



**COCKTAIL ROOM** At the front of the house, the living zone that Ella describes as “the cocktail room” has been furnished with a shapely pair of Ligne Roset ‘Pumpkin’ armchairs and a Ligne Roset ‘Plumy’ velvet sofa. Ella found the vintage travertine coffee table online. The striking wall mural is by Wall&Decò, while the pendant is the Eichholtz ‘Equalizer’ brass chandelier from James Said.

# California dreamin’

This Melbourne family home embraces its owners’ design sensibilities to achieve an enviable sense of style and space

ETAGERES SHELVING, JONATHAN ADLER GAS FIREPLACE WITH CUSTOM CONCRETE HEARTH AND JOINERY REAL FLAME, WALTER KNOLL BRASS TABLE, LIVING EDGE, LINE FLOOR LAMP, DOUGLAS AND BEC.

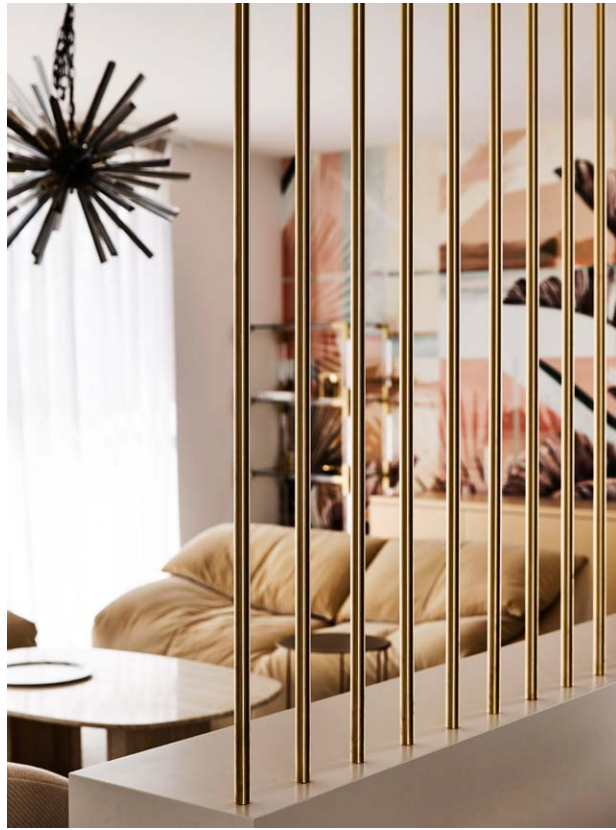
## cheat sheet

**Who lives here** Ella Edwards, fashion designer of Dream Monstar and interiors enthusiast, her husband Paul, owner and creative director of brands Nena and Pasadena and Kiss Chacey, their son North, four, and daughter Coco, two.

**Style of home** A U-shaped, Californian-modernist, four-bedroom home, wrapped around a leafy courtyard and pool.

**🕒** Following 18 months of planning and obtaining council approval, the build took 14 months.

**\$\$\$\$** \$1.5 to \$2 million.



**O**ne whirlwind viewing – and a little serendipity – was all it took to convince Ella Edwards that she had chanced upon the site of her family’s dream home. “The property was originally named Capri, which happens to be my favourite seaside place in the world,” says Ella of the blond brick veneer house hugging a hill in Melbourne’s inner-east. “I was determined to not let this one get away.”

To Ella, who with husband Paul shares a passion for travel, the wide and elevated site dotted with fruit trees held huge promise. “I’ve always loved rambling Italian landscapes filled with citrus and olive trees,” she says, “and an elevated block with a view somehow makes a house feel less suburban.”

Having lived in the home for three years, the couple enlisted leading residential design and construction company InForm, in collaboration with architects Pleyzier Perkins and the late interior designer Kanako Nakanishi, with the task of building their new home. “Living on site gave us an understanding of how we could utilise the north-facing aspect to maximise natural light in all areas, particularly the area around a new pool,” says Ella. “We knew we wanted to build a U-shaped courtyard house, and working in fashion design meant we’d already mocked up our floor plan. InForm was very professional and organised, ensuring issues during construction were kept to a minimum.”

From the outset, a strong connection to the outdoors was high on the couple’s wish-list. “It was important to us that each space within our home was considered and designed to maximise the outlook,” says Ella. “We’d previously lived in a penthouse apartment with a huge terrace and amazing views, which really cemented the importance of a functional outdoor space.”

Equally important in the design brief was that the home pay homage to the mid-century southern Californian architecture Ella and Paul admire. “We’ve travelled to Palm Springs every year for the past 10 years,” says Ella. “The original inspiration for our home was definitely a fusion of the Kaufmann house in Vista Chino and the Parker hotel, both in Palm Springs. We wanted spaces that were comfortable yet memorable.”

