

# Welcome HOME

When a long-admired 1920s abode came on the market, this pair of serial renovators in Sydney jumped at the chance to make it their dream home.

STORY ROSA SENESE / STYLING ASHLEY PRATT / PHOTOGRAPHY MAREE HOMER



**KITCHEN/DINING** / "I wanted a really big, inviting kitchen," says homeowner Anna Williams (pictured). "It's where we spend most of our time." Quantum Quartz benchtops in Alpine White (island) and Tornado Grey. Carrara marble splashback,, WK Marble & Granite. Copper pendant lights, Dunlin. Stools, Oz Design Furniture. Dining chairs, Alfresco Emporium. Metal-framed pendant light (in hall), La Maison. **Smart buy:** Soho jute rug (1.6x2.3m), \$420, Madras Link. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 186.**





Anna Williams had admired this gracious 1920s home on Sydney’s Northern Beaches for years, sometimes stopping her car to study its heritage features. “I could see that it had great character,” she says. “I’d think, ‘I’d love to renovate that!’”

Daydreams aside, Anna and her husband Matt got on with renovating a succession of homes for their family, which now includes sons Max, nine, Ben, seven, and Harry, five. It was invaluable experience that Anna parlayed into her interior design and renovation-management practice, Your Beautiful Home.

Fate intervened in 2013. In the last week of work on their third renovation project, Anna’s dream house, which had been in the same family for almost 50 years, came up for sale. The couple seized the day, won the auction and proceeded to create a family home for the 21st century.

With visions of a classic New England-inspired house, Anna and Matt engaged Adam Hobbs of Hobbs Jamieson Architecture to bring their ideas to fruition. And thanks to Anna’s contact book of trusted tradies, the renovation was relatively painless, even though the family lived on site for most of the five-month build. “We would come home each day excited to see what had been done,” she says.

The transformation is apparent from the new front door. Unhappy with the original side entrance, Anna requested that Adam create one facing the street. “I wanted a really inviting



FEATURE PLANTS

- DECK
- Lady palm (*Rhapis excelsa*)
- ENTRANCE
- Lobelia
- Lavender
- Gardenia
- Viburnum

This is the life

“It’s turned out to be the perfect family home,” says Anna. “Having multiple living spaces is fantastic – it gives us separation but we can still supervise the boys.” The comfortably furnished outdoor room is another favourite haunt for the family. The 9m pool is a magnet in summer, its size carefully gauged to suit the block. “We left a nice area of lawn for the boys to be able to play football,” says Anna.

**OUTDOOR ROOM** / The covered deck is a favourite spot for Harry, Max and Ben (left to right) – and visitors – to hang out. Sofa and armchair, Outdoor Furniture Online. Coffee table, Citta Design. Rug, Winton House.

**LIVING** / Concertina doors leading to the outdoor room are often wide open, extending the family’s living space. Coffee table and custom-made sofa, Beachwood Designs. Restored vintage armchairs were a gift to Anna from Matt. Rug, Pottery Barn.

**Smart buy:** Carved wood side table, \$299, West Elm.

**ENTRANCE** / Leroy the Burmese cat slinks through the new street-facing entry hall. Planters, Bunnings. Lights from the US.

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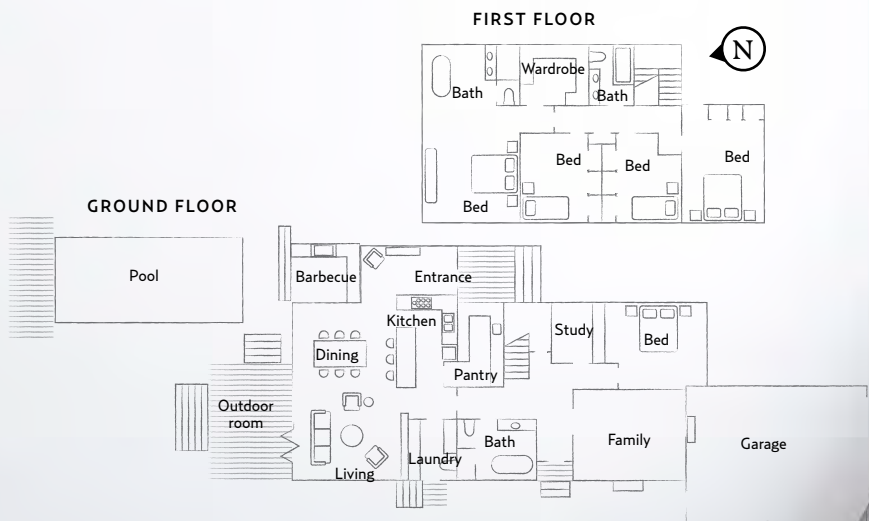
THE PALETTE

