

OUTSIDE ROOM Rows of buxus balls are at once formal and playful, hinting at the fun to be had at this Southern Highlands home, which was bought by homeowners Kate and Gary as a retreat for themselves and their grown children, and completely transformed by design and construction studio Cadence & Co. The landscaping was one of the primary points on the to-do list, tackled by Myles Baldwin Design. >

Escape time

WELCOME TO THE ULTIMATE COUNTRY RETREAT, A SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS WEEKENDER WHERE THE ONLY CHALLENGE IS BRINGING ONESELF TO LEAVE

Story SHELLEY TUSTIN Styling KAYLA GEX Photography MAREE HOMER

Between the demands of work and raising a family, life can be a bottomless to-do list, but with their children grown, Sydneysiders Kate and Gary could finally consider carving out a country retreat in the NSW Southern Highlands.

Minimally landscaped and with dated finishes and a polarising terracotta facade, the charms of their dream home weren't immediately obvious to all, but Kate was smitten. She says, "I hadn't even walked inside – we just walked to the front door and I said to Gary, 'This is it.' He thought I was joking, because it needed so much work."

They contacted design and construction company Cadence & Co to do a minimally invasive but transformative makeover on the space. "Originally, the brief was to bring a modern freshness to the interiors, with a more tailored approach to a country aesthetic. It was a light touch in terms of structural modification but as the project developed, more opportunities became apparent and the scope grew," says Cadence & Co design principal Michael Kilkeary. "Creating an enclosed link between the existing garage and house enabled a secondary, informal entry, which allowed some new thinking in terms of the overall spatial layout. It also provided a more private enclosure in the rear garden."

This change in the nature of the back garden, from open space to cocooning secret garden, with exquisitely crafted design by landscaper Myles Baldwin, completely altered the home's relationship to the outdoors. The French-inspired garden makeover inspired a rethink of the main bedroom suite. It was reconfigured to include a large and light dressing room, an adjoining bathroom was pinched to become the new ensuite, and a whole wall of windows added to the bedroom, so Kate and Gary can wake up to a dawn-lit garden.

A dramatic outdoor fireplace and bocce court draws people out into the garden for relaxation and play, while a wellness pavilion has been added – a gym with sauna and outdoor shower among the greenery – so one can emerge from a stay here feeling thoroughly revitalised. "The most important thing is that it be a family destination spot that we can all enjoy, people of different generations. That was the thinking behind the bocce court, for example – it's multi-use, going from enjoying a nice summer evening playing bocce, through to the idea of little kids riding bikes around," says Gary. Now a regular weekend destination for not only Kate and Gary but their daughters and their partners, the home is serving exactly the purpose they hoped, as a space for all to reconnect and recharge.

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DINING ROOM Kate and Gary's antique chairs in the dining room (opposite) were reupholstered with Colefax and Fowler 'Erith' fabric in Silver by The Classic Outfitter, and matched with a striking pendant from Interiors by George. The fresh, white scheme – walls are in Dulux Natural White Half – keeps the focus on the sculpted garden view. "I love sitting in the bay window at the table and just looking out at the back garden," says Kate. >

ACTUAL PAINT COLOUR MAY VARY ON APPLICATION





KITCHEN The angled kitchen island was fundamentally flawed for this family, fitted with an upstand that divided the kitchen from the rest of the space. “I wanted people to sit on the other side of the island and have chats with me while I’m cooking and I wanted to be able to see into the family room. I can see the whole back garden when I’m in there and it’s just lovely,” says Kate of the new island, which is topped with Bianco quartzite from Gitani Stone and illuminated by ‘Hampton’ pendants from Urban Lighting. Cadence & Co chose a tailored but welcoming country style, starting with a Lacanche ‘Sully’ freestanding oven. This aesthetic is continued with Armac Martin door hardware from The English Tapware Company, a mirrored splashback, copper pots and vintage chopping boards from Ferris Wheel and, to break up the expanse of solid cabinetry, panels of bronze mesh. >

ARTWORK ROWENA DEAN



“THE STYLE WAS TO BE TRADITIONAL AND CLASSIC, BUT WITH A MODERN TWIST AS WELL. THE OBJECTIVE WAS FOR A MODERN COUNTRY LODGE”
GARY, HOMEOWNER

“IT’S A MORE PARED BACK AND QUIET
PALETTE. IT HAS A SENSE OF CALM”

MICHAEL KILKEARY, CADENCE & CO

LIVING ROOM The living room scheme was originally heavy so Cadence & Co introduced a sense of lightness. “A new palette of finishes really changed the feel of this room, bringing more sophistication and elegance, but with a casualness that was important to our clients,” says Michael. Windows were painted in Dulux Natural White Quarter. Walls were lightened and the fireplace had a facelift with a marble mantelpiece. Furnishings are grouped for conversation, around a custom upholstered ottoman in William Yeoward ‘Dunsford’ plaid by The Classic Outfitter. >

