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ENTERTAINER'S DREAM

Channelling a little Euro chic paid handsome rewards at this home on Sydney's Northern Beaches.

* STORY *Carli Philips* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Natalie Spadavecchia*

THIS IS THE LIFE

The homeowners are thrilled by the opportunities they now have to entertain on a more generous scale. "The new kitchen allows us to have loads of people over and is much more functional. With the natural light, water and swimming pool, there's a true sense of being on a holiday. It's the perfect place for us to have long summer lunches."

'OCEAN' BALCONY The home's spectacular views are often enjoyed from this vantage point. B&B Italia outdoor armchairs and side table, available from Space. Landscaping by Mackay Landscapes. Scala crazy paving, Eco Outdoor.

Originally, the owners of this home on Sydney's idyllic Northern Beaches approached interior designers Leah and Fliss Pitman of Bone Made for a small renovation project. But the scope of works quickly grew - and then grew some more.

The house had been used as a weekender for about six years but the couple felt it was starting to look a bit tired and lacklustre. As they are keen cooks and frequent entertainers, they were focused on a new kitchen. But the main bedroom and its ensuite, the living room and outdoor areas deserved a facelift too.

The existing kitchen enjoyed beautiful water views, so the footprint and orientation were kept largely intact. However, it lacked storage and the joinery, finishes and fixtures were drab. Leah and Fliss ripped out the cabinetry and opened up the space, increasing the width and depth of the island and adding storage underneath. Winterfell White dolomite is used for the benchtops and splashback; the cloud-like patination of the surface delivers visual softness and provides a lovely textural counterpoint.

Prior to the renovation, the raked ceiling was finished in a dark mahogany, making the whole room feel somewhat oppressive. Painting it white transformed the open-plan kitchen/dining space entirely, giving it a bright and breezy volume. For even more storage and extra preparation ▶

KITCHEN Built-in joinery ensures plenty of storage and maximum functionality. The tall cabinet to the left of the stove opens to an inclinator that eases access to the pool. Walls painted Dulux Grey Pebble Half, rear joinery painted in Porter's Paints Rubble Half, island bench painted Porter's Paints Long Island Grey. Ilve 'Series 6' stove, Harvey Norman. Neu England mixer tap and Winslow pot filler, both Brodware. Counter stools, Coco Republic. Winterfell White dolomite benchtop and splashback, Avant Stone. Bronze cabinet pulls, Lo & Co. Herringbone parquetry, Precision Flooring.



H&G HOUSES

KITCHEN A reclaimed-timber beam conceals the rangehood and adds a dash of farmhouse chic. Qasair 'Lismore Executive' rangehood, Winning Appliances. Sink, Belfast Sinks. Ilve 'Series 6' oven, Harvey Norman. **BUTLER'S PANTRY** Zellige wall tiles, Di Lorenzo Tiles. The shelves are made from repurposed decking. Sink, Belfast Sinks. Neu England mixer tap, Brodware. Filtered water tap, Zip. **DINING** The custom dining table, by Delta Designs, was made from repurposed decking. Wishbone chairs, Cult Design.



space, Fliss and Leah designed a small butler's pantry enclosed by reeded-glass pocket doors. Oak flooring, laid in a herringbone pattern, adds warmth to the otherwise monochrome palette.

The owners' brief was for something "bistro-like and chic", a space that was "easy and functional, but not precious; comfortable and luxurious, but understated". Leah, Fliss and the owners created a shared Pinterest board, and soon found stylish French brasseries were a common source of inspiration. Drawing on their traditional features, the designers introduced rustic timber and brass detailing too. An open shelving unit above the island reinforces the sheer expanse of the space, plus references typical French kitchens. "All of the elements needed to work together to create a nourishing, always-open atmosphere, especially bearing in mind how much the owners love to host," says Leah.

