

A TIMELESS

Beauty

This Perth home was designed to have a classic base accentuated with items and pops of colour that can be easily updated with the times, ensuring an ageless appeal.

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The kitchen features cabinets with an antique white base stained with a darker colour to create an aged look.



Wide frontage, close proximity to the ocean and beautiful views of a nearby park were what first attracted Nicola Draper-Henkel and her husband Mike to their block in Perth's beachside suburb of Iluka. Nicola is an interior decorator and stylist, so the idea of building and decorating a house didn't daunt her – in fact, before she and Mike bought the block, she'd already spent a long time visualising how their house would have a classic design featuring lots of wrought iron, shutters and symmetry. Now it was finally time to make it happen.

ETERNAL ELEGANCE

Nicola's interior styling business, Rounded Edge Style, specialises in creating timeless spaces for renovations, new builds, display homes and styling and staging homes. Her philosophy is to avoid trends and instead create a beautiful base that doesn't age, then add accent pieces that can be updated as decorating fashions change. These are the principles she used when designing and maintaining her own home, and is evidenced in the fact that the house's style hasn't dated at all since it was built eleven years ago. Since then, she and Mike have welcomed twins into their family and added two children's bedrooms and a pool, but their two-storey house still maintains its eternal elegance.

Despite its beauty, the house is very warm and cosy. "There is nothing stuffy about the home and no room is too precious to use," Nicola explains. "In fact, I can honestly say that each room is used every day. If anyone needs a bit of quiet time there is a space available."



TOP LEFT: The hallway features a 16th-century dresser given to Nicola by her grandfather, and a wall-hanging that Nicola had custom-made to suit the area.

ABOVE: The lounge room's furniture was chosen to complement the look of the fireplace.

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A CLASSIC KITCHEN

The open-plan kitchen, lounge and dining area uses a light, natural colour palette on the walls and furnishings, and the flooring is Spanish tiles that resemble hand-cut stone. “The tiles have a rough imperfect edge which I love, and the grout is quite wide which adds to the more rustic look I wanted to create,” says Nicola. She had always wanted a kitchen that featured a chimney breast and corbels, so she and Mike designed the layout of the kitchen around these elements. “And a large stove was essential as I love to cook!” Nicola adds. She wanted an aged look to the kitchen cupboards so she chose an antique white base and asked the cabinetmaker to hand-stain each panel so that the dark stain would settle into the grooves.

There’s plenty of storage and bench space in the kitchen, ensuring a good balance between aesthetics and practicality. Framed pieces on the walls and a few well-chosen ornaments add a cosy feel, and there’s a kitchen clock in place, but not a conventional one: Nicola found a double-faced wall clock with a wrought-iron hanger in a homewares store while on holiday in South Africa. “The house was under construction at the time and when I bought it, I knew exactly where it would go,” she says. “It’s the one thing everyone comments on when they come into the kitchen area.”

SPACE AND STYLE

As well as the lounge area next to the kitchen, there are another two comfortable lounge rooms in the house. One is a carpeted room featuring long sofas around a fireplace. “The fireplace was the first item in place and so I simply chose furniture to complement the style of the fireplace,” Nicola explains. “It’s a very comfortable spot to sit and my children often do their after-school reading in here, each curled up on a sofa.” The other lounge area is upstairs, and is Nicola’s reading nook.

TOP: The open-plan kitchen, lounge and dining room creates a spacious living area for the family of four to relax and spend time together.

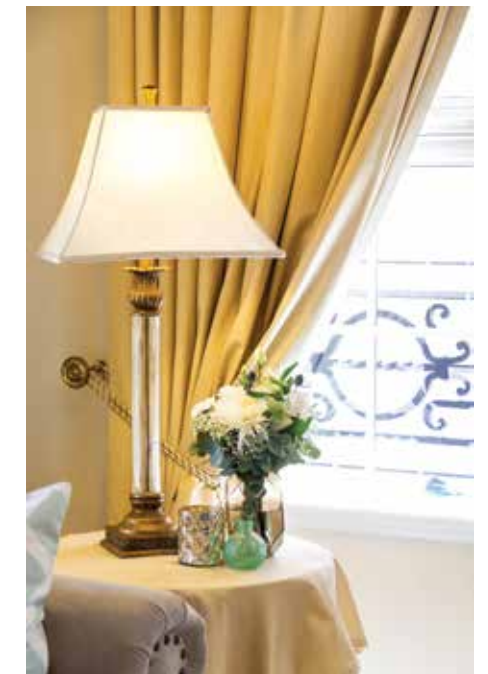
ABOVE: Nicola loved the idea of a chimney breast in the kitchen, and built the rest of the kitchen around this feature.

OPPOSITE PAGE

TOP: The dining room table was the first piece of furniture Nicola and Mike bought when they married. The table is from Empire Furniture and the chairs are a more recent purchase from Harvey Norman.

BOTTOM LEFT: The kitchen clock has a double-sided face and was found at a homewares shop in South Africa.

