

PAST PRESENT

An Art-Deco home in a quaint Melbourne suburb has been brought up to date, thanks to a sensitive makeover.

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About 10 kilometres north-east of the Melbourne CBD, Eaglemont is known for its beautiful gardens, Art-Deco houses and as the area where the Heidelberg School of painters made their base. A suburb of parklands and curving streets, it was designed in 1915 by Walter Burley Griffin, the architect who created the blueprint for Canberra.

Burley Griffin himself lived in Eaglemont from 1919-1921 and designed several houses in the area. The leafy enclave and stately architecture attracted Daniela and her family to the suburb about 13 years ago. "The house was extremely solid, with some attractive Deco features and its position, high on a sloping block with well-established trees in the garden, were drawcards for us," says Daniela.

The three-level, four-bedroom house is one of six properties that back onto a private park – a Burley Griffin trademark – and Daniela and her husband loved the location's country-life-in-the-city appeal. What's more, it would be the perfect place to bring up their two boys, Max, now 13, and Alex, 11. When she moved in, Daniela held a top design job with a fashion retailer but soon turned her talents to the makeover, aiming to update the house while respecting its past.

To her designer's eye, the original floor plan had huge potential, but was badly in need of an update. "The layout was a little peculiar, as you needed to walk through the formal living or dining room to get to the kitchen," she says. "The bathrooms were all in their original state, with terrazzo floors, sage porcelain tiles and cast-iron enamelled baths, but all in need of major repair. The kitchen had an authentic freestanding stove inside a chimney space, with a single stainless-steel sink, original overhead cupboards and limited >

This is the life

Here's a family who loves to entertain. "This is a real party house," Daniela says. "You can open it up easily to the garden so that people wander in and out." A keen cook, Daniela had the kitchen designed with lots of bench space so that it's easy to prepare food and serve it to either large or small groups of family and friends. "The boys often have their mates over to swim in the pool or to watch movies in the basement," says Daniela. "The gym alongside the pool gets a good workout too."

Interior designer Tania Di Lizio used the home's Art-Deco features as a starting point for the decor in the formal living room. Sofa, chairs and ottoman custom made by McGlade Fine Furniture. Chandelier is original. Rug from Designer Rugs. Artwork by Lewis Miller. Osborne & Little Metropolis wallpaper (in formal dining room) from Seneca Textiles. For Where to Buy, see page 187.



Timeless style

Architect Michelle Stephens used stacked stone and timber, Frank Lloyd Wright style, to link the house to the garden while being sensitive to the heritage of the property. Meanwhile, interior designer Tania Di Lizio used the home's original Art-Deco features as a starting point for decorating the formal living and dining rooms, making them more elaborate than the rest of the house, which is relaxed, contemporary and wonderfully airy.

< bench space. A meals area was a later addition, built on as a sunroom. And the outside toilet and laundry remained."

While Daniela had strong ideas about the changes she wanted, she called in architect Michelle Stephens for advice. "We love the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright and asked Michelle to use that as inspiration," says Daniela. "We asked her to rework the entrance, introduce large open-plan living areas that interconnected and to draw in daylight and indoor-outdoor aspects."

The wish list also included a parents' retreat on a new first floor, which would maximise city views, and a desire to turn the basement - built as an air-raid shelter - into a garage and home theatre. The living areas on the ground floor, too, would need to be extended at the rear by a few metres to accommodate the open plan.

Michelle's approach was to be respectful of the existing house but to bring it more into harmony with its surroundings. "There was no interface between the house and the yard. It completely dominated the landscape around it," she says. "I thought it was imperative that we anchored the architecture to the site and adopted robust, earthy materials which blurred the lines between built form and the >

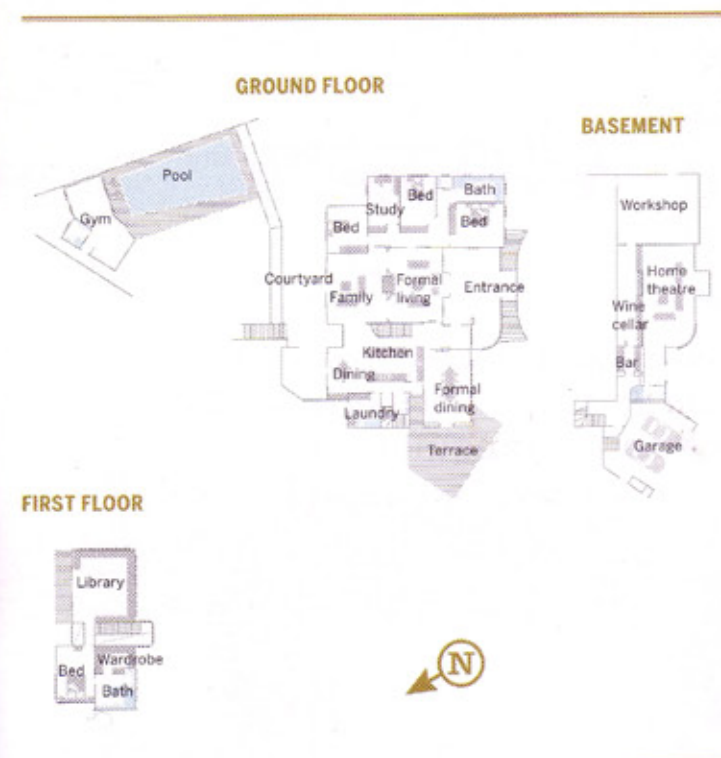
ABOVE Ceiling-height glass sliding doors connect the family room to a sunny courtyard. Sofas from Natuzzi. Ottoman from Gainesville. Rug from Designer Rugs. Artwork by Conchita Carambano. **RIGHT** Marble from RMS Natural Stone is a luxe touch in the kitchen. **OPPOSITE** Sleek fittings give the bathroom a contemporary edge. Tiles from Urban Edge Ceramics. Basins from Reece. **For Where to Buy, see page 187.**





Colour palette

- Dulux Off White
- Dulux Beige Royal
- Porter's Paints Sequin
- Porter's Paints Ecru



Although the original Art-Deco architecture inspired the interior design scheme as a whole, each room was approached differently.

< landscape. By using stacked stone and timber cladding for the alterations and adding frameless-glass balustrades to terraces and balconies, the new works have a reduced the bulk of the structure and blend into the site."

The final stage saw Daniela enlist interior designer Tania Di Lizio, from Caia Di Lizio, to help with the interiors. "The house was to be practical and workable," says Tania. "Daniela likes to entertain and, with two boys, a large extended family and many friends, she wanted everything to have a place. The original architecture was my inspiration, though each room was approached differently. The two formal rooms [separate living and dining] were done with a hint of the Art Deco and so are moody and more elaborate than the rest of house, which is relaxed, contemporary and airy."

The result is a comfortable home the family relishes every day. Daniela's favourite space is the upstairs retreat, where she has her office as well as her bedroom. From here, she looks out across the garden and surveys another example of Burley Griffin's timeless handiwork - the little park beyond.

H&G
 Architect: Michelle Stephens & Co, Fitzroy North, Vic, 0411 475 202.
 Interior designer: Caia Di Lizio, Ivanhoe, Vic, (03) 9415 7878.

ABOVE The guestroom is furnished with Daniela's special finds. Artwork by Pip Davey. **RIGHT** In the ensuite, marble tiles from Urban Edge Ceramics echo the stacked stone outside. **OPPOSITE TOP** Alex's bedroom. Blind in Romo Earl Stripe from Marco Fabrics. Rug from Customweave Carpets+Rugs. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM** The gym and pool area. For Where to Buy, see page 187.

