

Reinstated elegance

A new layout and a chic monochromatic colour scheme breathe new life into Narelle and Matt's tired apartment

STORY & STYLING HELEN ADAMS
PHOTOGRAPHY SIMON WHITBREAD

EXPECTATIONS OFTEN CHANGE when buying a home, as Sydney couple Narelle and Matt discovered after their dream of a beachside apartment became a two-bedroom city pad. "We just couldn't find what we wanted," says Narelle. "Then we walked in here. It was so much bigger than anything we had seen and was brimming with potential."

Built over a century ago, the apartment's high ceilings and large windows gave the space an almost regal elegance. Unfortunately, poor renovations over the years meant it was also in desperate need of a revamp, so the couple enlisted the help of interior designer Victoria Waters. Her biggest challenge was reworking the layout to make it more user-friendly and squeezing in another bedroom. This was achieved by making the separate kitchen, dining and lounge rooms one open space and incorporating the laundry into the kitchen.

Completed within an ambitious three-month period, the apartment is now almost unrecognisable and outdid all expectations in the style stakes. "It flows really well and is a much easier space to use," says Narelle. "It's just a shame we didn't do it years ago!"

Complete works: \$199,000



Kitchen A highlight of the renovation is the remarkable transformation of the kitchen, with this elegant design by Provincial Kitchens. The island bench doubles as a breakfast bar with the nickel ribbed hanging lamps from One World Collection a focal point. The muted tones of a Charlotte Wilson painting, *Emily and Sisters Under Umbrella*, from Galleria Mondiale, echo the room's refined style. >

Before





lesson learned

"When the cupboards were removed, the wall had to be rendered," says Victoria.

"Luckily, we built in a contingency because things usually crop up with old buildings."

Diary of a renovator

Before



November 2010

Work began when the builders spent two weeks ripping out the kitchen and bathroom, and removing the wall between the kitchen and bathroom and the living and dining areas. Two layers of acoustic underlay and one layer of plywood were laid to help soundproof the flooring.

January 2011

The kitchen wall was rendered and Victoria ordered the mirror, lights and bathroom products as plumbers waterproofed the bathroom. The bathroom was tiled and electricians installed the light fittings and power sockets before the kitchen and bathroom joinery were fitted. Tasmanian Oak floorboards were laid, then decorators painted the apartment and the shutters were hung.

October 2010

Narelle and Matt met interior designer Victoria Waters before going on holiday. Victoria emailed plans to them overseas and, two weeks later, they agreed on the new layout and chose a builder from a shortlist of three. They employed Victoria to project manage the whole process; she sourced and purchased items and coordinated the different trades. She also arranged an acoustic engineer's report to help soundproof the apartment.

Before



December 2010

Four weeks were spent reconfiguring the new layout, including building the wall of the third bedroom. Walls were resheeted, new ceilings installed and corncicing was completed in the kitchen and living area. Attention then turned to the decor. Narelle felt a monochrome colour scheme would marry the old with the new, and give her home an element of upmarket Manhattan. "I wanted something dramatic that would bring out certain features of the space," she explains.

February 2011

The timber flooring was stained, carpet was laid in the bedrooms, new wardrobes were fitted and the decorators touched up the paint work.

Before



Flowers by Lavande Designs complement the decor.



Lesson learned
"When we demolished the wall between the dining room and kitchen, the ceiling crumbled, so new ceilings had to be put in," says Victoria.



Living area Originally the living area was much smaller, in part due to a long hallway that ran down the side. "It always felt a strange space before," Narelle says. Porter's Paints Wide Stripe wallpaper in Tuxedo combined with Tasmanian oak floorboards stained almost black add a dramatic touch. >





Before



Master bedroom One of the biggest transformations in the master bedroom is the newly painted fireplace, updated from its former dark timber tones. "Although it is only a small part of the whole project, it is one of my favourites as it makes such a difference," says Victoria. Velvet curtains, along with striped wallpaper (opposite, bottom left) add texture to the predominantly black-and-white scheme. The upholstered bedhead (top left) was sourced by Robynne deCourtenay of Coloured Pencil and made by H & J Furniture.



Second bedroom Built-in robes from Betta Wardrobes fill the alcoves, while an elegant 'Marie Theresa' chandelier from Restoration Online is a luxe touch in the guest room.



Third bedroom Reconfiguring the layout created space for a useful third bedroom. The crisp white walls are painted in Dulux Fair Bianca Half. >

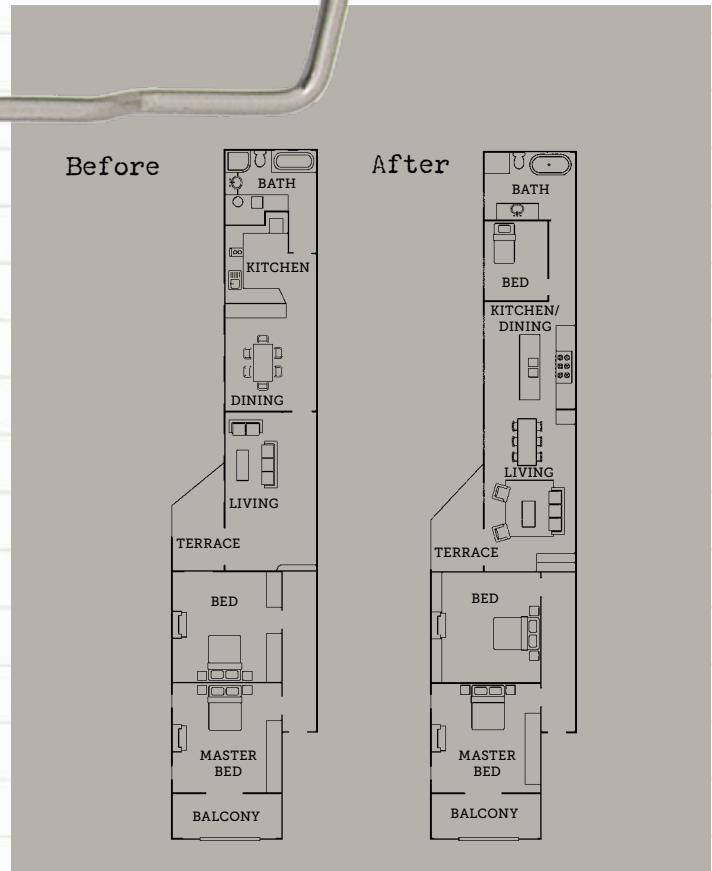
Bathroom Removing the false ceiling and the mirror and vanity that covered a beautiful window instantly transformed the bathroom. Ivory porcelain wall and floor tiles from Academy Tiles enhance the light-filled atmosphere. A custom-made vanity (opposite) by Provincial Kitchens is in the same finish as the kitchen island bench.

