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Federation Glamour

A stunning home in Sydney's Willoughby gets a sophisticated and minimalist makeover.





It's not uncommon to spot a Federation masterpiece amongst the peaceful and tree-lined streets of Willoughby in Sydney's Lower North Shore. Their tell-tale features — wooden architraves and skirting boards, wrap-around balconies, grandiose fireplaces, ornate ceilings, and stained-glass windows — exude charm and style.

For a local family of four, it was time to give their classic Federation home a modern, sophisticated facelift, while retaining and honouring its heritage.

Enter the genius minds of Leah and Fliss Pitman, the interior design duo from Bone Made, who say bringing this brief to life has been one of their favourite projects yet. "The owners wanted the home to feel light, bright, and open and have a cohesive fusion of classic and contemporary design," Leah explains.

During their first initial walk-through, Leah and her team were blown away by the key Federation features of the home but overall, the space felt quite "boxed in", impacting the flow and functionality of the property.

"We knew some walls needed to be removed to open it all up and really breathe new life into the home," Leah says.

So Bone Made got to work, removing the original wall between the dining and living room, which reinvigorated the space and created the "blending of lines" between the two areas.

The new open-plan layout created an expansive living area while embracing the home's high ceilings. To create a subtle separation between the areas, Bone Made moved a window and added a sandstone-clad fireplace.

"As the design elements and details of the home were quite sophisticated and elevated, we wanted to create a really laid-back, homely, cosy feeling with the styling items."

— Leah Pitman

Another key feature of the Bedford Street renovation is the hidden laundry, which was installed behind the kitchen cabinetry and blended in with the pocket door appliance alcove adjacent.

"The hidden laundry/pantry idea was to give the clients the versatility to be able to close off and conceal the back-of-house space when needed. We created the same profiled doors from the kitchen in the laundry to allow them to be cohesive with the kitchen."

Leah and Fliss also completely overhauled the kitchen, opening it up and putting in a 'breakfast bar'-style island and benches, which serve as a centralised location for the family, who have two young daughters, to come together.

"To pay homage to the classic and Federation style of the home, we specified an engineered stone with a marble vein through the kitchen; giving it that elegant and sophisticated touch. We opted for an engineered stone rather than a natural marble due to the practicality of a young family with kids," Leah reveals.

Styling-wise throughout the home, the team stuck to a very minimalist, chic approach. "As the design elements and details of the home were quite sophisticated and elevated, we wanted to create a laid-back, homely, cosy feeling with the styling items."

Textured rugs, pops of timber to bring in warmth and a light linen lounge worked beautifully," the Bone Made co-founder notes.

In terms of the finishes, Bone Made opted for cool and calming choices with natural terrazzo, light oak timber, and shades of soft mint green in the joinery.

"We wanted the palette to be soft, neutral, light, and airy with subtle pops of colour through the coloured joinery and terrazzo in bathrooms, bringing in the layer of warmth through the engineered timber flooring, the limestone-clad fireplace and the timber furniture," Leah says.

Reflecting on the design journey, Leah says she's beyond proud of the result, which successfully fuses classic and contemporary design. "We stayed true to this concept throughout the design process, and I feel it was executed beautifully."

Interior Design and styling:

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