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## shades of pale

A sophisticated colour palette forms the canvas for a Melbourne home's beguiling mix of traditional and contemporary styles

STORY BELINDA JACKSON STYLING WENDY BANNISTER PHOTOGRAPHY DEREK SWALWELL

**FACADE {above}** Stay-at-home mum Julie enjoys a moment with her son Jack on the verandah of their family home. The home was built in 1910 in the Arts and Crafts style, a traditional look that celebrates craftsmanship and simplicity. Its facade is painted in Resene Paints Napa.

**SITTING ROOM {opposite}** Originally planned to be Julie's retreat from the kids, this sitting room has now morphed into her husband Paul's football-watching room. "It's wonderful and cosy in winter with the open fireplace," says Paul. "We wanted a separate adults' space, but we didn't want the living space over two levels – we think it makes the house disjointed and breaks up the flow too much," adds Julie. In keeping with the home's heritage style, the walls are painted a gentle green, Resene Paints Inside Back, and the room is furnished with a plush sofa from Coco Republic. >





**KITCHEN & DINING AREA** Spacious and storage-savvy, the kitchen is ideal for Julie and Paul's growing family. They chose a Poliform 'Alea' kitchen in glossy Canapa lacquer. The plumbed island's height conceals the mechanics of the kitchen from view, and the fridge and pantry are also hidden behind closed doors, away from roving toddlers. Arper 'Catifa' chairs from Stylecraft and a trio of Flos 'Fuscia I' pendant lights from Euroluce add a modern edge to the 'Kenzo' dining table from Coco Republic.



**"We knew we wanted dark floors, but not stark white walls. We wanted a home that was warmer and more earthy"**



If you think kids and great style can't co-exist, you should take a peek inside Paul and Julie's home in Melbourne's inner-east – you'll quickly see that family-friendly spaces and sophisticated interiors are not exclusive. Recently renovated, this 1910-built home is all about the finishes – polished floors, soft-toned paints, glossy cabinetry – as well as functional spaces for Julie, Paul and their three young children, Jack, Oliver and Sophie. But there's another, more whimsical side to the house, manifest in the hand-painted illustrations on the children's bedroom walls, the beloved artwork hanging on the living area walls, and the playful little mobiles that Julie and Paul have tracked down and suspended above their children's beds.

Prior to its transformation, the house was a three-bedroom exercise in Baltic pine, as renovations were layered one on top of another from the home's beginnings. The couple originally envisaged a traditional extension across the back of the house but their architect Ramon Pleyzier, of Pleyzier Perkins, who had designed the previous, pre-kids house they'd lived in, had other ideas. "He looked at our sketches and said, 'Yes, that's very nice. Now, what about this?'" recalls Paul, laughing. Ramon split the narrow, north-facing block lengthways, with all the living areas on the southern boundary, opening the house up to the winter sunlight, which travels across the living area, for a sundial effect.

The sitting room and four bedrooms are now in the original section at the front of the house, while the new rear extension is devoted to the family's relaxed open-plan living, dining and kitchen area. "Now, the house gradually reveals itself as you walk in," says Julie.

Key to the design's success are the rich neutrals that flow through the house. "We cut out a lot of magazine pictures to create what Ramon called our 'mood file,'" recalls Paul. "It all started with a photo of a room in Singapore's famous Raffles hotel, and we knew we wanted dark floors, but not stark white walls. We wanted a home that was warmer and more earthy." Working with a colour consultant through Pleyzier Perkins, the couple used Resene Paints throughout, from the lighter Rice Cake in the children's bedrooms, to a mid-toned Tea in the kitchen and living area, the link to deeper Triple Tea in the master bedroom. The couple also enlisted the expertise of interior designer Maree Howley of Beautiful Room to define the home's overall look.

In comparison, the sitting room has retained most of its original character, with the restored fireplace – also a feature in each of the bedrooms – and a more refined look lent by Resene Paints Inside Back. "We wanted it light and fresh in the children's rooms, with more mature colours in the adult spaces," says Julie. With its open living spaces and playful kids rooms, this elegant home proves that family-friendly spaces work for young and old.

**OUTLOOK** (above left) To bring a touch of nature to the house, architect Ramon Pleyzier cut a circle in the eaves outside the open-plan living and dining area, and garden designer Jack Merlo brought in an ornamental pear tree, underplanted with a thicket of dark green dwarf mondo grass.

