



When the heat's on the best houses work with the elements, shading interiors, encouraging breezes, going with the flow. Think of louvres, french doors, a splash of cool blue on the walls. Get inspiration from this issue: a

february

holiday house in Victoria, an airy city extension in Melbourne, a Sydney beach cottage turned family home. For refurbishment, we show you three different ways to decorate a living room/study: an uncluttered area for a professional couple, a tailored retreat, and an exuberant space for an informal lifestyle. Wicker makes a comeback (did it ever go away?), catching the eye of designers everywhere. And to round it all off, extend your outdoor living well into the balmy nights with strategically placed garden lighting.

VOGUE
AUSTRALIA
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blueprint

*A four-room cottage expands
to capture a sunny country
style with city savvy.*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY QUENTIN BACON



French doors, above, open from the living areas to the Haddonstone-paved side courtyard. Espaliered white *Camellia sasanqua* are underplanted with blue and white annuals and white roses. Right: the coach-house, which runs the width of the site, includes a garage and fully self-contained guest quarters. The retaining wall for the pool is topped by a bank of lavender and white roses. Left: looking down from one of the balconies of the coach-house across the pool to the kitchen wing.



there is no need to ask Di Jones to name her favourite colour. "I just love blue" is her enthusiastic statement of the obvious, as her house sings the blues to stunning effect in every room, in the courtyards and in the swimming pool. For Di and Bill Jones, the old stone farmhouses of France were always the stuff that dreams were made of, and they wanted their own version in Sydney. It had to have french doors and Juliet balconies opening to places in the sun.

The couple are deeply involved in real estate. Di works long hours in the Woollahra area, Bill is based in the city. Home had to

The kitchen area is a delightful informal gathering place for friends.

be close, and no-one could know better than they that Woollahra is not noted for the country-farmhouse look. So they dreamed the improbable dream and thought "perhaps one day we will find something in the country". But there was a tiny, four-room stone cottage in the heart of Woollahra that had been empty for five years and had been bought and sold four times. "It must have been too daunting a prospect for successive owners," said Di. "We kept looking at it but the timing was never right." Then suddenly it was on the market again and the timing was right. The dream was gaining substance.

"We took our ideas to [interior designer] John Normyle, who came up with a concept that was perfect. The plan was drawn up and detailed by an architect."

There are no horror stories to relate about this building project. "It took two years but it all went smoothly. Our builder, Barry Elsbury, did a superb job and we are still friends." When the house was finished, his wife, Chris, designed the garden.

The tiny old cottage has been turned into a deliciously pretty, spacious house with a decided country air. French doors do open to the sun from the sitting room, dining room and kitchen onto a wide side courtyard, planted with white and blue flowers. More french doors lead from the informal living room, with its comfortable seating in blue and white stripes, to a stunning cobalt blue swimming pool. Upstairs, each room opens to its own Juliet balcony.

On the far side of the swimming pool is an enchanting two-storeyed coach-house. It is both a garage, which gives a whole new meaning to keeping up with the Joneses, and fully self-contained guest quarters. It too has balconies which overlook the pool.





Beyond the informal dining area, the kitchen has custom-built cupboards with glass insets. Lined a creamy white, they work well with the pine floor and a large pine cupboard to the left. The sink is in a central island, which forms a classic work triangle with the stove and refrigerator. Opposite top: blue striped sofa and chairs, china and decorative details against the

creamy background and timber floors enhance the country feel of the stone cottage. Opposite bottom: the formal sitting room exposes a play of textures: sandstone walls, kauri pine floorboards, linen curtains and heavy cotton sofa covers. Much of the interior decoration throughout the house was by Claire Edmonds of Claire Edmonds Quilts, Woollahra.



Everywhere, detail is meticulous: new sandstone was found to match the original; marvellous old kauri pine floorboards came from a demolition yard; Porter's sandstone limewash and Haddonstone paving blend with the stonework. And, of course, the accents are blue.

It is a house carefully planned to suit a particular lifestyle. The kitchen and informal living room, opening out to the pool, is a delightful gathering place for family and friends. The work area, a successful time-and-motion study, is geared for a couple who lead exceptionally busy lives and who love to entertain. "Everything was designed to be easy and time-saving," explains Di. "I wanted a functional kitchen with everything essential to hand, yet I didn't want it to look austere." A central island means no wasted steps: it holds the sink, dishwasher, storage and slide-out garbage bin. A double row of baskets on slide-out shelves is an example of the fine detailing in the house. Three full sets of baskets, of various sizes but in the correct creamy colour, were bought to get six singles of the right size. The cabinets were then made to fit the baskets. All the cabinets were designed to look "more like furniture than kitchen cupboards". They are limed in a creamy white and have Carrara marble tops.

Throughout the interior, fabrics and paint echo the blue, cream and white of the outside of the house. The whole is comfortable, uncluttered, unified. This is a happy story, a successful major rebuilding. "We find the house sunny and bright; perfect to live in and hard to leave in the mornings," said Di Jones. Sometimes dreams do come true.

HELEN MARSHALL

The main bedroom, above, gains light from french doors which open to Juliet balconies. Blue and white chintz and a "wedding ring" patterned quilt continue the country atmosphere of the house. Left: detail of a window seat tucked into an upstairs bathroom. Right: the all-white bathroom, heated by a Jetmaster fireplace, offers sybaritic indulgence.







BARRIE ELSBURY
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22 April 1991

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I have been associated with Greg Hunter in a business capacity for the past twelve months.

It has been my experience that he is an above average tradesperson with sound knowledge of building construction.

It is my opinion that he would be competent as a builder.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barrie Elsbury', written over a horizontal line.

Barrie Elsbury