Opening up the kitchen also allowed for a more generous dining space. Since the existing deck had aged and discoloured and would have to be replaced, Leah and Fliss used the timber to fashion a dining table. The table is paired with classic Wishbone chairs to prevent it from looking overly rustic.

The property spans four levels, including the two-storey main house, a garden terrace for entertaining, and a pool area with grotto dining area at the lowest point of the block.

The beautifully refurbished kitchen/dining/living area and adjacent 'ocean balcony' are at street level, along with the main bedroom suite - the second focal point for the project. Leah and Fliss refurbished the main bedroom and ensuite with the same restrained palette used in the kitchen, swapping the timber accents for travertine in the ensuite. Much like the kitchen, the ensuite was gutted but the general position of the fixtures was retained. "We used microcement rather than tiles for the wet areas," says Leah. "Microcement is fantastic because it's waterproof, but also because it allowed us to create a curved silhouette for the shower enclosure that pays homage to the arches elsewhere in the home."

The ground floor of the main house and the pool house weren't part of this project, but Fliss and Leah also worked their magic in the 'grotto' by the pool. Now with new silvery-toned crazy paving, an extendable dining table and an oversize raffia pendant light, it's the perfect undercover-yet-open air spot for entertaining all year round. ▶

Bone Made, Brookvale, NSW; bonemade.com.au.

Keith Root Building Services, Avalon, NSW; (02) 9918 4372 or www.keithrootbuilding.com.au.



"All of the elements work together to create a nourishing, always-open atmosphere."