Offering a contrast between old and new, the home’s material palette consists of timeless terrazzo and oak, smoked glass and sprinklings of brushed brass. Bespoke furniture pieces share the limelight alongside treasured vintage and designer finds. “There’s something special about original vintage design pieces; the life that piece has already had and the fact that it now receives a new life in your own home,” says Ella. “I like to treat interiors the same way I do my wardrobe and I don’t follow trends,” she adds. “I believe a home needs to be in line with your aesthetic to ensure you’re not redesigning every five years.”

The completed abode, enveloped by a lush garden dotted with olive and citrus trees, palms, cacti and fragrant orange blossom, is just what Ella and Paul envisaged. And perhaps best of all, it keeps their wanderlust alive. “At night, when the lights are sparkling across the midnight sky, it convinces us, if only for a minute, that we’re gazing at the LA skyline,” says Ella. “It truly is a dream.” <sup>10</sup>  
To contact InForm, call 0477 116 244 or visit [informdesign.com.au](http://informdesign.com.au)  
Follow Dream Monstar on Instagram: @dreammonstar

INTERNAL WALLS PAINTED HAYMES MINIMALIST NG12. KITCHEN MIXER, ASTRA WALKER.

**KITCHEN** The airy kitchen makes the most of natural light. An expansive island bench – Essastone ‘Caolino’ – is partnered with stools from Grazia & Co. “I love to entertain, so it’s important that I have plenty of room for serving food to our friends and family,” says Ella. **COCKTAIL ROOM** InForm installed a room divider between the cocktail room and front entry, which comprises solid brass poles incorporated into the custom joinery. **DINING** A custom solid oak dining table with brass trims, designed by Ella and made by AKWT – with Coco Republic ‘St James’ dining chairs – is illuminated by a striking starburst pendant. “The curved table helps squeeze in that last-minute guest,” says Ella.

“There’s something about the way old Hollywood used to live in Palm Springs that really resonates with me. That idea of cocktail parties in elaborate gowns by the pool under the desert sun”

ELLA EDWARDS, HOMEOWNER





**ENSUITE** A tribute to Ella's love of all things pink and peachy, the couple's ensuite showcases sumptuous Fibonacci Stone terrazzo floor tiles in Pavlova and Inax 'Nuance' mosaic tiles from Artedomus lining the shower walls. The Melange sconces are by Kelly Wearstler, while Ella designed the custom-made velvet chair. **MAIN BEDROOM** Ella and Paul's room has a glam 1970s vibe, with the custom-made oversized bedhead designed to resemble that of a luxury hotel suite. At the end of the bed, which is layered with an Abode Living 'Ravello' blanket, is a Grazia & Co 'Reeno' bench in wool boucle. USM side table, from Anibou. Attolo light, from Euroluce. **LAUNDRY** The same terrazzo tiles from the ensuite continue in the laundry, while Inax tiles from Artedomus encase the splashback. Vitra cork stool, from Living Edge.

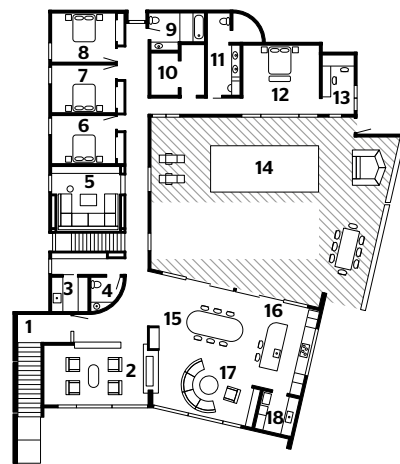


**bright idea**

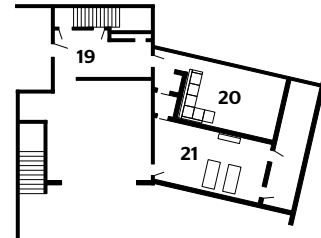
Continue your design theme in functional zones, too. Here, the mid-century vibe features in the bathroom by way of the smoky glass shower screen, nude-pink colour palette and vintage-look light fittings.



