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# ANYTHING IS **POSSIBLE**

This stunning renovation proves that with good bones and the right design, the possibilities are endless

**Words** Lauren Clarke **Photography** Elise Scott







“We’ve transformed an outdated home into a contemporary abode. The before-and-after transformation is testament to the fact that as long as a house has good bones, anything is possible”  
— Silvia Roldan



Old homes can grow weary as the wings of time beat down on them. Styles that once were celebrated can become stale, and dated layouts and technology can impact the functionality of a dwelling. Yet we don't always have to knock down and rebuild. In the interest of salvaging all we can in this waste-not-want-not era, renovating and redesigning can not only reenergise a home's looks, but add to its useability.

This dwelling in Hawthorn East, Victoria, was built more than 20 years ago. “The clients appreciated that the house needed some major updating. The existing selections felt really outdated and there was a general lack of warmth and ambience to the home,” says Silvia Roldan, principal designer at Studio Esar. The company was employed to update the home and provide a concept for a space that would be refreshed and contemporary.

“This was your typical circa 2000s home,” says Silvia. “It felt cold and dull, with a tired and unimaginative palette: grey-tile floors, stark-white paint and timber-look wallpaper and laminate surfaces.” There were also some missed opportunities when it came to layout and design that would enhance the functionality of the home, making this renovation not simply about looks, but quality of living, too.

Luckily, there were some strong bones for Silvia to work with. “The house had a great split-level layout, high ceilings and amazing sea views, so there was very little structural work required,” she says. These amazing sea views became a source

A striking stone splashback wraps around the wall and extends over the rangehood





A curved island bench encourages flow through the kitchen and accommodates space for an extra seat

**we love**

THE GENTLE PALETTE OF  
GREY MARRIED WITH THE  
WARM TIMBER FLOORS



The stone extends beyond the traditional border of the kitchen into the dining area, creating a sense of continuity in the open-plan space

of inspiration for Silvia, who envisioned a colour scheme for the home that was reflective of its location. This palette showcases light (but not white!) colours, as well as a host of textures and layers. “The natural stone used in the kitchen and bathrooms and the warm pinky tones on the herringbone floors create a soft, tranquil aesthetic,” continues Silvia. “We kept the colours and palettes light in tone and used the stone and timber flooring as the punctuation points to accent all the other layers.”

Indeed, the stone in the kitchen was one of the first pieces chosen for the home’s new look. “The Fior di Pesco is a beautiful marble. There’s so much depth in this stone,” Silvia shares. “We had to ensure we had the best slabs available so we undertook a pretty extensive search Australia-wide to secure the best slabs. We ended up purchasing these via Worldstone Solutions in Sydney and getting seven slabs transported over for the kitchen.”

This marble has become the perfect benchtop for the kitchen and extends dramatically over the rangehood to highlight and break up the line of overhead cabinets, creating a design feature that emphasises the height of the ceiling.

All this marble could feel a little cold, yet Silvia has paired it perfectly with engineered timber flooring in a herringbone pattern, adding warmth and a sense of whimsy. Yet the natural





## **ed's fave**

THE STONE IS ECHOED IN THE BATHROOM, EXTENDING THE SENSE OF CONTINUITY AND MAKING THE HOUSE COHESIVE



A riot of textures creates harmony in the bedroom



materials aren't the only updates the kitchen received. "The original kitchen stopped where the existing microwave and oven column were, which created this awkward dead spot that wasn't really functional," explains Silvia. A highlight window was also placed here, but it wasn't adding enough light to promote its worth. "We extended the kitchen to the end of the wall by closing off the highlight window and adding some feature open shelving so the mass of overheads was broken up."

This also added a lot more storage, which Silvia's client loved. "This increased the overall size of the kitchen and completely opened up the space," says Silvia. They also closed off the window that ran along the splashback, allowing that marble to steal the show.

Throughout the home, the renovation has continued to bring new life to the rooms. Another highlight window that wasn't adding value in the living room was removed, and new carpets, curtains and blinds were installed, creating textural delight. Curves to walls and joinery designs were also employed to soften some of the straight lines that are key characteristics for homes built in the early 2000s. This not only creates a sense of modernity in the home, but also promotes ease of movement throughout.

Finally, bronze finishes for the tapware in the bathrooms and kitchen unify the house and add a sense of continuity, while also paying homage to the warm golden tones of the coastal shore below. **HD** [studioesar.com.au](http://studioesar.com.au)

