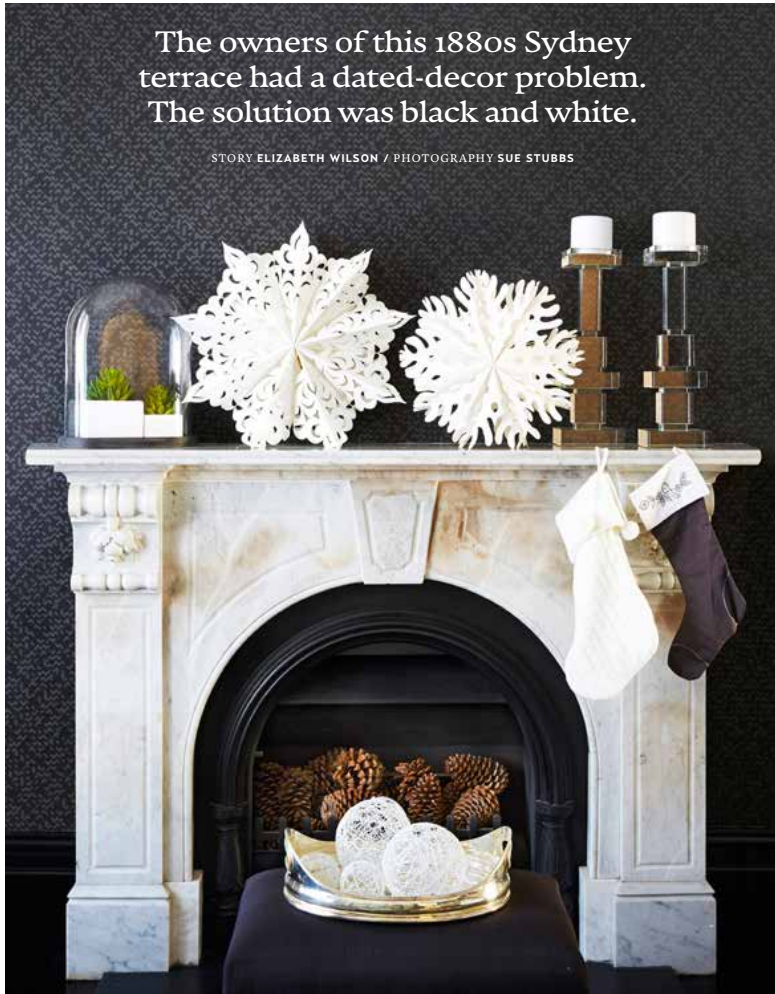


# DRAMA CLASS

The owners of this 1880s Sydney terrace had a dated-decor problem. The solution was black and white.

STORY ELIZABETH WILSON / PHOTOGRAPHY SUE STUBBS



**FORMAL DINING** / Homeowner Kylie Richards gets set for Christmas lunch. The dining suite is a family piece. Cabinets, Town & Country Style. Original fireplace. Khroma Anytouch wallpaper, Ascraft. Circuit mirror, Freedom (discontinued).  
**FORMAL LIVING** / The original fireplace is hung with Christmas stockings for the children. Candlesticks, Cromwell. Wallpaper, as before. Snowflakes, Papier D'Amour.  
FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 229.





After two years of dedicated house hunting in Sydney's inner-city, Kylie and Brendan Richards were quick to act when they spotted this well-preserved late-1800s terrace located an easy stroll from Sydney Harbour and the beautiful Royal Botanic Gardens.

"We were definitely looking for something with character and this place had everything on our list – large living areas, high ceilings, original marble fireplaces," says Kylie. "But it also had the bonus of modern conveniences, such as an ensuite and built-in wardrobes."

The three-storey home was structurally sound but the 20-year-old decor needed a complete revamp. Before their signatures on the sale contract were dry, Kylie and Brendan had enlisted Victoria Waters, an interior designer who had recently transformed a friend's home. With two young children – Thomas, five, and Ella, three – to consider, the couple decided to renovate first and move in later.

"We wanted a timeless look, but we were keen to include some quirky elements to give it character and life," says Kylie. "We also needed it to be a very functional family home so didn't want anything too precious."

Victoria's design respects the period architecture while giving it a modern twist. "Kylie and Brendan were drawn to black and white, to which I've added colourful accents," she says. She also included some flamboyant touches. In the formal living and dining rooms, ▶

*'The look is classic with a contemporary edge.'*

Victoria Waters, interior designer

**FAMILY /** above and opposite Brendan and Kylie with Thomas and Ella. From the tiled floor to under-banquette storage and scotchguarded fabric, everything is geared to good-looking functionality. Antonio Citterio Simplicite armchair, Space. Banquette back cushion in James Dunlop Textiles Lattice, seat cushion in Warwick Fabrics Lustrell Stamp. Tulip dining table, side table and Tom Dixon Copper Shade pendant light, all Dedece. Floor tiles, Academy Tiles. Christmas tree, Florabelle.