**SITTING ROOM** (above right) Family photographs and ornaments collected over the years adorn this shelf in one corner of the sitting room. Some of the objets d'art displayed are from Rose St Trading Co. in Armadale – visit [rovestradingco.com.au](http://rovestradingco.com.au) for a further look. >

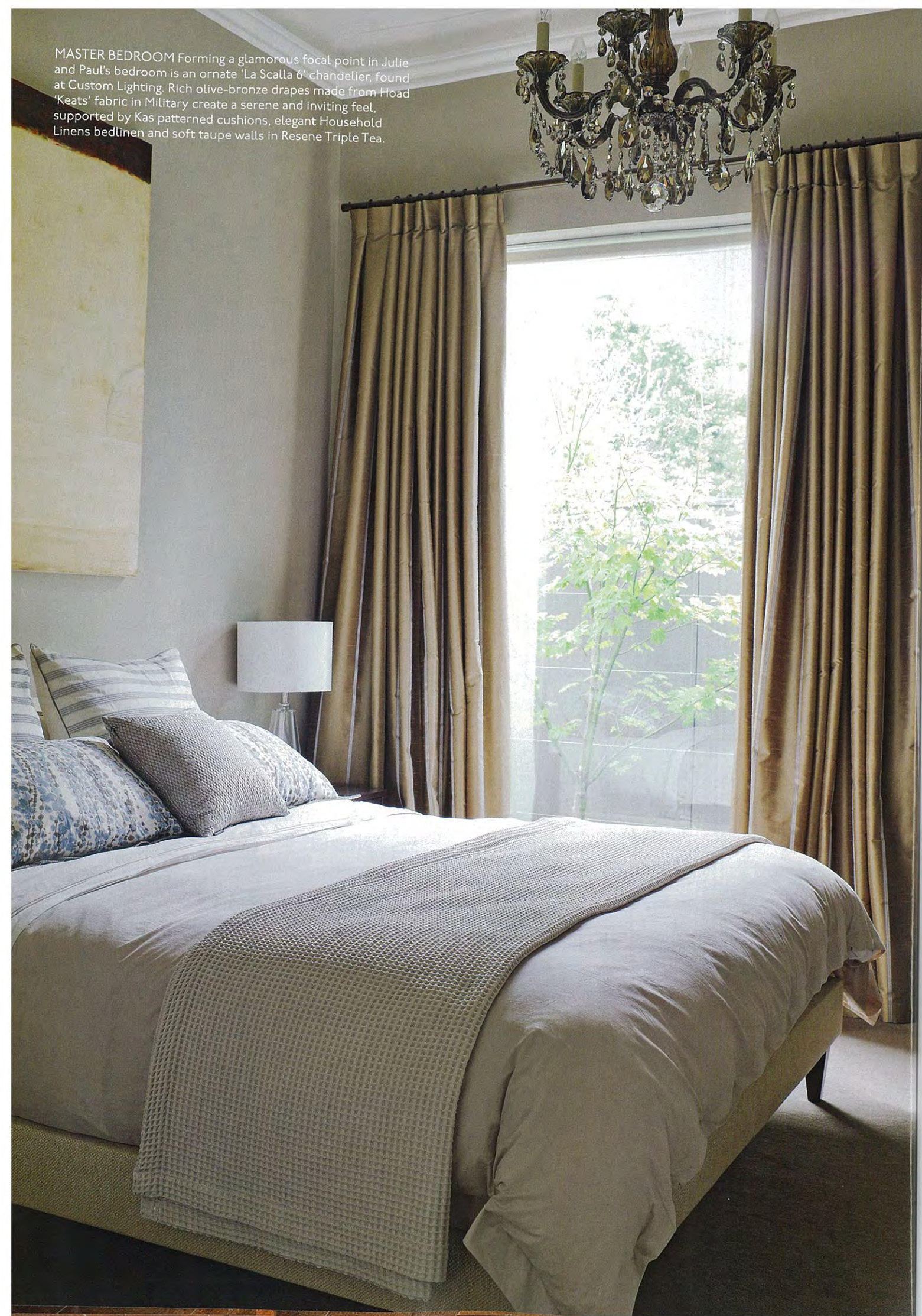




**LIVING AREA** "Typically, contemporary extensions become all-white rooms, but Julie and Paul wanted something more grounded and inviting," says interior designer Maree Howley. The living area exudes warmth, thanks to the soft tones of Resene Paints Tea on the walls and the mid-brown blackbutt flooring, partially dressed with a lush Oriental rug. The Poliform 'Wall System' entertainment unit provides ample storage. A Lars Stenberg artwork, *Spring*, captures the home's optimistic mood, while three sliding doors open to the home's outdoor room, flooding the area with sunlight. >



MASTER BEDROOM Forming a glamorous focal point in Julie and Paul's bedroom is an ornate 'La Scalla 6' chandelier, found at Custom Lighting. Rich olive-bronze drapes made from Hoad 'Keats' fabric in Military create a serene and inviting feel, supported by Kas patterned cushions, elegant Household Linens bedlinen and soft taupe walls in Resene Triple Tea.



