

An inspired makeover has brought glamour and luxe to this home in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs, which was already bathed in light and bush views.

These pages The new facade, with echoes of Palm Springs, projects serious street presence. Custom brass gates by All Metal Projects. House in Sto render, in Dulux 'Lexicon' quarter. Floor in Calacatta Oro marble from Euro Marble. Screens in white glass reinforced concrete by GRC Environments. Landscape design by Secret Gardens.

STREET SAVVY



Words CHRIS PEARSON Photography NICK WATT Styling LUCIA BRAHAM

This page The owners sacrificed the swimming pool for this rear terrace and pond, designed by Secret Gardens, with a signature red frangipani (*Plumeria rubra*) as a centrepiece. Custom white powdercoated and brass balustrades by All Metal Projects. House in Sto render, Dulux 'Lexicon' quarter. Limewash tiles and slabs from Surface Gallery. Pond in white pebble finish. SP01 'Jeanette' sofa and chair, by Tom Fereday, and B&B Italia 'Fat-Fat' outdoor coffee table, all from Space.

Opposite page, clockwise from top In the entrance bridge and void, ceiling and wall panels in Porter's Paints 'Irish Linen'. Custom brass balustrade by All Metal Projects. Custom triptych of crystal hemisphere lights by Christopher Boots. Wall panels by Corelli Joinery. The pivoting front door made by Elan in custom fluted solid American black walnut with a handle designed by Don Cameron. Floor in Calacatta Oro marble from Euro Marble. In the dining room, 'Iris' linear pendant light by Christopher Boots. 'Oslo' dining table in drifted black timber from Coco Republic. 'Manto' dining chairs in terracotta silk from Poliform. Fritz Hansen candleholder from Cult. Brass ceiling trims by JN Custom Metal. Floor in Calacatta Oro marble from Euro Marble. SP01 'Jeanette' outdoor sofa from Space.

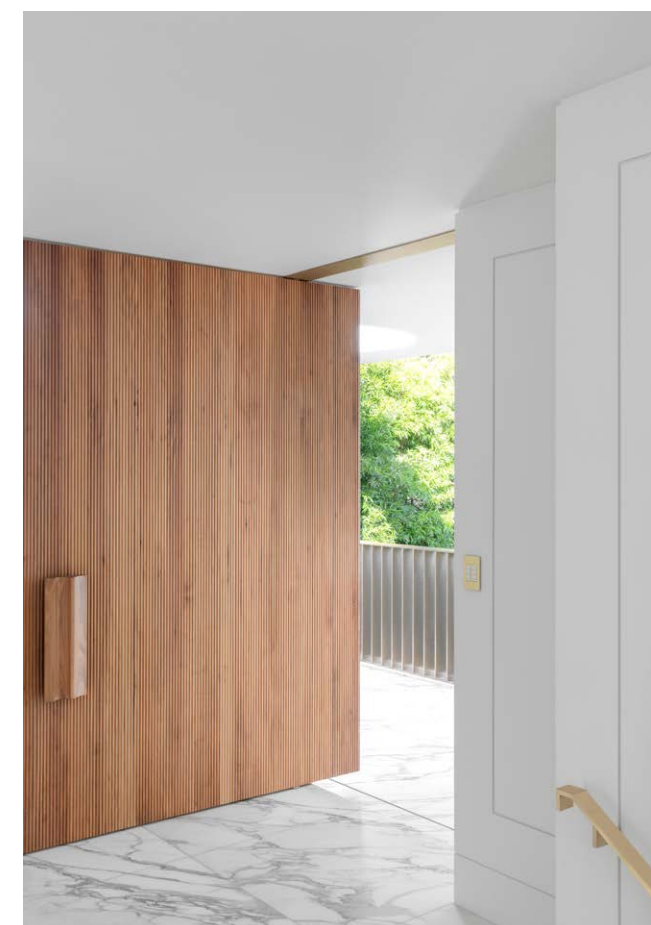


Feng shui principles were the catalyst for the renovation of this home in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs – and the elegant, luminous interiors surely reflect the happy outcome. A dramatic entry in marble and brass ushers in a new beginning for a home that charms at every turn.

