

DREAM IT. DESIGN IT. DO IT.

# detail driven

This meticulously planned renovation in the Melbourne suburbs was all about maximising available space and culling clutter

When medical specialists Kirsty Wiltshire and Scott Williams bought a Federation-era family home in suburban Glen Iris a decade ago, they knew that they wanted to renovate it. “At the time we moved in, there were seven different shades of green in the house – and the kitchen was bright red,” says Kirsty. “It was all very dramatic.”

However, life got in the way of their immediate plans: within months, Kirsty was pregnant with their first child, a girl. Shortly after baby Amelia was born, the couple conceived again. With two young daughters and demanding careers to juggle, the pair decided to put their renovation aspirations on hold. Later, when the girls were toddlers, another tentative plan to renovate was nixed after Kirsty discovered how messy young children can be. “Kids are kids; walls will be marked and things will be damaged,” she says. “I realised that I wanted to wait until I didn’t have to worry about that sort of thing.”

Finally, when the children began primary school, Kirsty and Scott decided to seize the moment. “It was just in time, too,” she says. “We’d run out of storage space and were at a point where handles were falling off the kitchen drawers!”



## cheat sheet

**Who lives here** Kirsty Wiltshire and her husband Scott Williams, both radiation oncologists; their two children: Amelia, nine, and Eloise, eight; plus their dog Lulu Rose, a Cavoodle.

**Style of home** A Federation-era worker’s cottage with a dual-level extension that was added in the early 2000s.

**🕒** Kirsty and Scott bought the home in 2009 and made small updates in the years that followed. They began planning their renovation in early 2018 and finished it in April 2019.

**💰** The couple spent approximately \$300,000 (excluding furniture).

## living room

Pooch Lulu Rose on the Felix sofa by Arthur G. Elle marble nest of coffee tables, GlobeWest. Heat & Glo fireplace. The bench seat makes the most of the leafy outlook; it’s clad in engineered European-oak boards with a clear two-pack finish.



wishlist

- + **New kitchen** Kirsty and Scott wanted a functional eat-in design.
- + **More room outside** The cluttered deck needed to be cleared.
- + **Storage** This was needed everywhere, especially in the living room.

kitchen

Dekton features on the benchtops: Sirius on the island and Zenith on the facing bench, matched with cupboards in Dulux Snowy Mountains. The splashback is Neolith Estatuario from CDK Stone. Hay 'About A Stool' seats, Cult. Timber floors, custom stained.

dream it

Kirsty and Scott focused on the ground floor of the home’s dual-level extension, which the previous owner had added in the early 2000s. Their priorities were to minimise wasted space, create more storage and tone down the zany colour choices.

The kitchen, a narrow island divided into two unequal halves, was particularly problematic. “The side of the kitchen with the stove and fridge was very narrow, less than a metre wide,” says Kirsty. On the other side of the island, a built-in table with chairs was positioned awkwardly. “What I really wanted was a big island bench where my kids could sit and do their homework while I was preparing food,” says Kirsty.

In the living/dining room, Kirsty and Scott hoped to overhaul the central fireplace and flue that divided the space into two halves. “It was supposed to be a wood-burning fireplace, but there was just a gas burner in there when we moved in,” says Kirsty. Out on the deck, the couple dreamed of making the space more practical by installing a new retractable roof and removing a pre-existing L-shaped pond.

design it

The couple’s neighbour, Matt Bright of MJ Bright Builders, suggested they speak to Johanna Hay of Hay Design about reconfiguring the home. “Matt had worked with us before on a couple of small projects, like refreshing our bathroom, so we trusted his recommendation,” says Kirsty.

Although they had waited years to begin the renovation, Kirsty was adamant the design stage shouldn’t be rushed. “Joh drew up 22 pages of plans over a six-month period,” she says, “because I didn’t want to be making any decisions on the fly. Renovations are just too expensive to stuff up.”

In the kitchen, Joh created extra space by moving the pantry towards the front of the house, into a passage that had separated the pantry from the laundry room. She and Kirsty chose a sleek pressed-porcelain island with Dulux Black Caviar base as the new kitchen’s centrepiece, and had the walls painted a crisp white.

The living/dining room also needed a lot of work. “It was full of cheap-looking orangey timber veneer, which had to go,” says Kirsty. “We worked with Joh to incorporate different timber tones to give the space a range of textures.” Kirsty and Scott then installed a Heat & Glo fireplace surrounded on three sides by black cabinetry. Along the back wall of the space they added a long bench with drawers underneath for more storage.



the moodboard



**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT** Windsor Wool 'Ashington' **carpet** in Blyth, from \$245.85 per lineal m, Choices Flooring. Bloomingville **vase**, \$69, Royal Design. Dekton Sirius **surface**, POA, Cosentino. David Trubridge 'Kina' **light**, from \$585, Creative Lighting Solutions. Dulux Wash&Wear acrylic **paint** in Black Caviar, \$91.55 per 4L, Bunnings. Elle round marble nest **coffee tables**, \$2300, GlobeWest. Bianco **kitchen mixer** with pull-out tap, \$859, Winning Appliances.