**Designer buys:** Vienna 18 dining chairs, from \$220/each, Thonet. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 229.**



***This is the life***

The buzzy location, a heritage suburb within walking distance to Sydney's CBD, was key for Kylie and Brendan. "We lived in Hong Kong for many years so we were well versed in urban living," says Kylie. "We love having access to the great restaurants in the inner city and the ease of getting into the city for cultural activities. The proximity to the Royal Botanic Gardens is fabulous too – it's such a great place to have family picnics."



**Share the magic**

"We love embracing the fun of Christmas," says Kylie. "In the lead up, we enjoy spending time on weekends making new ornaments, which we keep for future Christmases – the children love seeing their creations displayed on the tree. The night before Christmas, we attend church and then leave some milk and home-baked cookies out for Santa and carrots for the reindeer. This ritual feels extra special now that we have a fireplace."

**THE PALETTE**

**Dulux Whisper White**  
walls, throughout

**Dulux Black**  
trims

Add a dash of

**Porter's Paints**  
Alchemy Liquid  
Gold in Rose  
Gold



*"We love to cook and mostly eat at home so getting the kitchen right was critical."*

Kylie Richards

**FORMAL LIVING** / "This home has wonderful proportions so it could handle a touch of drama," says Victoria. Coffee table, Coco Republic. Custom-made rug, The Rug Establishment. Armchairs, Domayne (discontinued).

**Designer buy:** Innermost Beads pendant lights, \$4379/each, ECC Lighting+Furniture.

**TABLE SETTING** / Handmade decorations add a personal touch to the table. Table runner is Warwick Fabrics Odetta. Star decorations, Blanc-Leger. Wire decoration, Norsu Interiors. For similar cutlery, try Francalia.

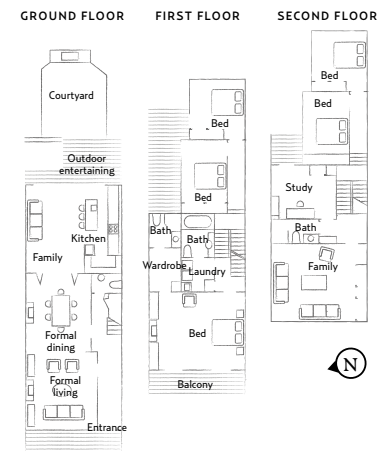
**KITCHEN** / Connected to a sunny deck and courtyard, the kitchen/dining area is the centre of much of the family's activities. Splashback tiles and floor tiles, Academy Tiles. Calacatta marble benchtops. Stove and rangehood, DeLonghi. Pendant lights, La Maison. Stools, Thonet. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 229.**



Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.



**THE LAYOUT**





## H&G HOUSES



*'Kylie and Brendan were open to adding dramatic touches so every room has wow factor.'*

*Victoria Waters, interior designer*

**THOMAS' ROOM** / Bright – and easily changed – accessories are fun for a child's bedroom. Lamp, Oz Design Furniture. Cannes plush-pile carpet in Palais, Victoria Carpets.

**ENTRY HALL** / The floorboards are stained 90-percent black japan, ten-percent walnut brown. "The touch of brown makes the floors more serviceable," says Victoria. Console, Casa Mia. Lamp, Mo&Co Lighting. Artworks by Cate Malik. Custom-made runner, The Rug Establishment. Modo 10 chandelier, Space.

**MAIN BEDROOM** / Sumptuous textures and overscale furniture evoke a luxe hotel suite. Bedhead, Domayne. Mirror, Town & Country Style. Bedside tables, James Said. Bedside lamps, Bloomingdales Lighting. Table lamp (on dresser), Mo&Co Lighting. Upholstered bench, Cafe Lighting & Living. Chandelier, Designer Chandelier. Zigzag cushions, No Chintz. Artworks by Thomas Bucich.

**Designer buy:** Natalie dresser, \$1690, James Said.  
**FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 229.**

◀ for example, she installed chandeliers of copper-coloured spheres. "A chandelier was the obvious choice, given the ceiling heights of the rooms," she says. "The copper colour is traditional, but the light fitting itself is unexpected."

The existing floor plan was tweaked slightly. On the second floor, two of the four bedrooms were repurposed. The largest of these, at the front, has been converted into a family room; the second is now a study/office, giving Kylie and Brendan the flexibility to work from home. The remaining bedrooms on the top floor are used as guestrooms.

The first floor contains the family's bedrooms (the main with ensuite), a family bathroom and the laundry. On the ground floor, the formal living and dining rooms are now linked, via bifold doors, to an airy kitchen with casual dining and banquet seating at the rear.

For avid cooks Kylie and Brendan, the kitchen was all-important. The must-haves? "A big oven and stove, a walk-in pantry and an island bench with a sink in the middle so we can interact with people while we cook." With an entire ground floor dedicated to entertaining, it's not surprising that the Richards' home is a magnet for family, and Christmas Day is no exception. With 20 people on their guest list this year, their new kitchen will be proving its worth on December 25.