*Dulux  
Malay Grey*  
kitchen island

*Dulux  
Tranquil Retreat*  
main bedroom,  
ensuite

*Dulux  
Natural White*  
kitchen/dining

THE LAYOUT



*'I love texture - everything  
from timber to velvet. It  
makes a room feel so inviting.'*

*Anna Williams*

**MAIN BEDROOM** / "I love the bedside lights," says Anna. "The porcelain gives off such a beautiful soft glow when lit." American-oak boards were used for the feature wall. Bed, Heatherly Design Bedheads. Bedside table, Satara. Trunk, Alfresco Emporium. Stool, Lightly. Rug, Temple & Webster. Carpet, Ken Sparks Carpets. Throw, Bed Bath N' Table. Cushions on trunk, Rapee. Pink cushion, Citta Design.

**Smart buy:** Drop 1 bone china pendant lights, \$348/each, Dunlin.  
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◀ entrance,” she says. “Now, you can see from the front door straight through to the pool in the backyard. Then you turn the corner and the house opens up.”

The side entrance still provides access to the original front rooms, which have been repurposed as a sitting/games room, guestroom and study, plus a bathroom in what was previously the kitchen. The new front door leads through a generous entry foyer to the new heart of the home, an open-plan kitchen/living/dining area that lends itself beautifully to both everyday living and social occasions.

The kitchen contains one of Anna’s well-considered splurges, a chef-quality Smeg stove with double oven. Another splurge was the wall panelling that resonates with the home’s pedigree. “I nearly forwent the panelling because of the cost,” says Anna, “but I’m so glad we decided to go ahead with it. It gives the house character and charm.”

There is easy flow between rooms and a well-considered relationship between indoors and out. Concertina doors from the rear living area lead to an outdoor kitchen and barbecue area and a north-facing outdoor room. “We use that space all the time,” says Anna. “We sit out there and watch the boys while they play in the pool, or we have a barbecue. It’s idyllic.” ▶

*Your Beautiful Home, Freshwater, NSW; (02) 8096 1335 or [yourbeautifulhome.com.au](http://yourbeautifulhome.com.au). Hobbs Jamieson Architecture, Balgowlah, NSW; (02) 9948 3807 or [hobbsjamieson.com.au](http://hobbsjamieson.com.au).*

**EXTERIOR** / Youngest son Harry with Anna on the steps of the covered deck. Shutters, North Shore Shutters. Black and white planter, Flower Power.

**ENSUITE** / **opposite top** Anna requested that the ensuite be open to the main bedroom. “It gives us the luxury of space,” she says. Basins, Apaier. Tapware, The English Tapware Company. Tasmanian-oak benchtop. Cabinetry, Cibo Design. Floor tiles, Tiles by Kate.

**Smart buy:** Forme Libra bath, \$2199, Domayne.

**MAIN BATHROOM** / **opposite bottom** The boys share this bathroom on the ground floor and a smaller one upstairs. Floor tiles, Tiles by Kate. Vanity, Beachwood Designs. Stool, Your Beautiful Home. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 186.**





### Fun & functional

This thoughtful renovation has made the most of its generous block, once part of a large estate. The expanded layout allows parents and children, and their respective friends, to chill out in their own ways. "We never feel like we're on top of each other," says Anna. "When we entertain, the grown-ups can sit by the big windows and have a lovely adult dinner and still be able to see the children playing outside."



*There is easy flow between rooms and a well-considered relationship between indoors and out.*

**MAX'S ROOM / above and right** "The boys each chose a theme for their room," says Anna. "Max's was 'jungle explorer'." Bedlinen, Pottery Barn Kids. Bedside table, desk and map, Temple & Webster. Stool, Globe West. Rug, Armadillo&Co.

**FRONT YARD /** Ornamental pear trees with beautiful colour in autumn were planted along the driveway and around the property, providing a contrast to the crisp coastal white of the house. Anna wanted an oversized front door and large-scale planters at the end of the bluestone path to make the long walk through the lawn appear shorter. The front door is solid cedar.

**BACKYARD /** In summer, Max, Harry and Ben spend a lot of time in the north-facing saltwater pool. Behind it is the fully equipped barbecue area. Three woven baskets contain towels, swimming costumes and pool toys. For similar baskets, try Satara.

FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 186.

H&amp;G