When the owners bought the noughties home for them and their future family – now with two under four – in 2015, there was plenty to love about the house. It enjoyed generous light and bush outlooks, partly thanks to a double-height entry abutting an internal courtyard. But a front door aligned with doors taking in views at the rear was a serious misstep for owners mindful of feng shui. And, while homely, the house wasn't luxe enough, starting at the humble facade, which lacked street presence.

In 2016, they hired Tanya Hancock of Hancock Architects to zhuzh up the interiors while tweaking the layout. "As well as realigning the entrance and letting in more light, the owners wanted a sense of refined elegance, luxury and quality, with the emphasis on materiality. A minor makeover to realign the entry and refresh the kitchen, bathrooms and flooring evolved into a complete overhaul," says Tanya, who stripped the home back to bare bones. Embracing the original layout, she worked with landscape designers Secret Gardens to enhance the connection between inside and out.

The house steps down the sloping site. Visitors enter via a double-height void on the first floor with glazing on two sides, one of which looks down into the courtyard. That level is shared by two bedrooms, including the main with ensuite and walk-in robe. Downstairs sit two more bedrooms, while past the internal courtyard is the open plan, with living, dining and kitchen areas looking into bushland. »



« First up, Tanya reconfigured the entrance to create a dogleg, so the front door no longer aligns with the rear door. In the process, a new entrance portico and double brass gates, with echoes of Palm Springs mid-century glamour, create an imposing street presence. The sense of arrival continues into the hallway, which Tanya widened for a sense of grandeur befitting the double-height void.

She also increased the glazing to maximise light and views into the garden and the reserve. On one side of the void, she removed pillars and inserted a wall of frameless glass to spill more light into the core of house. Privacy was cleverly preserved with a large screen in glass-reinforced concrete (GRC), a malleable material that combines the toughness of concrete with the lightness of fibreglass. Woven into a fish-scale pattern reminiscent of the mid-century breeze block, this screen is reprised in the main ensuite, and front elevation. “The screens create intimate, enclosed spaces, in contrast to wider vistas of parkland at the back,” says Tanya.

On the opposite side of the entry and along the rear facade she installed expanses of glass punctuated by a series of tall slender blades. “They offer a sense of verticality, breaking the house’s horizontal nature, providing privacy, controlling light and framing views,” she says. The blades and screens play off each other. “The square, modern architecture can be overpowering and dramatic with those oversized blades,” says Tanya. “This is softened by the organic fish-scale screens that create subtle changes between light and shade.”

Again emphasising the indoor-outdoor connection, greenery, courtesy of Secret Gardens, also softens the crisp white walls, with vignettes of golden cane palms, a Japanese maple and a frangipani at the rear captured and framed by strategic glazing. »



These pages, from left On the terrace, viewed from the dining area, an ‘Iris’ linear pendant light by Christopher Boots is positioned to illuminate the SP01 ‘Jeanette’ sofa by Tom Fereday and B&B Italia ‘Fat-Fat’ outdoor coffee table both from Space. Custom powdercoated balustrade by All Metal Projects. Limewash pavers from Surface Gallery. The smart kitchen is both sophisticated and functional at the same time. Cabinetry by Corelli Joinery in Dulux ‘Lexicon’ quarter in piano finish with brass inlays by JN Custom Metal. Benchtop and splashback in Black Panther onyx from Euro Marble. Ovens and cooktop from Wolf. Full-sized fridge and wine fridge both from Sub-Zero. ‘Oxygene’ pull-out spray kitchen mixer from Gessi. Other gooseneck tap from Zip. Flooring in Calacatta Oro marble from Euro Marble.



This page The soaring entrance bridge and void features garden outlooks on both sides, including these golden cane palms, which create tropical lushness and verticality. Triptych of crystal hemisphere lights by Christopher Boots. Landscape design by Secret Gardens. **Opposite page, from top** In the powder room, Bolle '04 Bubbles' pendant light from District. Vanity made by Corelli Joinery in Black Panther onyx from Euro Marble. Vola swivel spout and mixer in Brushed Gold PVC finish from Candana. Mirror custom-made by JN Custom Metal. Hay ceramics on vanity from Cult. In the living room, Christophe Delcourt 'Pop' modular sofa in Kiana '142' mohair fabric in Chamois from Ondene. 'Le Club' armchair from Poliform covered in silk leather from Pelle Leathers. Fredericia 'Insula' coffee table, Fritz Hansen small side table and magazine rack, and Hay ceramics, all from Cult. Custom Mongolian cashmere rug from Robyn Cosgrove. Feature wall in bookmatched marble from Euro Marble. Brass ceiling trims by JN Custom Metal. Floor in Calacatta Oro from Euro Marble. Curtains by Simple Studio.