ADDITIONAL PRODUCT SOURCING: NATALIE JOHNSON



### dining room

Keeping the centrally located fireplace and revamping it with a Heat & Glo model has maintained the delineation between the living and dining zones. Cranberry Design contemporised the owners' table with Belinda chairs from GlobeWest. Pendant, Custom Lighting.



### the best bits

#### + Working with a receptive designer

"We'd heard that some designers enforce their viewpoints on clients, but Joh was very conscious of what we were trying to achieve. She helped us realise our vision," says Kirsty.

+ **Smart kitchen storage** "Joh measured each of our appliances and made sure there was space for them in the pantry. We also used pocket sliding doors on some of the cupboards, which means we have easy access to most items but can also hide things away."

+ **The great outdoors** "Removing the pond on the deck has made the outdoor space feel much more open, and swapping our French doors for glass sliders has created a much-needed indoor-outdoor flow. We use the deck much more now."

### bedroom

Resene Truffle paint on the wall keeps the mood subdued. The bed was custom-made in Tasmanian oak a few years ago. Linen and Soho quilt cover and matching pillowcases in Lake, L&M Home. Tilt lamp, Established For Design. Photographs by Peter Turnley.



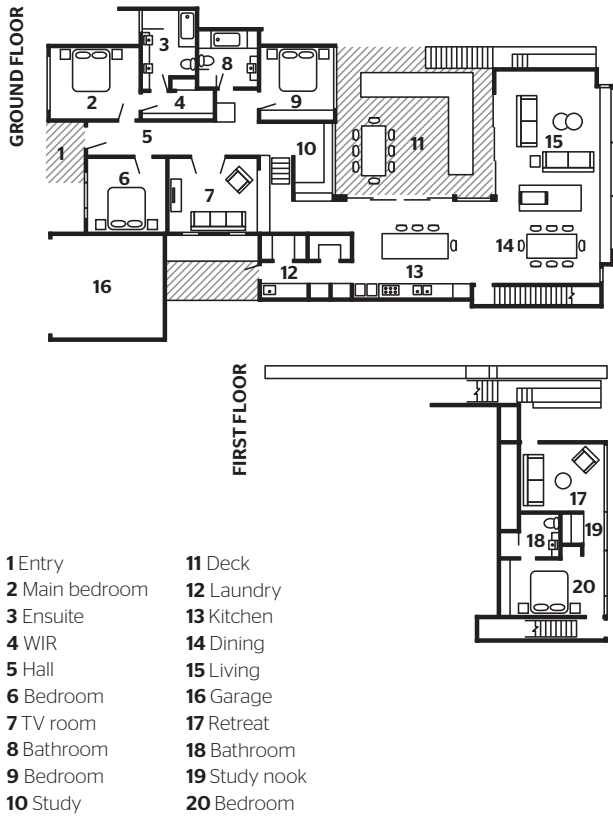
### do it

Kirsty and Scott's builder neighbour Matt completed the work in stages to minimise disruption for the family. The use of different woods – including lacquered dark-wood floorboards and sleek white kitchen cabinetry – proved to be a revelation. "We watched the house 'grow up' before our eyes," says Kirsty.

When it came time to decorate, the couple signed up Wendy Davey and Jodie Bond from Cranberry Design. They took their cues from Johanna's interior design, sticking with neutrals – including a range of calm greys in the living room – and adding just the occasional pop of warm colour, such as in the pink cushions. Green accents, including several green-glass vases, speak to the leafy living-room views. "Wendy and Jodie instilled a softness that had been very difficult to achieve with the original colour scheme of the house," says Kirsty.

Ten years after moving in, Kirsty and Scott finally feel at home. "A lot of people get to the end of a renovation and say 'never again', but I enjoyed the process," she says. "I think that's because we knew exactly what we wanted from the start." The experience was so empowering that Kirsty now admits to a new dream. "I don't think this will be the last thing we do. Part of me would love to build a house from scratch at some point." 10

Matt Bright is based in Glen Iris; [mjbrightbuilders.com.au](http://mjbrightbuilders.com.au).  
Johanna Hay is in Hawthorn East; [haydesignstudio.com.au](http://haydesignstudio.com.au).  
Cranberry Design is in Malvern; [cranberrydesign.com.au](http://cranberrydesign.com.au)



### lessons learnt

"You can never be too prepared"

KIRSTY WILTSHIRE, HOMEOWNER

"We knew where every single power point and light switch was going to go before we started work. We were prepared and so didn't go over budget."