ARTWORK (GREEN ARTWORK) SARAH BISHOP, SET OF FOUR LANDSCAPES, ELAINE GREEN
(FLOWERS) LEREE LINDSAY, A TALL PAINT COLOUR MATCH, ON APPLICATION





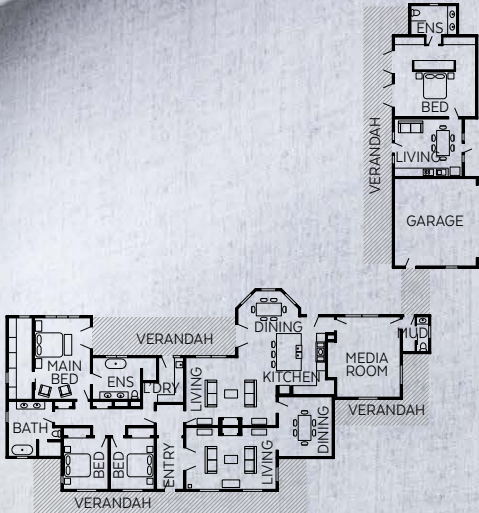
WE LOVE...
a nice view

The exquisite landscaping influenced interiors that spoke directly to the garden – and the ensuite was no exception. The Turner Hastings ‘Cambridge’ bath and Brodware ‘Winslow’ bronze spout were centred beneath a new window, positioned to take in leafy views. Alhambra ‘Candela’ linen blinds from The Classic Outfitter lend softness to the bathroom and allow privacy.

ENSUITE In the ensuite (this page), the emphasis here was on softness, so hard surfaces are limited to Artedomus ‘Elba’ stone tiles and a stone skirting from Gitani Stone, with painted walls used instead of tiles everywhere except the shower recess. **GUEST BEDROOM** Thibaut ‘Bankun Raffia’ wallpaper in Fog lends cocooning texture to the guest bedroom (opposite). Georgia Boyd of The Classic Outfitter added further layers of comfort with a custom bedhead and valance in Fabricut ‘Cosada Stripe’ fabric and quilt from Restoration Hardware. >



FLOOR PLAN





LAUNDRY Hiding the appliances behind cupboard doors successfully softens the laundry space (this page). Powdery blue-grey tones dominate here, with joinery in Dulux Pūkaki Half and Chalford limestone pavers from Eco Outdoor. **ENSUITE** A wainscoted wall painted in Dulux Silver Tea Set (opposite top) screens the shower and appears to shorten the long room. **DRESSING ROOM** “I’ve always wanted a large dressing room (opposite bottom left),” says Kate. “It works really well because the bedroom is now just for relaxing; all the working bits – the wardrobes and the drawers – are out of the way.” Joinery in Resene Quarter Silver Chalice. **MAIN BEDROOM** To give the main bedroom (opposite bottom right) a point of difference, Cadence & Co opted to add Intrim mouldings to the walls. The William Yeoward ‘Huxley’ bedside table from Cromwell flanks a blue-toned bed setting, featuring a custom bedhead and valance in Colefax and Fowler ‘Laurie’ fabric, and velvet quilt from Few & Far.



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OUTDOOR FIREPLACE Flanked by a bocce court, the outdoor fireplace is a desirable destination any time of the year. This towering structure made from 'Apollo Random Ashlar' stone cladding from Eco Outdoor, and Bundanoon sandstone - is designed to visually balance the landscape. A patio of Chalford limestone pavers (also Eco Outdoor) provides a cosy spot to sit by the warmth of the fire or in the sunshine.

Source book

Design and construction: Cadence & Co, cadenceandco.com.au.

Interior design: Cadence & Co in collaboration with Interiors by George (interiorsbygeorge.com.au) and The Classic Outfitter (theclassicoutfitter.com).

Landscape design: Myles Baldwin Design, mylesbaldwin.com.



INSIDE STORY *Kate & Gary's home*

Who stays here?

Kate and Gary, their adult daughters Harriet and Emma and their partners, and dogs Mr Pancakes and Miffy.

Where do you find inspiration?

Kate: "My interior design books and magazines, along with our travels."

How would you describe your style?

"I would say definitely classic and traditional. It never dates."

What is a typical Sunday morning?

"After walking our dogs, having a coffee in the outside room and enjoying either the sunshine or a roaring fire."

What do you love most about country living?

"We adore the peace and quiet of the country and the sense of stepping away from the hustle and bustle of the city."



1. A gas fire, set in 'Wyndam' limestone from Eco Outdoor, provides warmth.
2. The front entrance of the home has been preserved, with a new coat of paint.
3. A vanity in Dulux Silver Tea Set helps to lend a certain softness to the ensuite.
4. The dramatic artwork that graces the hallway is by artist and childhood friend of Kate's, Sophie Gralton.
5. An organic shape in tadelakt cradles the non-traditional outdoor shower.
6. The dark bedside table from The Classic Outfitter adds colonial charm to a guest room, decorated in pale blue.
7. The new gym pavilion is connected to the garden via Jansen steel windows from Award Architectural Aluminium.

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