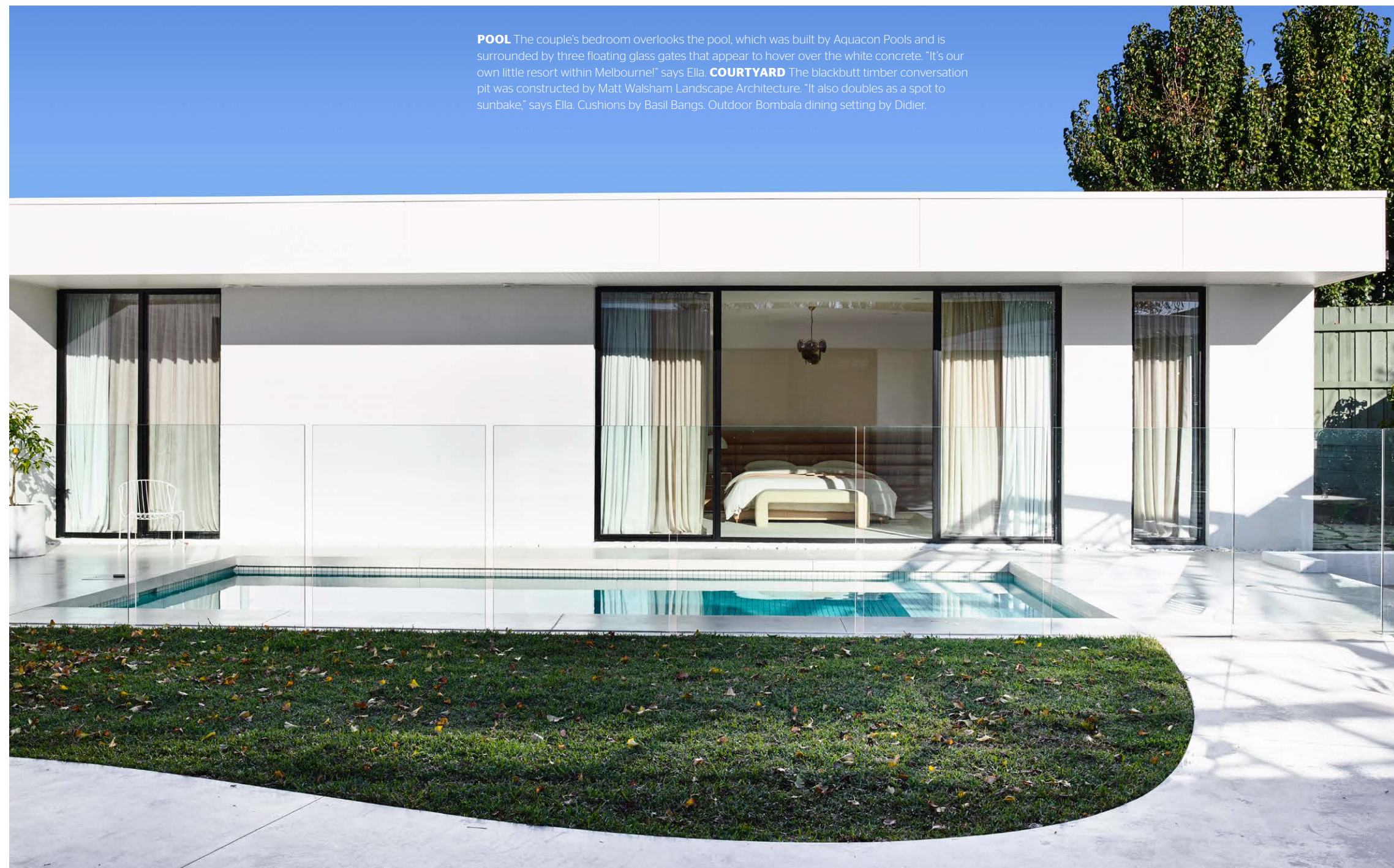
**GROUND FLOOR**



**LOWER FLOOR**



- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 Entry         | 12 Main bedroom |
| 2 Cocktail room | 13 Study        |
| 3 Laundry       | 14 Pool         |
| 4 Powder room   | 15 Dining       |
| 5 Den           | 16 Kitchen      |
| 6 Bedroom       | 17 Living       |
| 7 Bedroom       | 18 Pantry       |
| 8 Bedroom       | 19 Garage       |
| 9 Bathroom      | 20 Media room   |
| 10 Walk-in robe | 21 Gym          |
| 11 Ensuite      |                 |



**POOL** The couple's bedroom overlooks the pool, which was built by Aquacon Pools and is surrounded by three floating glass gates that appear to hover over the white concrete. "It's our own little resort within Melbourne!" says Ella. **COURTYARD** The blackbutt timber conversation pit was constructed by Matt Walsham Landscape Architecture. "It also doubles as a spot to sunbake," says Ella. Cushions by Basil Bangs. Outdoor Bombala dining setting by Didier.

**GREAT FINDS**

**modern revival**

Channel Palm Springs vibes with these key pieces

**FROM LEFT** Equalizer large brass **chandelier**, \$2885, James Said. Diamond white concrete **pot**, \$429 for large, Domayne. Muse collection **terrazzo** in Pavlova, from \$181 per sq m, Fibonacci Stone. Wall&decò 'Floridita' indoor **wallpaper** in Bronzage, \$230 per sq m, Pure Interiors. Ligne Roset 'Pumpkin' swivel **chair**, from \$4050, Domo. Kelly Wearstler 'Melange' **sconce**, \$979, The Montauk Lighting Co.



ADDITIONAL PRODUCT SOURCING: NATALIE JOHNSON



**LESSON LEARNT**

"Find the right shade of pink, so your house doesn't end up looking too 'Barbie-esque'."

ELLA, HOMEOWNER

"I somehow managed to convince my husband to use tones of pink throughout our home, from our front door to our ensuite. But you need to find the right balance between nude and pink. I also love tones of beige, ivory, cream and brushed brass, for contrast."