



modern MATCH

A NEW ZEALAND COUPLE DELVED INTO THE DARK SIDE FOR A SLICK AND STYLISH REVAMP OF THEIR 1970s HOME

STORY & STYLING LEANNE MOORE PHOTOGRAPHY HELEN BANKERS

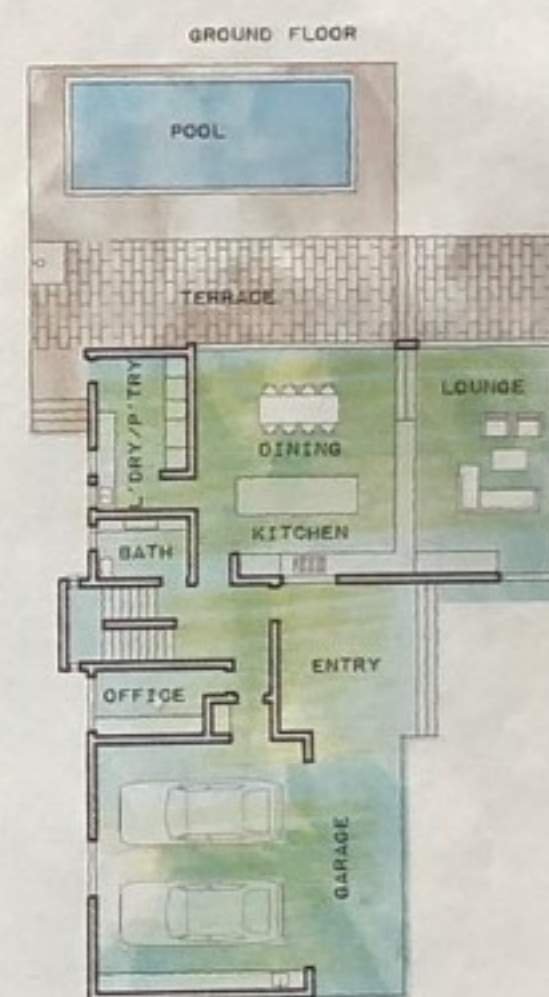
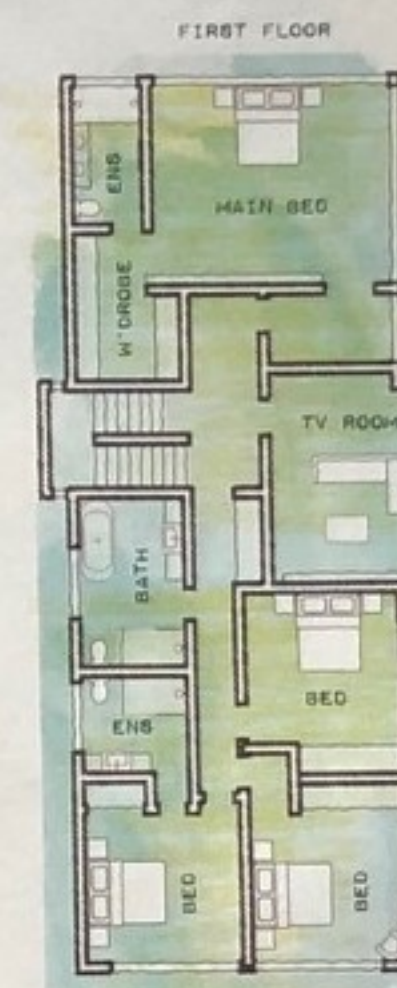
FAMILY MOMENTS Rebecca and Paul's Auckland home, constructed nearly 50 years ago, is filled with contemporary know-how. Rebecca, who's a fashion buyer, and Paul, who builds houses for a living, took a hands-on approach to reconfiguring their two-storey abode, adding a light-filled living zone to share with their children, Isabella, 10, and eight-year-old Miller. The dark, barn-laid solid oak flooring (opposite) mirrors the home's moody interiors, fixtures and accessories such as the large artwork, created by Rebecca (pictured King Living is softened by patterned cushions Rebecca picked up while on holiday in Noosa in Queensland; the velvet ones are from oversized sofas for pizza and movies, while the adults crank up the music and dim the lights downstairs," says Rebecca. >



STYLING COURTESY OF CANE PEOPLE



FLOOR PLAN



Iomes built during the 1970s have their challenges, and for Rebecca and Paul, the greatest one they faced when they bought their tired and dated abode in 2010 was having the living and dining room inconveniently positioned upstairs. "It was a nightmare when the kids were little because they always wanted to be outside, and it was difficult to keep an eye on them," explains Rebecca. "The layout was all wrong for how we wanted to live as a family."