OLIVER'S ROOM {top left} Each of the children's rooms feature a hand-painted mural by illustrator Jane Reiseger, which Julie has complemented with a thoughtfully chosen mobile; Oliver's mobile is of a hot-air balloon, floating in the sky. A trundle tucked under Oliver's bed is ideal for sleepovers.

SOPHIE'S ROOM {top right} A blush pink palette is set in baby Sophie's room by the pretty mural, the taffeta curtains in Hoad 'Matinee' fabric in String, a Jordan 'Arana' chair upholstered in Mokum 'Tangier' fabric in Ivory for Julie, and a custom-made Tsar rug designed by interior designer Maree Howley.

BATHROOM {bottom left & right} Separated by floor-to-ceiling frameless glass, the shower looks out onto a private courtyard planted with Japanese maples, while a sculptural 'Haven' tub from Apaier is finished with 'Logic' taps and spout from Rogerseller. >



## inside story

Who lives here? Julie (inset), a stay-at-home mum, husband Paul, an executive, their children Jack, four, Oliver, three, and baby Sophie, one, and their Scottish terrier, Darcey.

### Your biggest splurge?

Paul: "The Poliform kitchen and cabinetry and the Bang & Olufsen sound system, which is wired throughout the living areas and into the ensuite, bathroom and garden."

### Never scrimp on...

Paul: "Good heating and cooling. It's important to make the house comfortable in all conditions."

Julie: "The two bathrooms also feature underfloor heating, which is great for the kids."

I'll never again live without it."

### Lessons learned?

Paul: "Next time, we'll use local, high-quality craftsmen instead of imported joinery companies, to get a truly bespoke finish."

### Any tips for kids and style co-existing?

Julie: "Lots and lots of storage – we have a few cupboards in the living area cabinetry for the kids' toys, as well as our things, too."

### Describe your decorating style.

Julie: "We like things a bit pared back."

Nothing fussy." Paul: "I do like order."

### Describe the feel of the house.

Julie: "This house is cosy and moody."

Paul: "It has a consistent style in every room – there is no disjointed effect."

The colour just flows throughout."



**GARDEN & POOL** Celebrated Chelsea Flower Show gold-medallist Jack Merlo designed the garden. A key aspect is the pool by Dolphin Pools, fed by a water feature, with a built-in banquette dedicated to lounging. In summer, the garden is filled with the sweet scent of the star jasmine growing on the back wall.



**LIVING AREA** {right} An expanse of glass sliding doors provides a restful and undisturbed view of the garden and pool.

### JACK'S ROOM

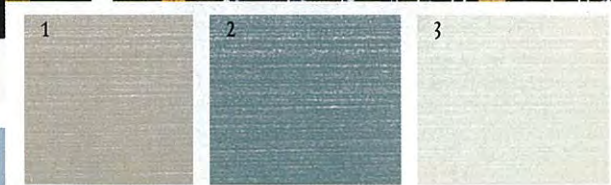
{below left} Jack's room features a bay window with banquette seating and baskets for extra storage.

### DINING AREA

{below far right} A simple yet elegant space, the dining area is enlivened by an urban landscape, *Herald and Weekly* by Robert Klein Boonschate.



"The house has a consistent style in every room – the colour just flows throughout"



## colour story

### subtle tones

Julie and Paul's home is painted in a series of rich neutrals, from a warm white in the children's rooms {left}, to a pale taupe in the living area {top}, to a deeper sage green in the sitting room. "Julie and Paul haven't been afraid to use colour," says interior designer Maree Howley. "There's a sophisticated richness of earth tones that are definitely not beige, yet it provides what becomes a neutral background. So many people live in all-white houses, but this is a north-facing house where glare is a real issue, so we pulled the colour right down to add a coolness to it."

## paints & materials

1 Interior paint Zylone 20 in Tea, \$34.90/litre, Resene Paints, 1800 738 383, resene.com.au.

2 Sitting room paint Zylone 20 in Inside Back, \$34.90/litre, Resene Paints.

3 Children's bedroom paint Zylone 20 in Rice Cake, \$34.90/litre, Resene Paints.

Due to the printing process, actual colours may vary.

CONTACTS: Architect Ramon Pleyrier of Pleyrier Perkins, (03) 9533 6766, pleyrierperkins.com.au.

Interior designer Maree Howley of Beautiful Room, (03) 9830 4045, beautifulroom.com.au.

