

INSIDERS

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LOOK! Share My Style's biggest prize ever



Who lives here: Grant Harris, a builder; his wife, Lee, owner of interiors store, White Nest; son, Lochie, 13; daughter, Peppa, 10; plus 6-year-old labrador, Bill.

Style of home: A new modern U-shaped coastal home in Sorrento, Victoria. The facade, particularly of the guest wing, is a nod to the fisherman's cottage that was originally on the plot.

 The new build was finished in nine months, from demolition to moving-in day.

DREAM IT. DESIGN IT. DO IT.

COTTAGE

A seaside cottage is replaced with a family-friendly

WORDS & STYLING JULIA GREEN PHOTOGRAPHY ARMELLE HABIB

exterior
Convincing Grant to go with black took a little work from his wife Lee, "but I knew it would be dramatic and create a wow factor". The sculpture by Colin Hyett Design is the perfect foil for the door painted in Dulux Golden Marguerite.

STYLING ASSISTANCE: SARAH EL SHANG, BEN CHI, CLASSICWITHATWIST.COM, AU
PLANTERS, WHITE NEST, WHITE NEST (TAU), (OPPOSITE) WALL PLANTER & FOX SCULPTURE, WHITE NEST.

INDUSTRY

new build that still exudes the charm of the original

by the sea

Those that grow up in a seaside village will often say it is impossible to leave it. Lee and Grant Harris, both born and bred on the Mornington Peninsula, share this opinion. The couple were determined to make Sorrento home for their own family, so when they received a random phone call from an agent about a rare and hotly contested block on Sorrento's 'golden mile', Lee and Grant drove back from their weekend away to view it as soon as possible.

DREAM IT.

As they weren't allowed to inspect the cottage internally, Lee and Grant went with blind faith and signed the sales contract anyway. For the pair, it was all about the building opportunities that lay ahead on the large flat block only a stone's throw from the sea. "I will never forget the moment we got the keys and opened the door," says Lee. "I looked at Grant and said 'we can't live in this!'" For seven years though, that is exactly what this family of four did. With only a small budget to replace the decrepit flooring and put in a split-system air-conditioner, the family lived in the house planning their future dream home.

"This was our time to plan, plot and dream big for what our new home would look like in time," says Lee. "With Grant at the helm of our build, it was always just going to be a matter of time in his schedule - and having the money - before we could embark upon the project. But, like with holidays, the planning is often the most enjoyable part!"

sitting area

At the entry is an original Lisa Lapointe artwork, "my absolute favourite piece of art I own," says Lee. The wood stacker and ottoman are both from Lee's store, White Nest.



living area

A pair of custom-made sofas from Sorrento Furniture contrasts with the feature fireplace. The couches' soft-pink tone is picked up by the patterned Ruby Star Traders buffet.



sitting area

Opposite the fireplace, a chic buttoned sofa from Freedom teamed with a Paule Marrot artwork brings a dose of personality and colour to the guest living area.



“Living in a space before renovating gives you complete faith that you’re making the right spatial decisions”

LEE HARRIS, HOMEOWNER

Grant & Lee’s wishlist

- + “Even though we were demolishing the original cottage, we planned to retain its character and charm with the new facade”
- + “We wanted to create an inner sanctuary in a family-friendly ‘U’ shape.”
- + “A separate guests’ wing, with a bathroom for family and friends, was a must.”
- + “A large open-plan living and dining area that spilled out onto the garden was always a part of the plan.”

the moodboard



“Clean & Protect” low sheen interior **paint** in Hide And Seek, \$4750/2L, British Paints, britishpaints.com.au.

“Clean & Protect” low sheen interior **paint** in Black Ace, \$61.60/4L, British Paints, as before.



“Every year, we go to the VCA graduate show. It’s the best way of seeing art because you see new talent and get to have a dialogue with artists before they’re picked up by galleries”

LISA LAPOINTE CUSHIONS, WHITE NEST, WHITE NEST METAL, PAINT COLOUR MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

DESIGN IT.

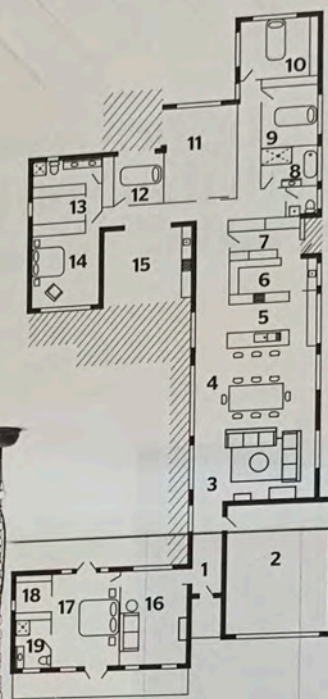
With previous renovations under their belts - and a lifetime on the tools for Grant - the couple were well-versed as to how best to tackle the logistics of their home build.

