



Work OF heart

With a celebrated interior designer in the family, the owners of this Sydney home knew that the results of their renovation would be something special.

STORY CHRIS PEARSON ♦ STYLING GREG NATALE ♦ PHOTOGRAPHY ANSON SMART



DINING The new rear extension is a translucent lightbox, bathed in diffused sunshine. Cappellini dining table, Dedee. Kartell chairs, Space. Greg Natale rugs, Designer Rugs. Bench, Jonathan Adler. Vintage ceramic horse's head. Artwork by Andy Warhol, Conny Dietzschold Gallery. Blackbutt flooring with American walnut stain.

ENTRANCE Owners Eddie and Sarina Gonano, pictured with sons William (left) and Jonathan, at the door of their home, which was originally a pair of worker's cottages. For Where to Buy, see page 188.

This is the life

Family members spend most of their time in a voluminous new open-plan space at the rear of this home, and many happy summer hours in "the biggest swimming pool they could fit in on the site", says interior designer Greg Natale. The kitchen suits their needs perfectly for daily living, while its generous benchtop and preparation areas are great assets for entertaining. Sons Jonathan and William also use the benchtop as a place to do their homework.

LIVING Greg Natale's signature blend of formal symmetry and playful colour is evident throughout the house. This and other projects are profiled in his book, *The Tailored Interior* (Hardie Grant Books, \$69.99). Sofa, Dedece. Armchairs, coffee table, tray and floor lamps, all Jonathan Adler. Greg Natale Monte Carlo rug, Designer Rugs. Artwork by Conchita Carambano, Soho Galleries. For Where to Buy, see page 188.

Welcome to the little house that could. The home that Sarina and Eddie Gonano purchased in Sydney's inner west in 2001 was actually two old worker's semis that had been joined into one. It was still tiny but, with its charming verandah and sash windows, the Victorian cottage looked like something out of a fairytale. "Eddie and I thought it was such a pretty house," says Sarina.

And this pint-sized pleaser had a giant advantage, she points out. "It was on a 400m² block, a fair size of land for the area. There was the opportunity to renovate and extend in the future, helped by the fact that we thought the house had good bones."

The couple knew that to achieve what they wanted would take time, money and good planning, so they happily waited 10 years, until practical considerations intervened. "We wanted to get a feel for the light and the whole area," says Sarina. "But after a decade we needed the extra room, as we had two children."

Sarina happens to be the sister of prominent interior designer Greg Natale, so who better to turn the poky into the palatial? "Light, airy, comfortable, good for entertaining... and colour!" were the main points of Sarina's brief to her brother. And she knew that he would deliver on all counts.

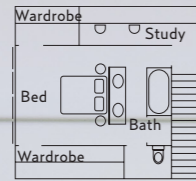
Greg shaved a lean-to off the back and kept the original footprint of the conjoined semis at the front, changing little in the layout. This section now consists of three bedrooms and a media room bisected by the hallway. He added a huge, light-filled contemporary extension at the rear, which houses an open-plan living, dining and kitchen area, between a side courtyard and the outdoor terrace and pool.

Shutters, louvres and a partially pitched roofline on the new section pay homage to the existing architecture at the front but deliver their own contemporary twist. Above the open-plan zone is the main bedroom, with ensuite and generous wardrobe space. Greg delved into the roof cavity to make use of attic space, too.

At the front of the house, a blocked-up front door that once served one of the semis was converted to a sash window to match the pair on the heritage facade. Greg also added another sash window on the left wall to bring more natural light into the library. >

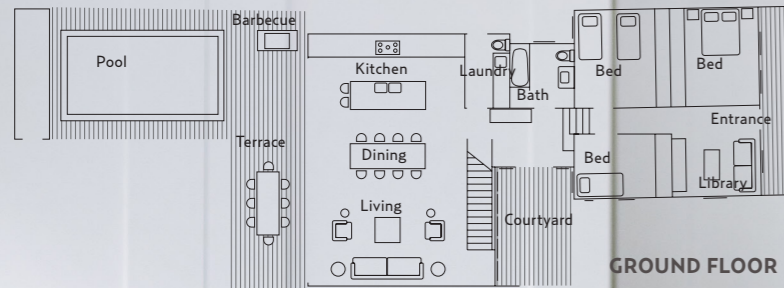
'THE HOUSE IS DECORATIVE BUT STILL BOASTS ARCHITECTURALLY CLEAN LINES.'
GREG NATALE, INTERIOR DESIGNER

