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HEART OF GLASS

This Victorian home's spectacular new foliage-framing extension has inspired a fresh approach to family living

Words TESSA PEARSON
Photography SHARYN CAIRNS





Polished and practical, the extension of this Melbourne abode – one of three identical residences built at the turn of the century in the suburb of Armadale – is the work of Australian interior architecture practice Studio Tate. Initially enlisted to create bespoke joinery, the firm's designer, Alex Hopkins, was quick to identify ways the home could work harder for its owners. Drawing on a long-standing friendship with the clients, she set about reconfiguring its layout to better serve the needs of the couple and their three teenage children. Her aim was to give everyone space for themselves, while also creating areas that would bring them together.

The heart of the four-bedroom home is now a sleek eat-in kitchen, which is linked, via a striking glass walkway, to a newly created living and dining space within the former stable block. 'The layout has been designed with two dining experiences in mind,' explains Alex. 'The main table is for when the whole family has time to sit down for a leisurely meal, while the extended island bench creates a natural place to grab a quick bite and gather at the end of a busy day.' Framed by floor-to-ceiling steel-framed windows, it's an airy and incredibly inviting central space that has a strong connection with the outdoors.

This addition could have looked out of place beside what Alex refers to as the 'distinct sense of formality' of the property's period architecture, from its stately façade and grand entry hall to its elaborate ceiling mouldings. Thanks to a fresh, restrained monochrome palette, however, there's a pleasing symmetry to the old and new elements in this home.

The whole interior, despite its modernity, is underpinned by references to the building's history. These can be seen in the subtlest of touches, such as the way the furniture and the curated art collection picks up accent colours from the original stained-glass windows. 'I like to think we managed to respectfully balance heritage features with a contemporary vision, while truly transforming how this family lives,' concludes Alex. Elegant yet functional, linked to nature and the past, this really is a metamorphosis to be marvelled at. studiotate.com.au

Exterior Situated in the stable block, the striking glass walkway links the new extension to the original Victorian building **Living area** Two canvases by artist Clinton Naina echo the monochrome theme of the décor in the house. They hang above a mirrored drinks table. A patterned rug by Cadrys picks up a subtle geometric thread, another unifying theme ►





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Living area With light flooding in, Le Corbusier's 'LC4' chaise longue for Cassina makes a perfect spot for relaxation. The portrait on the wall beside it is by Heike Davies, and to the right is an inviting 'Tired Man' armchair by Flemming Lassen for By Lassen. **Dining area** A 'Laurent 03' pendant by Lambert & Fils hangs above the 'Soul' table by Nonn. Three glazed stoneware pieces by Tessy King from Modern Times are placed on top, while sculptures by Tarryn Gill sit on plinths beside it ►



Kitchen Bespoke ebonised American oak joinery by Studio Tate contrasts with the pale limestone surfaces from Australian brand Signorino. A 'Highline' pendant light by Archier accentuates the room's streamlined aesthetic ►



Hallway An artwork entitled *More Bang* by Nigel Sense and Mike Chavez hangs above a leather bench by Handværk, while sculptures by Martin Smith and Hugh Ramage sit on stone plinths **Child's bedroom** A built-in desk provides a space for homework. The lamp and the 'S 533' chair by Thonet are both vintage pieces ▶





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Bathrooms One bathroom uses the same materials as the kitchen, with elegant Signorino limestone surfaces surrounding a sunken Duravit basin, and a vanity unit in ebonised American oak. The tap is by Brodware. In the other, slender ceramic tiles by Signorino line the walls. The tall clay vase by the bath is by Kerryn Levy **Main bedroom** Above the bed hangs an artwork by Wayne Fogden and an 'Atomium' pendant light by Lambert & Fils. The table lamp is by Ateljé Lyktan **See Stockists page for details**

