165



THIS PAGE (TOP RIGHT) GOLD ORNAMENT, THE SHELLEY PANTON STORE, SHOP.SHELLEYPANTON.COM, STAR, NORJU INTERIORS, NORJU.COM.AU, (BOTTOM) WIRE STAR, NORJU INTERIORS, AS BEFORE, EURO PILLOWCASES, SHERIDAN, SHERIDAN.COM.AU, OPPOSITE, WOODEN ANTLERS, HOUSE OF ORANGE, HOUSEOFORANGE.COM.AU, WOODEN BEAD GARLAND, STRING LIGHTS AND SANTA SACK, THE WOODSFOLK, THEWOODSFOLK.COM.AU, WOODEN ELF (ON SIDE TABLE), NORJU INTERIORS, AS BEFORE, LIGHTBOX, TYPO, TYPO.COM



lessons learnt

What we'd change: "The bathrooms - they were only updated five years ago, so we left them out of the initial reno, but eventually I'd like to redo them. The same goes for the facade of the house, but it's in such good condition that I can't quite con my husband into agreeing with me just yet on that," says Jennifer.

Biggest surprise: "We thought it would be more of a summer pad, but rugging up and walking along the beach in winter is fabulous, too. And the fireplace - which was there when we bought the home - is beautiful."

Best tip: "Remember what drew you to the house initially, and make that a focus. For us, that was the view. We realised that the balconies had thick white tubular framing that blocked the outlook when you were sitting down, so we changed those to a more modern frameless style."

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MASTER BEDROOM (opposite) The Gubi lights from AmbienteDirect.com set the blue and grey tones in the room, along with the 'Leila' bed from Jardan. **LILAH'S BEDROOM** Subtle curves come to the fore with the powder-blue Jardan 'Nook' bed and a table from GlobeWest. The 'Bay Of Islands' carpet in Ocean is from Victoria Carpets.