



ABOVE: The kitchen underwent the biggest transformation, with a sleek, open space the result.  
 RIGHT: A formal living room introduces more masculine features to define the space.  
 FAR RIGHT: Sarah and Adam Chandley have created a light-filled, family-friendly Manifold Heights home.





## Creative vision lights the way

A Manifold Heights family found their perfect living space - they just needed to add a little light on the subject, writes SUZIE COFFEY

WHEN Adam and Sarah Chandley bought their Manifold Heights home two years ago, they never envisaged the transformation that would take place.

The Californian bungalow was structurally sound and had the living space they needed to suit their family lifestyle, though the decor was somewhat tired.

"It was totally liveable," Sarah explains. "Just a bit outdated."

"It was quite dark and just needed a bit of light," Adam adds.

The couple, who run catering company and cafe Steampacket Foods, set about reinvigorating the space. It was restumped and replastered before what started as cosmetic touch-ups turned into a large-scale makeover.

"There was a lot of slate flooring, which made it quite dark so we tried to take some of it up," Adam recalls enthusiastically.

"We tried to smash it with a sledgehammer - but the sledgehammer went straight through the floor."

"One minute we had a slate floor, the next we had a huge hole."

"So we decided to just take the whole floor up. It worked out pretty well in the end."

It proved the catalyst for transforming the whole space. Floorboards replaced the slate, adding natural warmth and complementing other timber features such as overhead cabinetry in the kitchen, and breakfast bar detailing.

In keeping with the style of the home, the existing layout meant rooms were somewhat enclosed. Adam and Sarah decided to open up the central living, kitchen and dining spaces by extending and raising doorways to create one fluent, open area.

A formal sitting room was also opened up and, while it retains its own separate space, it has been effortlessly linked to the central hub.

The renovation ensures the family, which also includes children Poppy, 9, and Jasper, 6, has room to enjoy and spend time together. "Before this we had a little townhouse but we outgrew it," Sarah explains.

"What we came from was just a little box," Adam adds.

"We needed some room for the kids and that's what we have got. It's been pretty good to us, this house."

While it now evokes a light and fresh feel, there were many original elements Sarah and Adam were keen to keep.

A bay window in the master bedroom with leadlight detail remains Sarah's favourite feature of the entire house, a fireplace has been retained, while Adam says keeping the home's ornate ceiling roses was "non-negotiable".

"We kept the same layout and a lot of the original features because we thought they add a lot of character," Sarah says.

"They're really nice features to have. The house had good bones to start with, all it needed was to be freshened up."

**'We just needed some room for the kids and that's what we have got. It's been pretty good to us, this house.'**

The kitchen underwent the biggest transformation as dark timber cabinetry was replaced with fresh, white joinery, and white subway tiles and plantation shutters were introduced instead of black tiling and timber venetians.

A breakfast bar was also extended, creating clever use of space.

"We could only fit three bar stools as it was," Sarah says.

"We wanted room for all of us, so we just extended it out a bit further. It works really well."

While they had an idea in mind of how they wanted their home to look, the couple called on Geelong interior stylist Justine Ash to help bring it together.

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STYLIST: Justine Ash  
PHOTOGRAPHY: Mitch Bear





TOP LEFT: Black, white, grey and blush tones support the home's Scandinavian-inspired decor.  
LEFT: Black tapware is a sophisticated touch.

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With the existing palette supporting a Scandinavian-inspired look, black, white, grey and blush tones were introduced throughout, while the formal living room boasts a more masculine palette to again define the space.

"It was a really good canvas for us to work with," Justine explains.

"Sarah and Adam had the kitchen table and two couches, and we pulled in the rest based on Sarah's choice of colour palette and minimalist

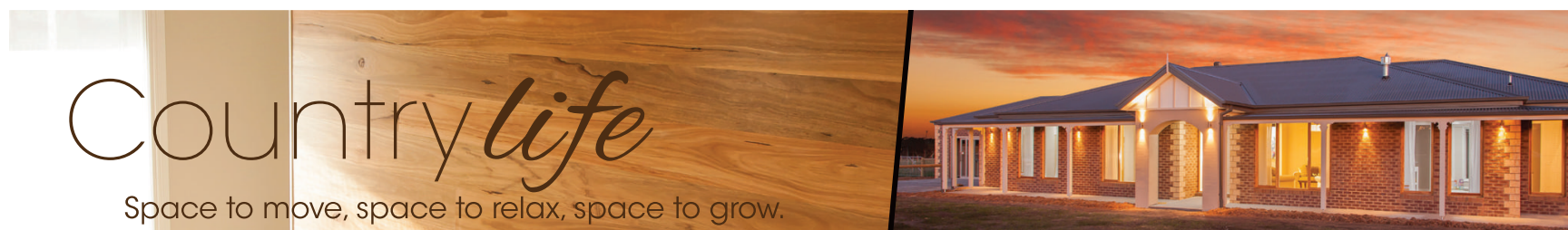
style. The bones were there – features like the beautiful floors and black tapware.

"It was just a matter of bringing it to life and complementing the work that had already been done."

The finished result is a beautiful, family-friendly home.

"We had no experience in doing anything house-related before this one," Adam says.

"To see it transform has been great."







ABOVE: The open-plan kitchen, living and dining room is the hub of the home.  
ABOVE LEFT: Leadlight windows are a feature throughout, including in nine-year-old Poppy's bedroom.

STYLIST: Justine Ash  
PHOTOGRAPHY: Mitch Bear

