



stay a little while

Creating a home that would appeal to a wide range of families was the key objective when planning this contemporary gem in Geelong

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cheat sheet

Who lives here: Lauren and Matt Wilson, who run Built By Wilson; their children, Teddy, 6; Henry, 4; Jimmy, 2; and Vivienne, 9 months - plus their kelpie-border collie cross, Elvis.

Style of home: A contemporary two-storey, three-bedroom home in South Geelong, Victoria, a few minutes' walk from the train station.

🕒 The home took just five months to complete.

\$\$\$ Lauren and Matt worked on the project themselves and spent about \$530k all up.

TERRACE (opposite) Sliding doors open up the living area to the garden. Space To Create chairs and a table offer casual outdoor dining. **LIVING AREA** Primary colours shine with a Jardan 'Harvest' armchair and 'Andy' sofa paired with a 'Bogart Compass' ottoman from GlobeWest and Stephen Ormandy's *Flamingo* print from Olsen Gallery.





For Lauren and Matt Wilson, who run their own building company in Geelong, Victoria, the completion of this project – a house they were planning to put up for sale – and the sale of their family home occurred almost simultaneously. “This was an express build,” says Lauren. “From start to finish it was only five months, beginning July 2016, because we had to be out of our house just before Australia Day.”

She and Matt had bought the land at auction – at the time a ramshackle Victorian cottage stood on the space. They had driven past the morning of the sale and saw the potential of the lot. “When I bid and won, we walked down the side of the house and the woman explained that there was a parcel of the land that was adverse possession,” she says, which refers to common land that has become part of a property over the years.

Combine that with a sewerage easement that had to be moved to accommodate building to the rear of the block – at a cost of \$14,000 – and the brakes needed to be quickly engaged.

In the meantime, the couple engaged architect Ben Robertson of Tecture to design a house that would become part of the existing streetscape. “If you look around the neighbourhood, most of the houses are quite old and there are a lot of workers’ cottages,” says Lauren. “My brief to Ben was that it needed to be contemporary, but we didn’t want it to stand out too much. I wanted it to be white with a traditional pitched roof line.”

Another consideration was the neighbour on the southern side of the block. That property has a small courtyard that the

new construction couldn’t overshadow at any time of the day. As a result, the second storey of the new home was pushed to the northern edge of the building. On its southern side, skylights draw natural light into the dining area and kitchen.

Because the home was eventually going to be resold, the couple and architect Ben worked to a tight budget. “We spent our money in areas where we thought it’d have the most impact,” says Lauren. “There’s marble and brass tapware in the kitchen and bathroom, but we kept a lid on it. Ben’s choices for the fixtures and fittings throughout kept it really simple. I love it and love living in it. We wanted the house to be fresh and appealing to a range of people, and I think we achieved that.”

To give the home character, Ben repeated elements of the original building. The form of the old paling fence on a brick base – “We were going to keep it, but it got blown down by the wind,” says Lauren – was kept in the new build. Vertical panelling is used at various points in the interior, including the cabinetry in the kitchen and around the fireplace in the living room.

Pale oak flooring from Woodcut is used in the entry and front of the house, where there is a study and the master bedroom. Polished concrete is a practical choice in the living spaces, including a small rumpus room, where the couple’s four children play and watch TV. Another small playroom is upstairs, creating a space that’s adaptable for growing families.

“It’s a very easy place to live,” says Lauren. “We always laugh and say the only problem with this house is having four kids!” **LD** Visit builtbywilson.com. See more of Tecture’s projects at tecture.com.au.



TERRACE (opposite) A painted white brick screen matches brickwork at the front entry. **RUMPUS ROOM** Homeowner Lauren relaxes with baby Vivienne on a custom window seat. “It gives the room personality,” says architect Ben. Through the window is a Pippi’s Plants vertical garden. “We had it installed because it was too much fence to look at out the window,” says Lauren.

SOUK RUG (OPPOSITE), WEST ELM, WESTELM.COM.AU



how to build your not-forever home

Architect Ben Robertson of Tecture gives us his tips for creating a home with the greatest possible resale value

+ Get ahead of the kerb "You want to create a facade that is timeless and can lure buyers in, and use materials that resonate with the idea of 'home'. The key here was picking up the street's heritage elements and understanding what the future buyer might be looking for."

+ Create a sense of wow "Buyers are often drawn to the kitchen and master ensuite - that's where you want to invest in a few luxury items, such as natural stone or feature pendants."

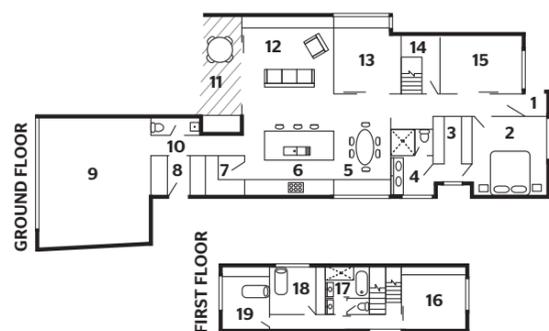
+ Use a neutral palette "This allows buyers to imagine their own furniture blending into the interiors. We used grey tones in the curtains, carpet, bathrooms and concrete flooring, and added warmth with the timber flooring."