Before





Before



Budget breakdown

BATHROOM

Expect to pay: \$45,000 (including building and materials)

Basin: 525mm under-counter basin with overflow, \$577, Villeroy & Boch. **Bath:** 'Chetto 1700' freestanding bath, \$1788, Cibo Design. **Cabinetry:** 2-pac polyurethane finished 'Provincial' vanity with 30mm Carrara marble benchtop, \$4301, Provincial Kitchens. **Doors and trim paint:** Super Enamel Semi Gloss in Vivid White, \$77.45/4L, Dulux. **Lighting:** 'Marie Therese' 5-Light Chandelier, \$205.65, Restoration Online. Telbix 'Corin' wall lights, \$70ea, Light Up Kingsford. **Mirror:** 'Levanger' mirror, \$250, Ikea. **Shower screen:** \$1000, Ezy-Glide Shower Screens. **Shutters:** 89mm 2-pac polyurethane finished shutters, \$500ea, Global Shutters & Blinds. **Tapware:** 'Olde English' wall set with swivel spout & taps, \$297, 'Olde English Signature' shower mixer, \$397, 'Olde English' shower/bath mixer, \$834, all Astra Walker. **Tiles:** 'Nature' porcelain tiles (300mm x 300mm), \$51.70/sqm, Academy Tiles. **Toilet:** Zoom 'Kyo' toilet, \$799, Harvey Norman. **Wall paint:** Wash & Wear 10I Advanced Low Sheen in Fair Bianca Half (used throughout), \$69.95/4L, Dulux.

KITCHEN

Expect to pay: \$76,000 (including building and materials)

Appliances: 'C9GMXA' 90cm upright cooker, \$3690, 'SA3IX - IMX' microwave, \$490, both Smeg. 'SGI53E15AU' dishwasher, \$832, Bosch. Rangehood, try Omega Appliances. **Cabinetry:** 'Provincial Profile' doors with 2-pac polyurethane finish in Dulux Vivid White, \$24,200, Provincial Kitchens. **Doors and trim paint:** Super Enamel Semi Gloss in Vivid White, \$77.45/4L, Dulux. **Flooring:** Tasmanian Oak with a custom stain, \$80/sqm, Antique Floors. **Sink:** Try Blanco. **Shutters:** 89mm 2-pac polyurethane finished shutters, \$500ea, Global Shutters & Blinds. **Tapware:** 'Olde English Signature' mixer, \$518, Astra Walker.

LIVING ROOM

Expect to pay: \$17,000 (including building and materials)

Coffee table: Try Bloomingdales. **Doors and trim paint:** Super

Enamel Semi Gloss in Vivid White, \$77.45/4L, Dulux. **Lighting:** Nickel ribbed hanging lamps, \$790ea, One World Collection. **Flooring:** Tasmanian Oak with a custom stain, \$80/sqm, Antique Floors. **Sofa:** Try French Dressing. **Wallpaper:** Wide Stripe wallpaper in Tuxedo, \$150/10m roll, Porter's Paints.

MASTER BEDROOM

Expect to pay: \$11,000 (including building and materials)

Bedhead: Custom-made bedhead, \$1650, H & J Furniture. **Carpet:** Beaulieu Carpets 'Bellagio Twist' in Gun Barrel, \$65/sqm, Alex Bowen Carpet Court. **Doors and trim paint:** Super Enamel Semi Gloss in Black, \$84.45/4L, Dulux. **Fireplace paint:** Surround in Paving Paint in White and internal areas in Paving Paint in Pot Black Belly, \$64.95/4L, both White Knight Paints. **Wallpaper:** Wide Stripe wallpaper in Tuxedo, \$150/10m roll, Porter's Paints.

SECOND AND THIRD BEDROOMS

Expect to pay: \$50,000 (including building and materials)

Doors and trim paint: Super Enamel Semi Gloss in Vivid White, \$77.45/4L, Dulux. **Tiles:** Mosaic tiles in Black Gloss, \$37.20/sqm, Academy Tiles. **Fireplace:** Surround in Paving Paint in White and internal areas in Paving Paint in Pot Black Belly, \$64.95/4L, both White Knight Paints. **Lighting:** 'Marie Therese' 9-Light chandelier, \$307.95, Restoration Online. **Wardrobes:** 'Provincial Profile' 2-pac polyurethane finished wardrobes, \$3802/pair, Betta Wardrobes. Stockists, page 205

CONTACTS

Builder: Glenn Anthony of Aqua Building Solutions, 0411 213 939, aquabuildingsolutions.com.au.
Interior design: Victoria Waters Design, 0421 900 049, victoriawatersdesign.com.au.

Total \$199,000*