



view from  
ABROAD

RACHEL AND GARETH DREW ON STYLE INSPIRED FROM LIVING OVERSEAS FOR THE NEW LOOK OF THEIR COMPACT KITCHEN DINER

WORDS JANE PARBURY STYLING ADAM DE LAUNAY  
PHOTOGRAPHY SIMON WHITBREAD

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WHEN RACHEL AND HER husband Gareth planned their move back to Australia after six years overseas, giving their Sydney apartment a new look was high on their priority list. "As it's only a two-bedroom apartment – despite its generous floor space – it has limits size-wise," explains Rachel. "We wanted to redesign a few key areas to open up the space and create as much storage as possible, while making it aesthetically beautiful." One such area was the kitchen, formerly a long, narrow run of pale blue melamine units that also incorporated the laundry. Rachel wanted to maximise storage and bench space, and to give the area a flavour reminiscent of interiors she and Gareth had enjoyed while living in New York.

As the couple were still overseas, they asked interior designer and *Home Beautiful* regular Victoria Waters to oversee the kitchen transformation and manage the project. The fresh, modern look Rachel sought has been delivered, with Shaker-style cabinetry painted in the lightest shade of ecru and teamed with snowy Caesarstone benchtops. The cabinetry continues around the window enclosure at a lower height and is topped by a comfy L-shaped banquette to provide a cosy window seat. "The space at the end was narrow, so it was difficult to include a dining area," explains Victoria. "The bench seating has lift-up lids for storage, and allows for dining or a daybed for a quiet reading spot." At the opposite end, a wall in Osborne & Little 'Pompadour Du Barry' wallpaper completes the picture.

"I love the wallpaper, the light fixtures are amazing and the banquette is a hit with everyone who visits," enthuses Rachel. "They just want to sit there in the sun and sip a glass of wine!"

1 ON THE BENCH

The window seat, built by Mark's Cabinet Making and upholstered in Warwick Fabrics' 'Lumiere' velvet in Sky by Jade Upholstery, is a favourite spot to linger. The bench seats lift up, allowing for extra storage underneath.

2-3 IN FULL BLOOM

Rachel has her own floristry business, Lavande Designs (lavandedesigns.com.au), and her chic bouquets can be seen throughout the kitchen. Interior designer Victoria Waters included glass-fronted cupboards for Rachel to display her vases.

The Shaker-style cabinetry throughout the kitchen came from Provincial Kitchens and is finished in 2-pac polyurethane in 10 per cent Dulux Grand Piano, a warm off-white that contrasts with the Caesarstone benchtops in Snow and the glossy tiled splashback, also sourced from Provincial Kitchens. Stainless-steel 'E2126 Roma' handles from Kethy Australia are a neat touch, while a pair of undermounted sinks teamed with a single mixer reduce necessities on the benchtop. >

CHAIRS AND TABLE, THONET.NET.AU; CUSHIONS, EDIT-EDIT-GROUP.COM.AU; (OPPOSITE) NO.3 BOWL AND CHEESEBOARD, LA MAISON; LA MAISON.NET.AU; MUGS AND BOWLS, MUD AUSTRALIA; MUD AUSTRALIA.COM; WINE GLASSES, RIEDEL; RIEDELGLASS.COM.AU; MINIATURE BOOKS, ICI ET LA, ICI.ET.LA.COM.AU; RECIPE FLAG, COLLECTOR STORE, COLLECTORSTORE.COM.AU



#### 4 GROUND WORK

Stained stringybark floorboards look wonderful, but their installation caused the revamp's biggest headache. "When we pulled up the flooring, we found two cracked downpipes were leaking water under the floor," recalls Rachel. "We had to have fans installed to keep the air circulating and replace the downpipes! This held up renovations for over a month as the damp levels had to dry out before the floor could be laid." Interior designer Victoria created more storage by moving the laundry elsewhere in the apartment. Other design tricks, such as installing the oven beneath the hob and incorporating a tea and coffee station within the pantry, free up space on the benchtop.

#### 5 FABRIC AND FINISHES

"We chose rich velvet for the bench seat and a wallpaper feature wall," explains Victoria. "We tied them in by using the same pattern on cushions on the bench seat." Rachel bought the Osborne & Little 'Pompadour Du Barry' wallpaper in Hong Kong, but it is also available from Seneca Textiles. A pair of oversized linen-covered 'Hampton' drum pendant lights from Magins add the final flourish.

### BUDGET BREAKDOWN

<b>Appliances and fixtures:</b> Cooktop, oven, rangehood, dishwasher, microwave plus sinks, all Smeg; tap, Harvey Norman Bathrooms & Tiles; fridge, Fisher & Paykel.....	\$6895
<b>Banquette seat:</b> Joinery, Mark's Cabinet Making; upholstery, Jade Upholstery.....	\$4200
<b>Cabinetry and splashback:</b> Including benchtops and handles, Provincial Kitchens; joinery, Mark's Cabinet Making.....	\$26,500
<b>Flooring:</b> Stringybark hardwood, Sydney Flooring.....	\$6000
<b>Wallpaper:</b> Osborne & Little 'Pompadour Du Barry' (including installation), purchased in Hong Kong.....	\$600
<b>Lights:</b> 'Hampton' pendant lights, Magins.....	\$2400

Cost: \$46,595\*

\* SOME COSTS ARE BASED ON OWNER'S ESTIMATES AND WILL VARY. CLEANERS BOXED SET, MURCHISON-HUME, MURCHISON-HUME.COM.AU.