

### *This is the life*

During the week it's just owners Andrew and Linda at home, with an open-plan kitchen and family room perfectly sized to suit. "We have space but we're not at opposite ends of the house," says Linda. On the weekends, however, the house is full of the noise, laughter and activity of the couple's two children and their partners, as well as five grandchildren.



## GLORY DAYS

An interior designer's vision brought this 1930s home on Sydney's North Shore back to its magnificent origins.

STORY SUNNY DE BRUYN / STYLING NATASHA LEVAK / PHOTOGRAPHY MAREE HOMER



**H&G HOUSES**

**SUNROOM** / Once an external loggia, this room has an original arched window that everyone is drawn to. Reconditioned blackwood sofa and armchairs, ottomans and curtains, all by Coco Republic Interior Design (CRID).

**PORCH** / A much larger front door, stone columns and acid-washed limestone paving complete the sophisticated new entrance.

**Smart buy:** Capri planters, \$398/each, Yardware.  
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**HALLWAY** / Just inside the front door is a custom-made coat rack by CRID. Beneath it is an Oly San Francisco Henry bench from Coco Republic.

**FAMILY ROOM** / This informal eating area features Barbara Barry pendant lights, curtains in Schumacher Ambala Paisley fabric and custom furniture, all by CRID.

**KITCHEN** / A honed-Calacatta island bench stands proud of the black granite benchtops behind. Limed oak cabinetry and sofa in Busatti Melograno fabric, CRID. Rug, Cadrys. The print above the shelf is a photograph of a train station in Montreal (where the couple met) by Serge Babineau. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 222.**

What began with a consultation about a new recliner and coffee table turned into an epic two-and-a-half-year renovation of this landmark home on Sydney's North Shore. The owners, Andrew and Linda, had invited Natasha Levak, senior interior designer at Coco Republic, to their home to discuss a few pieces of furniture. But as she walked through the house on that warm spring day in 2012, Natasha was mesmerised by the original features of the four-bedroom 1930s property and the promise it held.

Andrew and Linda needed little convincing and the furniture consultation evolved into a massive renovation of the exterior, as well as a complete redesign of the floor plan on both the ground level and first floor, with a full DA submission. By the time the project was completed, a comprehensive fit-out of furniture and furnishings for the entire home had been undertaken – right down to monogrammed sheets, towels and napery to accommodate seasonal dining.

Two previous renovations (in the 1990s and early 2000s) were well done but weren't in keeping with the home's true style. On her first visit, Natasha spied some of the beautiful Regency Revival and ►



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*'The island bench's turned timber legs make it look lighter and prevent the kitchen from being too built-in.'*

*Natasha Levak, interior designer*



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*'I wanted to reinstate the integrity of the original home and create spaces for pure enjoyment.'* **Natasha**

◀ classic Art Deco features. On closer inspection blown-glass windows, plaster-set double-brick internal walls, plaster-panelled ceilings, and solid doors and trims revealed themselves.

Natasha knew the home would be spectacular in one cohesive style and, after explaining this to the owners and gently suggesting how the floor plan could be much improved, she says that Andrew, in particular, had a strong desire to see the house at its best. "The clients were receptive to this bigger vision and it went from there. I wanted to reinstate the integrity of the home and create spaces for pure enjoyment," she says.

The changes Natasha suggested saw the ground-floor footprint expand to include a new sunroom and larger kitchen/informal living space. A practical back hallway was created to service internal access to the double garage as well as the elegant entry hall. French doors installed throughout the ground floor now offer enchanting views of the garden from every room. Upstairs received similar treatment. The floor plan was 'flipped' and the main bedroom relocated from the eastern side to the western wing to create a master suite complete with generous walk-in wardrobe. In addition, one oversized ensuite was redesigned to achieve a main bathroom and guest ensuite.