So when Rebecca, a fashion buyer with a degree in interior design, and Paul, who builds homes but also renovates, decided to join forces on a revamp, creating a home that made sense to the entire family was the priority. "It was designed with the children very much in mind," says Rebecca. "I wanted to create a place where the children were happy to bring their friends, and so far it's working really well. I love that I can be at the kitchen bench and watch the kids swimming. And they love being able to run inside and grab something to eat before heading back out to play."

The beating heart of the couple's chic family home in Auckland's south-east is the elegantly moody kitchen, which hits the sweet spot between style and functionality. When Rebecca dreamed up the

colour story for the high-impact space, white was never an option. "I've always wanted to do a black kitchen," she explains. "I like the glamour and drama of a dark palette."

Concealed from view when visitors enter the home, the new open-plan living, kitchen and dining area flows seamlessly out to the garden and swimming pool through a wall of glass sliders. "When people come around the corner into this space, the sudden expansion often catches them by surprise," says Paul. To add a little magic to their ideas, the couple engaged architect Paul Clarke from Studio2 Architects. "He was our second architect because the first one didn't want us closely involved in the project," says Rebecca who, together with Paul, stayed hands-on throughout the renovation process.

The family stayed on site during the 11-month-long makeover, which, says Rebecca, "definitely took a toll". Yet memories of those days are fading fast and Paul is already thinking about what they could do next. "We both enjoy the renovation process and there are plenty more projects in us," he says. Rebecca is keen to embark on another building adventure, but it will take something special to lure her away from this beautiful home. "We love what we've ended up with," she says. "For now we are enjoying what we've created here."



ILLUSTRATION: KENZIEDESIGN.COM



KITCHEN "Our brief to our kitchen designer was to have a super-functional space with a central island bench that would serve as breakfast bar, workspace and cocktail bar," says Rebecca, who engaged Colleen Holder of Colleen Holder Design to help bring the couple's ideas to life. Black powdercoated aluminium shelves with oak dowelling are among the well-considered details (left and above left), along with custom-stained inky cabinetry and shelving. "My favourite part of the kitchen is the integrated fridge and the generous pantry hidden behind the tall cupboards," says Rebecca. "It looks seamless but everything is super handy." The striking wall of joinery extends into the adjoining sunken lounge, which is connected by a cleverly designed servery. >



LIVING ROOM

The extension has a 'mid-century modern' vibe and brings serious wow factor to the home. Rebecca's training as an interior designer is evident in her choice of cool blue tones in the patchwork rug from Source Mondial (above). "It was important to get the right rug, because you look down on this space from the kitchen and dining area," she says. "I like the way the pale blues offset the warmth of the timber." The Riva Studio wood-burning fireplace set among folded steel tiles by Powersurge makes this a cosy spot during winter.

STAIRWELL

Copper downpipes from the home's original guttering were upcycled for a feature wall. Beaten flat, the panels serve as a striking spine to the stairwell (left).

ARTWORK: ULETTI TLOX

WE LOVE...

dark oak flooring

Rustic timber floors lend an aura of authenticity to Paul and Rebecca's home. "Paul saw it at a supplier and knew it would be right for our place," says Rebecca. The dark, barn-laid solid flooring is finished in Pallmann Magic Oil, available at Gilt Edge Industries in New Zealand, giltedge.co.nz.



DINING ROOM "The copper light above the dining table was the inspiration for our home's new look," says Rebecca of the 'Capella' pendant light from Light Plan. "As soon as I saw it I could see how the rest of the house could look." The pendant's ideal style match? A 'Transom' dining table from Designers' Collection and black cane chairs from Città. Floor-to-ceiling glass stacker doors from Aluminium City open to create an easy transition to the outdoors and pool area. >

"THE *open shelving* WORKS REALLY WELL - IT LOOKS GOOD AND IS ALSO HANDY FOR *storage*" ~ REBECCA