To start, Lee and Grant focused on the design elements to set their home apart from others nearby. "I had my heart set on a cottage right from the word go," says Lee. "They have a sense of homeliness that can be hard to replicate with new builds. So I would pack Grant, the kids, and our draftsman into the car, and we would drive the local streets looking for 'cottage' inspiration. This went on for quite some time!"

Having previously lived in a smaller house, Lee and Grant wished to create large open-plan spaces for communal living that allowed for the whole family to be together but also spread out for privacy, too. "The house was definitely designed around the emergence of two teens," says Lee. Doing this while still retaining the 'cottage feel' was important.

"Once the drawings were completed, and our U-shaped space was down on paper, we began to think about fittings and fixtures. And that is where the creative juices began to flow," says Lee. Modern black taps paired with apple-green rimmed mirrors were installed in the bathroom. Subway tiles with industrial pendant lights were fitted into the kitchen.

Lee's access to decorative items via her store has given the home its soul and personality. "Designing this home was a while in the making - it was all about the finishing touches and finer details," says Lee. "By the time we got to it, we were armed with so much research it was more matter of culling ideas rather than creating them."



1. Entry
2. Garage
3. Living area
4. Dining area
5. Kitchen
6. Butler's pantry
7. Laundry
8. Bathroom
9. Bedroom
10. Bedroom
11. Rumpus room
12. Bedroom
13. Ensuite/WIR
14. Master bedroom
15. Outdoor entertaining area
16. Sitting area
17. Guest bedroom
18. Walk-in robe
19. Ensuite



“The floorplan is great for a growing family– it allows us to be together while also being able to enjoy our own space in the different wings” LEE HARRIS, HOMEOWNER

WHITENESTMETAL ARTWORKS (IN BUTLERS PANTRY) BY RACHEL CASTLE ORIGINAL ARTWORK
BY ALI MCGABNEY STEVENS GREENHOUSE INTERIORS GREENHOUSEINTERIORS.COM.AU



kitchen/dining
The size of the concrete waterfall island bench is matched by the table from Kyo, surrounded by Freedom dining chairs. The pendant lights are from Industria X.

DO IT.

Many people head into a build or renovation with trepidation and warning signals from their predecessors. As renovation veterans however, Lee and Grant ran their build to a strict schedule. "Every day that runs over is a day that costs the owner money so Grant made sure we stuck to our dates," says Lee. "His promise of July 1 as our 'move-in' date was honoured to the day!"

The couple anticipated an approximate nine-month turnaround from the time of demolition to the completion of the project. And while many owners lament their renovating disasters, there are none to be told in Lee and Grant's home makeover story. "The only testing moment was funnily enough over the exterior paint colour," says Lee. "I wanted black and Grant wanted white. I had the chequebook that day, so I won the battle!"

The family opted for a short-term rental in a nearby street that allowed them to make daily visits to watch progress. Reliable trades, and even weather was on their side. "We had seven years to plan this whole exercise and get it right, so the execution was really all in Grant's capable hands," says Lee. "And other than one tiny change to our plans that meant moving the front door, we built the exact cottage that had been in our thoughts for years. We would do it again in a heartbeat." **10**
For info on Lee's stores in Blairgowrie and Sorrento, visit whiteneast.net.au. To contact builder Grant, call 0417 567 084.



guest quarters

The guest wing is practically a separate cottage of its own with this bedroom, as well as an ensuite, WIR and sitting area. It also opens out directly onto the pool area (opposite).

Peppa's room

The bed from This Little Love, dressed in Cotton On Kids bedlinen, sets the scene for sweet dreams. An HK Living lamp and custom-made chair from Sorrento Furniture forms a fun reading nook.



bathroom

A green-rimmed Middle Of Nowhere mirror from White Nest brings a touch of bright colour. The vanity is made of American oak while the grey tiles are from Bayside Tiles.

the best bits

- + "Our bright yellow front door was another great choice and certainly caused a great deal of chatter in the street! We love coming home to such a bright, happy, welcoming entrance!" says Lee.
- + "Living so close to town and the beach is fantastic for the kids. Grant built them a trolley to tow their canoes down to the beach, where they spend endless summers with friends by the sea. It's a healthy existence."
- + "We once had the worst house in the best street but were hopeful that we would flip that around to having the best house in the street. We believe we pulled it off and are really proud of our achievement."

lessons learnt
“Sourcing a reliable and trusted bank of trades was our greatest renovation weapon. Having Grant as the builder meant we were in the best hands”

LEE HARRIS, HOMEOWNER



outdoors

The house is clad in 'Scyon Linea' weatherboards from James Hardie painted in Dulux Wayward Grey. A wall garden from Pippi's Plants provides an artistic element outside.