One of the key internal changes was the flooring. The existing carpet was rolled back to reveal 60mm wide tallowwood floorboards, which were matched with reclaimed boards stained with Feast Watson Proof tint in the sunroom and kitchen/living area. Natasha chose fresh, crisp whites and neutrals for the walls, including Watty! Flokati and Murobond Paints Bone, Travertine, Moontide and Nero. Ceilings are Dulux Vivid White, which reflects light beautifully. The palette for the furnishings is very soft: greys, greens, blues, ivory and coral, accented with mustard, chartreuse, olive, tangerine and navy.

There were many changes to the exterior, with work undertaken by Kuringai Civil, and then the real fun began with the interior ▶

### *Inspired decorating*

Inspiration for this project came from the elegance and glamour of the 1930s Art Deco and Regency Revival aesthetic. "I set out to create a home that was authentic and true to this period but still relevant to today," says Natasha. "For me, curtains and upholstery by fabric house Schumacher and lighting by American designer Barbara Barry achieve this current-classic aesthetic."



LIVING / Tactile fabrics, studded leather and glazed linen with antique brass touches make this formal room. The sofa, mustard-coloured chairs, ottoman, tables and lamps are by CRID. Rug, Cadrys. Artwork by Melissa Mladin-Lowgren. **Designer buy:** Oly San Francisco Sienna chair in Velvet, \$5855, Coco Republic. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 222.**







## THE PALETTE

*Dulux  
Stowe White*  
exterior

*Dulux  
Bio Blue*  
front door

*Dulux  
Oxford*  
shutters



**MAIN BEDROOM** / An Oly San Francisco Marco four-poster bed from Coco Republic and other custom furniture contribute to this sense of harmony. The bedside table, Schumacher Haruki sisal wallpaper and custom curtains are all through CRID.

**WARDROBE** / Backed with Larsen Mystery wallpaper, the open shelves of the walk-in wardrobe provide lots of attractive storage options. The cabinetry, light-fitting and blinds in Ralph Lauren Mitford silk ticking are by CRID.

**GUESTROOM** / Coral and navy are expertly blended in this room, making everyone feel welcome. Schumacher Chenonceau curtains with Olicana Singapore linen bases and furniture, CRID. **Designer buy:** Valance and cushion-trim fabric is Melograno in French Blue, \$150/m, Busatti. ►

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Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow. Front door colour has been colour-matched by H&G.

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*'Our children were raised in this house and now our grandchildren love spending time here.'* Linda





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*'All the bathrooms have hand-finished wall tiles, marble floor tiles, chrome tapware and custom joinery.'* *Natasha*



## FEATURE PLANTS

### FRONT PORCH

Peace lily

(*Spathiphyllum wallisii*)

### BACK GARDEN

Camellia japonica

Lacecap hydrangea

### IN POTS

Golden cane palm

Pineapple plant

(*Ananas comosus*)

**PORCH** / Shutters and metal-framed accessories balance the expanses of white in this corner. Arched panel mirror, Le Forge. Planter and pots, CRID.

**VERANDA** / Accessed by french doors and running the length of the home is this outdoor space overlooking the garden and pool.

Wrought-iron armchair and ottoman, CRID.

**MAIN BATHROOM** / With a calming grey palette and antique-style bath from Cast Iron Baths, this space now happily accommodates the grandchildren. Subway wall tiles, The Art of Tiles. Oly San Francisco Tristan side table, Coco Republic.

**Smart buy:** Hexagonal Carrara marble tiles, \$220/m<sup>2</sup>, Teranova.

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◀ details. “I can confidently say that the napkins match the curtains – which reference the flatware and custom joinery – and not by accident,” says Linda. “This house has been designed top-to-toe.” No detail was overlooked, including everything from the customised window coverings to the meaningful artworks in every room.

“I think the interior fit-out of the house makes it special. It feels original even though many aspects are not. It’s as if everything has been this way all along. But at the same time there’s a functionality and purpose to the design of each room that makes it feel fresh, casual and current,” says Linda. “We were lucky to find a designer who was able to understand our requirements, have a vision and then work with us to create a home that reflects us.”

“Linda and Andrew really were dream clients,” says Natasha. “They gave me a huge amount of freedom to design the house as I saw fit. Every element in this house is considered and there is beauty everywhere you look – that was my goal.”

**H&G**

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