SPEED READ

» When the owners bought this home in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs in 2015 it boasted lots of natural light and bush outlooks together with a smart two-storey layout. An entry on the first floor and living areas on the lower level made the most of a steep site. » But the entry, aligned with the rear doors, violated the principles of feng shui and the home lacked grandeur and elegance. » Tanya Hancock of Hancock Architects added a new portico to realign the entry, while increasing areas of glazing to let light into the core of the house via an existing internal courtyard. » Luxe materials, such as two marbles and brass, together with fish-scale external screens for privacy, soften the lines of the stark architecture while bringing glamour to the living spaces.

« Within the house, curves in coved ceilings and joinery deliver softness as well as visual interest. And grooved faux panelling is a modern take on traditional panelling, but more delicate. Rich and refined marbles with brass accents also temper the white expanses. "Heaps of marble and golden metals, such as brass and copper, soften a harsh architectural building, making it quite feminine," says Tanya. "The two marbles, both with gold undertones, have their individual beauty, but when combined, and with the added element of brass, they become truly special, providing warmth and elegance."

Oversized brass balustrading in the void becomes a standalone element, an architectural feature in itself, while a similarly striking sinuous balustrade, inspired by Gio Ponti's Palazzo Rai house of 1939, graces a second staircase leading to the main bedroom suite.

Other standouts include the bespoke lighting, such as three crystal hemispheres over the void and a Christopher Boots wing formation chandelier in the back stairwell, called 'Wings of Pegasus', that the owner originally spotted in the Hermès Madison Avenue store, where it really takes flight.

With so many options, Tanya is hard-pressed to select a favourite space. "I love the double-height void, with the slender columns and concrete screens filtering the light, while framing views into the courtyard ... and the living and dining, where the large doors slide away, allowing the room to spill out into the outdoors, while bringing the tree canopy inside."

Both spaces allow inside and out to blend harmoniously – while always honouring the principles of feng shui. No wonder the owners now feel totally at home. **15**

hancockarchitects.com.au; secretgardens.com.au





This page, clockwise from top With expansive glazing, the main bedroom enjoys views of the nearby reserve as well as Secret Gardens’ handiwork in the garden below. Fritz Hansen ‘Fred’ easy chair by Jaime Hayon, from Cult. Linen from Cultiver. Panelling by Corelli Joinery. Calacatta Oro flooring from Euro Marble. Custom brass balustrade by All Metal Projects. Brass ceiling trims by JN Custom Metal. SP01 ‘Jeanette’ outdoor chair by Tom Fereday from Space. Pot from Secret Gardens. A deciduous Japanese maple takes centrestage in the courtyard, chosen by Secret Gardens for its fabulous colouring come autumn, as well as its striking branch structure. It’s underplanted with tractor seat plant (*Ligularia dentata reniformis*), which forms a dramatic contrast. House in Sto render in Dulux ‘Lexicon’ quarter. The pond sports a white pebble finish. Garden design by Secret Gardens. In the main ensuite, a glass reinforced concrete screen by GRC Environments offers privacy as well as gentle, filtered light. Walls and ceiling in Porter’s Paints ‘Irish Linen’. Wall dado and flooring in Calacatta Oro marble from Euro Marble. Giopato & Coombes ‘Gioielli 07’ wall light from District. AntonioLupi ‘Solidea’ bathtub from Candana. Black Panther onyx from Euro Marble. Towel rail by JN Custom Metal.



1 Arabescato Vagli **marble**, POA, from Signorino. 2 ‘Prometheus I + II’ **pendant lights**, POA, from Christopher Boots. 3 ‘Manta’ **chair**, POA, from Poliform. 4 Giopato & Coombes ‘Gioielli 07’ **wall light**, POA, from District. 5 AYTM ‘Torus’ **vase** in Black and Navy, from \$135, from Top3 by Design.