FIRST FLOOR

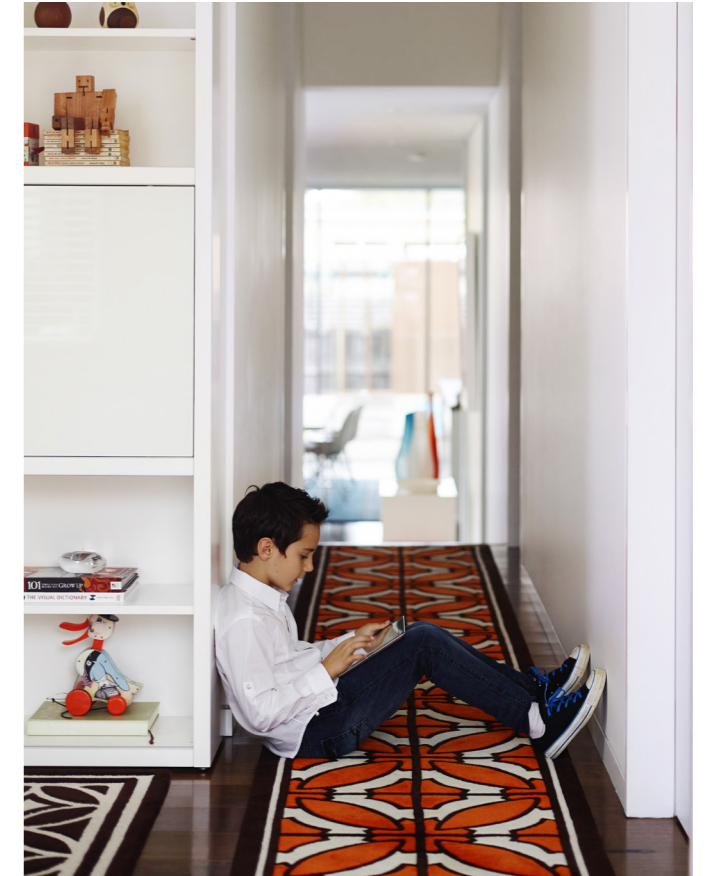


Sanity savers

"This house is packed with storage," says Greg. "We have utilised every bit of space." Both the kitchen and the library also feature generous joinery for clutter-free family living. Upstairs, two dressing rooms, one on each side of the main bedroom, make clever use of the cavity under the new angled roof, while attic storage, accessed by a drop-down ladder, has been created in the original part of the house.



GROUND FLOOR



'THE KITCHEN FEELS LIGHT, OPEN AND MODERN, YET AT THE SAME TIME OPULENT, THANKS TO VIBRANT HITS OF COLOUR.' SARINA

DINING The slatted backs of the Kartell dining chairs are subtly echoed in the linear form of a modernist light fitting overhead. Pendant light, Jonathan Adler.

HALLWAY William finds a comfy spot for surfing the net. Greg Natale South Beach rug in custom colour, Designer Rugs.

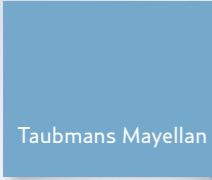
DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM Mosaics and custom joinery create a monochrome masterpiece. Mosaic tiles, Trend. Basin and chrome stand, Rogerseller.

KITCHEN A Caesarstone benchtop in Ginger was selected to match the colour of the walnut-topped dining table. Stools, Thonet. Platter, Zuster. Vase, Jonathan Adler.

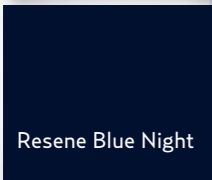
Designer buy: Feza 71126 tiles (splashback), \$239/m², Academy Tiles. For Where to Buy, see page 188. >

Dulux Lexicon, quarter strength (interiors and exterior)

ADD A DASH OF



Taubmans Mayellan



Resene Blue Night



Resene Rich Gold

Take paint cues from artworks for a chic, coordinated result.



◀ What was once a humble, 70m² cottage has now blossomed into a dazzling showpiece about three times its original size, delivering breathing space and deep comfort for the couple and their children, Jonathan, 11, and William, eight.

Happily, Greg's dramatic decorating style, celebrating bold colour and geometric forms, is perfectly in tune with his sister's aesthetic. "Sarina likes layered interiors with pattern, colour with a real pop or two, and a little fun," says Greg. "This house is decorative but still boasts architecturally clean lines. The base is neutral and I added colour and pattern in cushions and rugs."

"I trust his taste," says Sarina, "so it took the load off thinking and procrastinating. I'm sure I asked more from Greg than I would have if he was not my brother."

Among the new features, she particularly loves the Andy Warhol artwork and the rich chocolate leather sofa that grace the living area. These pieces, she says, became the starting point for the colour scheme throughout. Her favourite spaces include the sun-splashed rear living area in its entirety and the outstanding kitchen, which she describes as "beautiful and functional". Her brother agrees that the kitchen is cooking with gas. "It's a knockout, with its tiles and panelling, and it's nice and bright," says Greg.

Of course, as with any siblings, there were differences of opinion to begin with. That included, surprisingly, the statement kitchen. "I was unsure about the kitchen panels," says Sarina, "but Greg assured me they would be beautiful, and they certainly are."

Greg Natale, Surry Hills, NSW; (02) 8399 2103 or gregnatale.com.

'THE BASE IS NEUTRAL THEN I ADDED COLOUR AND PATTERN IN CUSHIONS AND RUGS.'
GREG NATALE

STAIRCASE William pauses on the minimalist, open-tread stairs, which preserve the sightlines to the adjoining courtyard.

COURTYARD Sarina has amassed a collection of handsome terracotta pots over the years, planted with succulents and other hardy species. The courtyard decking is Australian hardwood.

MAIN BEDROOM "It's a light, airy room with beautiful natural light," says Sarina. Bedhead by BQ Design in Kelly Wearstler for Groundworks. Fuji Moderne fabric, Lee Jofa. Cushions and lamp, Jonathan Adler. Carpet, Cavalier Bremworth. Artwork by Scott Petrie.

Designer buy: Kartell Componibili two-door storage cabinet, \$370, Space. For Where to Buy, see page 188.

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