BOTTOM MIDDLE: The home features plenty of teal accents that help create a feeling of flow throughout the rooms.





FAVOURITE THINGS

Throughout the house, Nicola used plenty of teal accents to create a sense of French-provincial style, and the master bedroom is no exception with its teal feature wall. For the room's bedding Nicola used a combination of items from Pottery Barn, Adairs and Bed Bath N' Table. "I don't really favour using sets as such, preferring to mix things up," she explains. She recently updated the look of the bedroom furniture, painting the bedside tables grey and changing the hardware to a soft gold.

The twins' bedrooms were a labour of love for Nicola, and a lot of fun for her to design. "Children's rooms are one of my absolute favourite things to do and I've done quite a few now," she says. Her method is to first find out what the child likes, dislikes and is interested in, then use that to build a vision. "Then start giving them choices, but controlled choices," she says. "What I mean is to give them choices of two or three things that you already like, that way they feel like they are contributing. For example, my daughter chose her wallpaper and my son chose the prints on his wall. I took them both to the framers with me and they chose the frames they liked for all their art." The resulting bedrooms are comfortable yet beautifully-designed spaces, with plenty of travel-themed decor for Nicola's son and a mellow teal colour scheme for her daughter.

OUTDOOR APPEAL

Outside, the original backyard had a formal garden, but when Nicola and Mike had their twins they decided to convert part of it into a pool. "I have to give full credit to my husband for placement of the pool as I never thought it would fit in that spot," Nicola remembers. They also added a small gazebo at one end of the pool. "We got our architect back in to draw

"Whenever I get a chance for a quiet cup of tea, this is where you will find me," she says. The neutral colour scheme of creams and beiges is complemented with wooden furniture, including an antique dresser which was a gift from her grandfather.

Another cosy spot is the office, with its large L-shaped desk lining two walls, and a built-in bookshelf that covers one wall and reaches the ceiling. Nicola designed the shelving to complement the other cabinetry in the house and create a sense of flow. "Shelving should be practical of course but also beautiful," she says. "I love finding new ways to display favourite objects and books."



TOP LEFT: Nicola's daughter picked out the wallpaper in her bedroom, and the rest of the decorating scheme reflects the soft teal hue.

TOP RIGHT: Nicola's daughter's room contains plenty of teal touches.

ABOVE: Nicola likes children's bedrooms to reflect their interests, and her son's room features a travel theme.

ABOVE RIGHT: Practical furniture such as desk and bookshelves ensure the children's bedrooms are functional as well as beautiful.

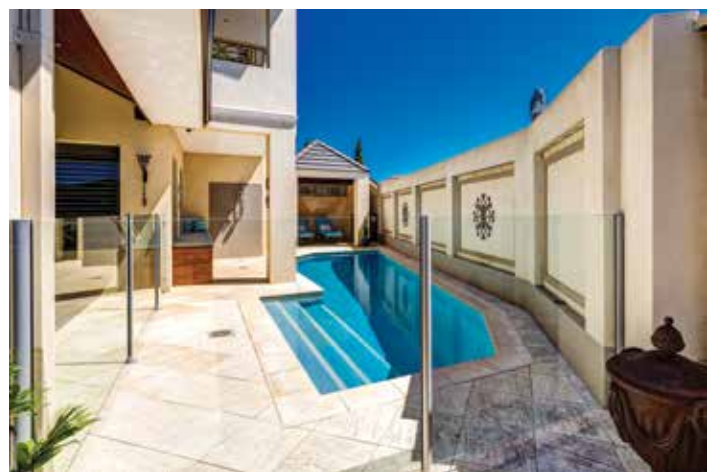
OPPOSITE PAGE

TOP: Nicola used a combination of bedding items from Pottery Barn, Adairs and Bed Bath N' Table to make up the bed in the master bedroom.

BOTTOM LEFT: Nicola had mirrors custom-made for the two bathrooms, ensuring the perfect fit and style.

Nicola's styling tips

- Be clear on the look you are after as mistakes can be costly.
- Scour Pinterest and magazines for ideas, then run them past someone you trust with good taste or invest in an interior decorator.
- Choose an accent colour to help your home flow while keeping the rest of the home neutral.
- Once the big purchases are out of the way, layer your look with sentimental items and additional accent pieces.
- Use different textures to create interest.



up plans for the gazebo as we wanted it to appear seamless with the rest of the house,” she says. Mike made bench seats for seating and storage in the undercover area at the side of the pool, and the couple added a large square alfresco dining set from Early Settler for outdoor entertaining.

The outdoor areas reflect the indoors: cosy yet stylish places to entertain, relax and spend time with family, with colourful accents set against a classic backdrop that’s easy to maintain and will retain its timeless look. ■

TOP: Mike built the alcove ceiling in the upstairs lounge area, which is Nicola’s reading nook.

ABOVE: Nicola designed the office with its plentiful shelving and desk area, ensuring the desk could comfortably fit two people using it at the same time.

RIGHT: The pool and gazebo were a later addition to the yard after Nicola and Mike had their twins.