MAIN BEDROOM

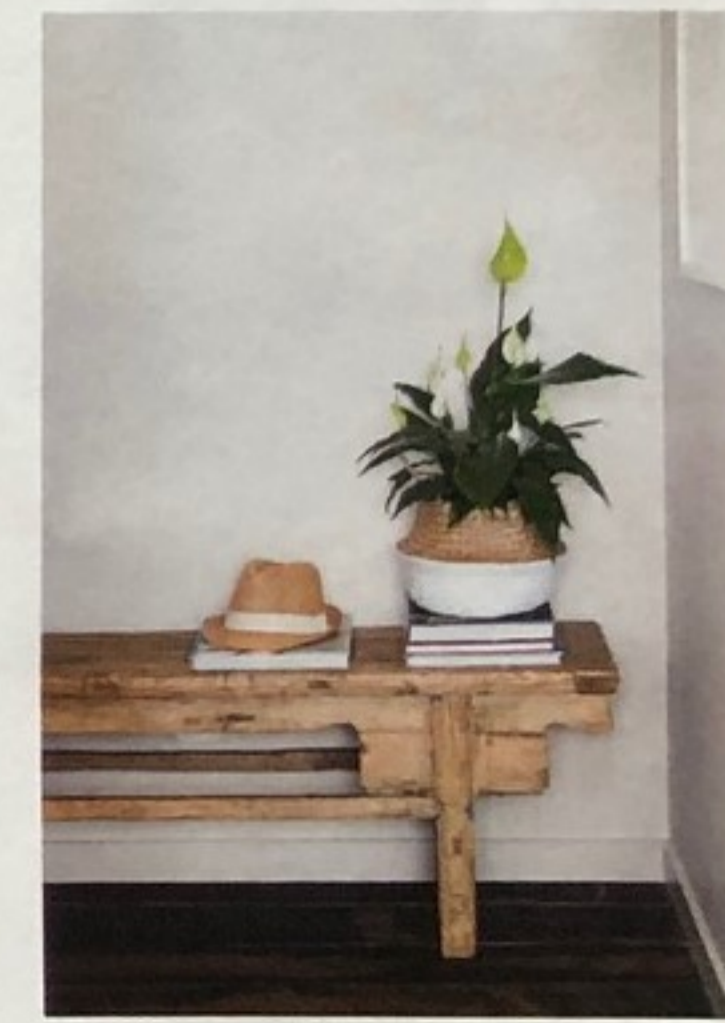
A resort-style vibe imbues the upstairs zone, with one end of the area devoted entirely to the ensuite and main bedroom (opposite). Here, Rebecca's interior designer flair and Paul's talent as a designer-cum-builder are on show; they dreamt up the oak shelving on either side of their bed, introducing the warmth of wood to the room. "Our bedroom has a lovely calm feeling and I wanted to keep the furniture simple to highlight that," says Rebecca. Pendant lighting from ECC makes a chic statement beside the upholstered bed from Designers' Collection, dressed in bedlinen from EziBuy Home. Dark-stained oak flooring in the hallway (below, far right) leads through to the couple's bedroom, creating a contrast to the pale timber of the vintage bench seat sourced from Corso De' Fiori.

POWDER ROOM

Pendant lighting, such as the dazzling pair of lamps from ECC Lighting suspended above a custom-built oak benchtop (above, right), provides illumination and drama throughout the property. As well as using lighting to create mood in the powder room, Paul and Rebecca installed a wall of hexagonal tiles from Tile Space, in warm rich tones that are perfectly in keeping with the home's sophisticated styling. "We've holidayed at a few resorts and I wanted to add that little bit of luxury to the powder room, which is mostly used by guests," says Rebecca. The mirror is from Weekend Trader.

MAIN BATHROOM

Wall-to-wall glamour continues in the main bathroom (right), with a custom-built oak vanity topped with Caesarstone in Sleek Concrete the star of the show. Twin basins from Robertson Bathware are a perfect addition at teeth-brushing time for Isabella and Miller. >



BACK YARD

Paul and Rebecca (pictured with Isabella and Miller, below) dedicated just as much time to designing the exterior as they did the interior, opting to do the landscaping prior to the renovation. The pool, a shady outdoor dining area and comfy sofas add to the holiday vibe. "It's a great party house," says Paul. "The layout flows easily from one space to the next and we've had some fun gatherings. The pool gets well used and there have been times when someone's ended up being thrown in fully clothed!"

CONTACTS

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DARK MAGIC

INSIDE STORY REBECCA & PAUL'S HOME

Who lives here? Rebecca, a fashion buyer; her husband Paul, who owns and operates a building company; and their children, Isabella, 10, and Miller, eight.

Favourite aspects of the home?

Paul: "It's a great home for entertaining and we often have friends and family staying."

What's it like having your wife as a client?

"Thankfully Rebecca and I have very similar tastes. We learnt from our last renovation that bouncing ideas off each other challenges us to come up with better solutions."

Advice to others?

"Instead of the more typical method of building first and landscaping last, we did it the other way around. We got planting advice and would spend weekends in the garden, which meant everything was reasonably well-established when it came time to enjoy our outdoor spaces."



1. The single-level extension, clad in vertical cedar weatherboard, is stained with Dryden WoodOil in Platinum.
2. Isabella, Paul, Miller and Rebecca relax on the outdoor sofa by New Zealand's Design Warehouse. For similar, try Eco Outdoor.
3. The copper pendant light from Light Plan helped set the theme for the interior of the home.
4. Tresor 'Argent' hexagonal tiles in the powder room from Tile Space.
5. Mimic these boards with European oak engineered floorboards in Chocolate from Royal Oak Floors.
6. A patchwork vintage rug from Source Mondial, and table from Città.
7. Miller and Isabella poolside. For similar outdoor beanbags, try Zanui.

ACTUAL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