+ Broaden the appeal "Create a plan that's flexible and functional for different families. Here, the rumpus room upstairs could be another bedroom and the study could double as a nursery."

TAPWARE, ASTRA WALKER, ASTRAWALKER.COM.AU, PRINTS & HAVE YOU MET MISS JONES VASE (ON SHELF), GOOSE, GOOSESTORE.COM.AU

DINING AREA (opposite, top & bottom)

The shapely Curio 'Cosmos' table is from Clickon Furniture, paired with Feelgood Designs 'Chair 170' seating from Livingetc. Above, the Laal 'Conehome Stick' pendant light illuminates Andrea Shaw's *Shore Trails* (left) and *Looking Upward* paintings from Geelong's Boom Gallery. **KITCHEN** In a family of six, you can never have too much seating! Sturdy 'Lionel' bar stools from Jordan surround an island bench, topped with Elba marble from Signorino Tile Gallery.



- 1. Entry
- 2. Master bedroom
- 3. Walk-in robe
- 4. Ensuite
- 5. Dining area
- 6. Kitchen
- 7. Pantry
- 8. Laundry
- 9. Garage
- 10. Powder room
- 11. Terrace
- 12. Living area
- 13. Rumpus room
- 14. Store room/stairs
- 15. Study
- 16. Playroom
- 17. Bathroom
- 18. Bedroom
- 19. Bedroom





bright idea

Metallic finishes carry extra oomph in an all-white palette. For the bathroom, Lauren and Matt chose Astra Walker tapware in an Eco Brass finish and aged brass 'Duomo' wall lights from Anaesthetic Design.



CUSHION & THROW (OPPOSITE), GOOSE, GOOSESTORE.COM/AU



ENSUITE (opposite) Natural light streams into the bathroom, where Carrara marble from Signorino forms the vanity. **MASTER BEDROOM** Ross Gardam's 'Polar' desk lamp is a futuristic touch. The 'Ascot' side table and bed from GlobeWest are a perfect match for the Kip&Co 'Epic' rug and Society Of Wanderers bedlinen. Skye Jefferys's *Untitled 1* artwork from Boom Gallery ties the look together.





BATHROOM (left) Used by the children, this features a 'Duomo' pendant light from Anaesthetic Design and a Cibo Design 'Fineline 2' basin. **VIVIENNE'S BEDROOM** Jessie Breakwell's artwork *Nights Of Jaipur* offers colour above an IKEA cot and a 'Cutler' rug from Kip&Co. **EXTERIOR (opposite)** The cedar screening can be opened when the window needs cleaning. Terrazzo floor tiles from Signorino contrast with the concrete inside. "We loved the terrazzo in the bathrooms so much that we used it out here, too," says Lauren.

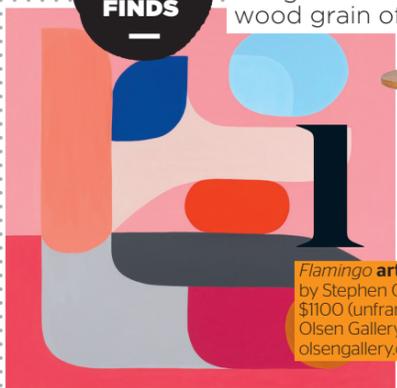


star performer

Natural light is a huge selling point for potential buyers. Here, sunshine is drawn in with 4.5m-wide aluminium stacking doors in Anodised Bronze from Stegbar, along with matching windows throughout the home. They are double-glazed to keep heat in during winter.

5 GREAT FINDS

MODERN LINES Sleek shapes meet contemporary design in these minimalist pieces. Combine the natural wood grain of timber with bright colour for a bold look



1 Flamingo art print by Stephen Ormandy, \$1100 (unframed), Olsen Gallery, olsengallery.com.



3 Curio 'Cosmos' dining table, \$2795, Clickon Furniture, clickonfurniture.com.au.



4 'Ascot' bedside table, \$660, GlobeWest, globewest.com.au.

2

'Andy' sofa, \$7226, Jordan, jordan.com.au.



5 'Chair 170' dining chair, \$420, Feelgood Designs, feelgooddesigns.com.

ADDITIONAL PRODUCT STYLING: NATALIE JOHNSON; CUSHION & BABY'S BLANKET (ABOVE RIGHT), KIP&CO; KIPANDCO.COM.AU; BEDLINEN, SOCIETY OF WANDERERS, SOCIETYOFWANDERERS.COM