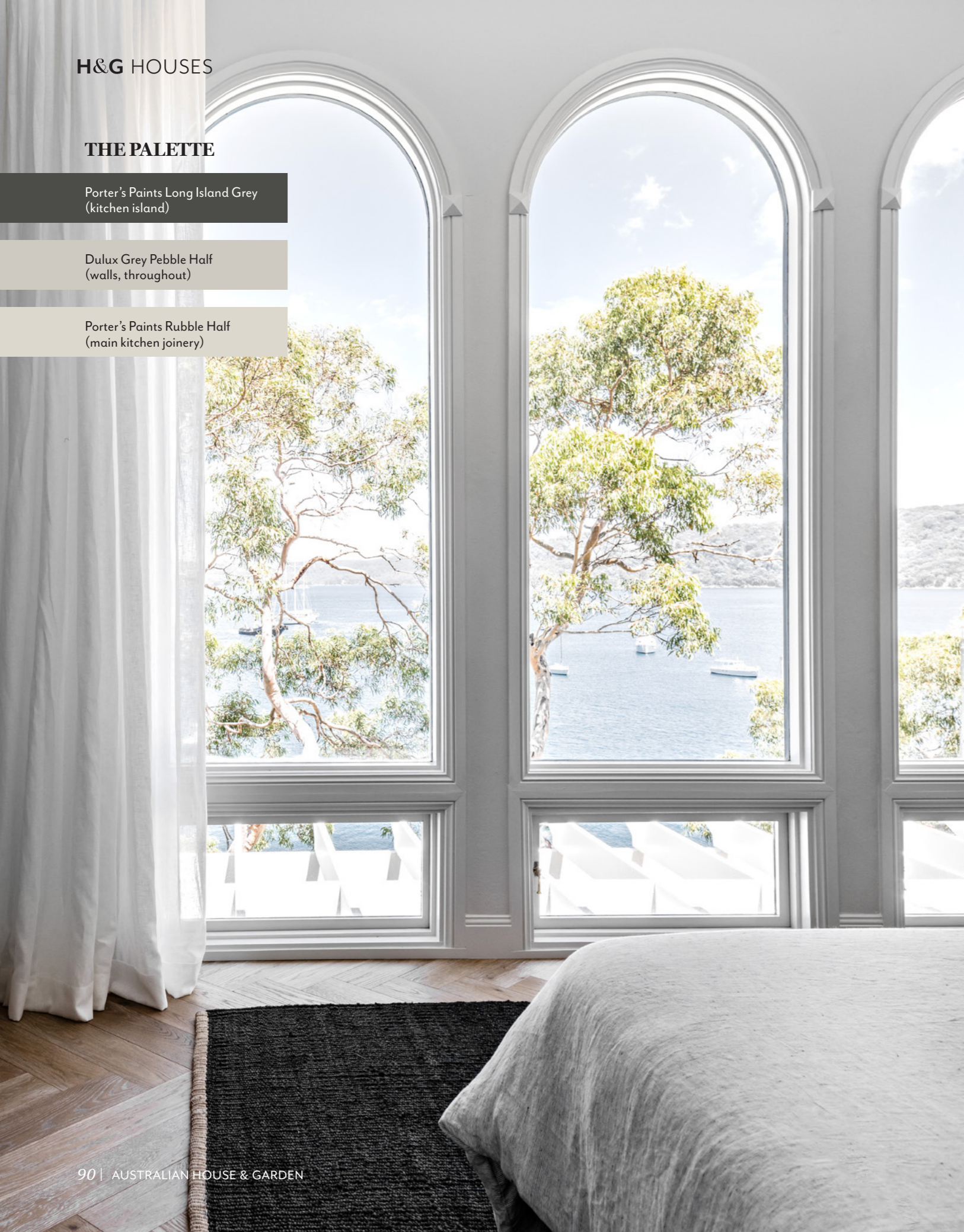
LEAH PITMAN, INTERIOR DESIGNER

THE PALETTE

Porter's Paints Long Island Grey
(kitchen island)

Dulux Grey Pebble Half
(walls, throughout)

Porter's Paints Rubble Half
(main kitchen joinery)



“The curved shower wall pays homage to the arches elsewhere in the home.”

LEAH PITMAN, INTERIOR DESIGNER

MAIN ENSUITE *Left and below* Vida & Co mirror, Zanui. Neu England tapware and wall hooks, Brodware. Goldie wall light, Jordan. Existing basin. The benchtop and walls are finished in microcement by Mineral Fox. Timber vanity finished in Feast Watson Black Japan. Scala travertine floor tiles, Eco Outdoor. **MAIN BEDROOM** Bedlinen, Cultiver. Nest rug, Armadillo. Curtains in Zepel Fabrics 'Pearl Allusion', made by Divine Designs. ▶

THE LAYOUT



Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.



GROTTO DINING Panama raffia pendant light, LuMu Interiors. Malibu extendable outdoor table, Coco Republic. Chairs, GlobeWest. Scala crazy paving, Eco Outdoor. The font at rear was existing.



The poolside grotto is the perfect indoor-outdoor entertaining spot.



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THE SOURCE

A restrained palette and elegant curved forms combine to deliver an air of relaxed sophistication.



Produced by Saffron Sylvester. Room design by Bree Leech (4). Photograph by Lisa Cohen (4).

1 Koppel **hurricane candleholder** by Henning Koppel for Georg Jensen, from \$195, Spence & Lyda. 2 Cooper **kitchen stool**, from \$430, Coco Republic. 3 Parasol **pendant light**, \$320, Tigmi Trading. 4 Laminex PureGrain **surface** in Tornado (cabinetry), \$116.60/m², and laminate **surface** in Alaskan (shelves), \$135.75/m², Laminex. 5 Middle of Nowhere 'Pebble' **wall mirror**, \$308, Life Interiors. 6 Resin **horn vase** in White Marble, \$420, Dinosaur Designs. 7 Wash&Wear Interior **paint** in Hog Bristle Quarter, \$85.90/4L, Dulux. 8 St Clair organic cotton **bath towel**, \$80, Baina. 9 Gareth Ashton '304' **gooseneck mixer with pullout spray** in Artisan Copper, \$823.90, Harvey Norman. 10 La Cornue CornuFé 110 **cooker**, from \$20,575, Andi-Co. *For Where to Buy, see page 190.* H&G