

HOT IN MILANO

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SPECIAL ISSUE

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70

pages of

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HOUSES FROM
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JEWELS IN THE CROWN: COLOURFUL & CURATED HOMES

LIVING

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SKY HIGH



Pocket courtyards and provisions for young adults characterise this forward-thinking family home in Malvern.

These pages, from left The dining room opens onto a rear courtyard and is paved in crosscut travertine from G-Lux and all set up for outdoor entertaining with a Kettal 'Park Life' setting from Mobilia. Fermob 'Sixties' armchair from Classic With a Twist and Kettal 'Park Life' small table from Mobilia. Inside, custom dining table from Studio Thomas Lentini and Cassina 'Cab' side chairs from Mobilia. On table, Paola Paronetto paper clay bowl from Fanuli. Artwork by Mark Rodda. Le Klint 'Bouquet' pendant lights from Great Dane. Edra 'Standard' sofa from Space with custom cushions in Mokum 'Kaasa' and Tradition 'Shuffle MHI' side table from Cult all on a custom rug from Halcyon Lake. Ottó 'XIII' engineered boards from George Fethers & Co. Next to the fireplace, in Tanaro marble from Signorino, is a large artwork by Mark Roper. On left shelves, small purple artwork by Fleur Stevenson from The Corner Store Gallery while above are Hearth Collective sculptures from Modern Times. To the right on the marble shelf is a pot plant from Glasshaus, Nason Moretti table lamp, Dinosaur Designs bowl, blue artwork by Fleur Stevenson from The Corner Store Gallery and green work by Kristina Tsoulis-Reay from Lon Gallery. 'Fomu' side table with white top and black legs from District. Overgaard & Dyrman 'Wire' stools from Hub at the kitchen island in Hasmal marble from Signorino. 'Peruse' bowl from Living Edge. Vase from Fenton&Fenton. Brodware City Stik tap from E&S.



This page The leafy grounds were landscaped by Eckersley Garden Architecture. The exterior is clad in zinc and crosscut travertine. **Opposite page, from top** A crisp, white Paola Paronetto paper-clay bowl from Fanuli graces the Studio Thomas Lentini table. Cassina 'Cab' chairs from Mobilia. Le Klint 'Bouquet' pendant lights from Great Dane. Artworks by Mark Rodda (far left) and Golden by Belynda Henry on back wall. On joinery with ribbed glass fronts is a small artwork by Noel McKenna from Niagara Galleries and Foscarini 'Buds 2' table lamp from Space. On shelf, cream travertine sculpture from Fenton&Fenton and trio of totems by Lisa Lapointe. Overgaard & Dyrman 'Wire' stools from Hub. Edra 'Standard' sofa from Space. Walls in Dulux 'Pipe Clay' Marmorino. The ceiling is clad in American oak boards. The soaring entry features a custom console from Studio Thomas Lentini and an artwork (left) by Myles Young from Olsen Gallery. Vase by Debbie Weinmann Ceramics from Fenton&Fenton. Small vase by Alterfact from Tarrawarra Museum of Art. Mirror artwork by Cordon Salon from Sophie Gannon Gallery.



It seems the tide has shifted: kids once packed and ready to get out of the family home when they hit university or finish school are no longer going anywhere in a hurry. With parents becoming empty-nesters later in life, the long-term view for many architects involves designing self-sufficient spaces all under the same roof. Kathryn Robson and Chris Rak of Robson Rak say that, increasingly, it's become an upwards trend across their clientele and a big consideration in the homes they are designing. "We're creating more and more houses that will see the family unit grow into older experiences. Kids aren't as eager to leave home and move into a 20-person share house anymore. We're designing for a new generation who are living at home longer," explains Chris.

With their youngest child still at school and two others completing double degrees at uni, this was especially true for the owners of this home in Melbourne's leafy Malvern. "We envisage still having children at home for the next decade! We moved in when our kids were in their late teens, so our brief was for a house for that stage of life." With ample land and clever planning, Kathryn and Chris crafted a floor plan that would enable each child to have their independence, starting with the first-floor bedrooms, each with their own ensuite and large three-metre desks in anticipation of them being used long-term. For further separation, a sliding door gently divides this wing from the master suite. "Our clients wanted their kids to be around, but not on top of them," says Chris.

Responding to the brief for hard-wearing, long-lasting materials that have solidity, Kathryn and Chris selected an easy-to-maintain palette of zinc and stone. To break up the tougher elements, »



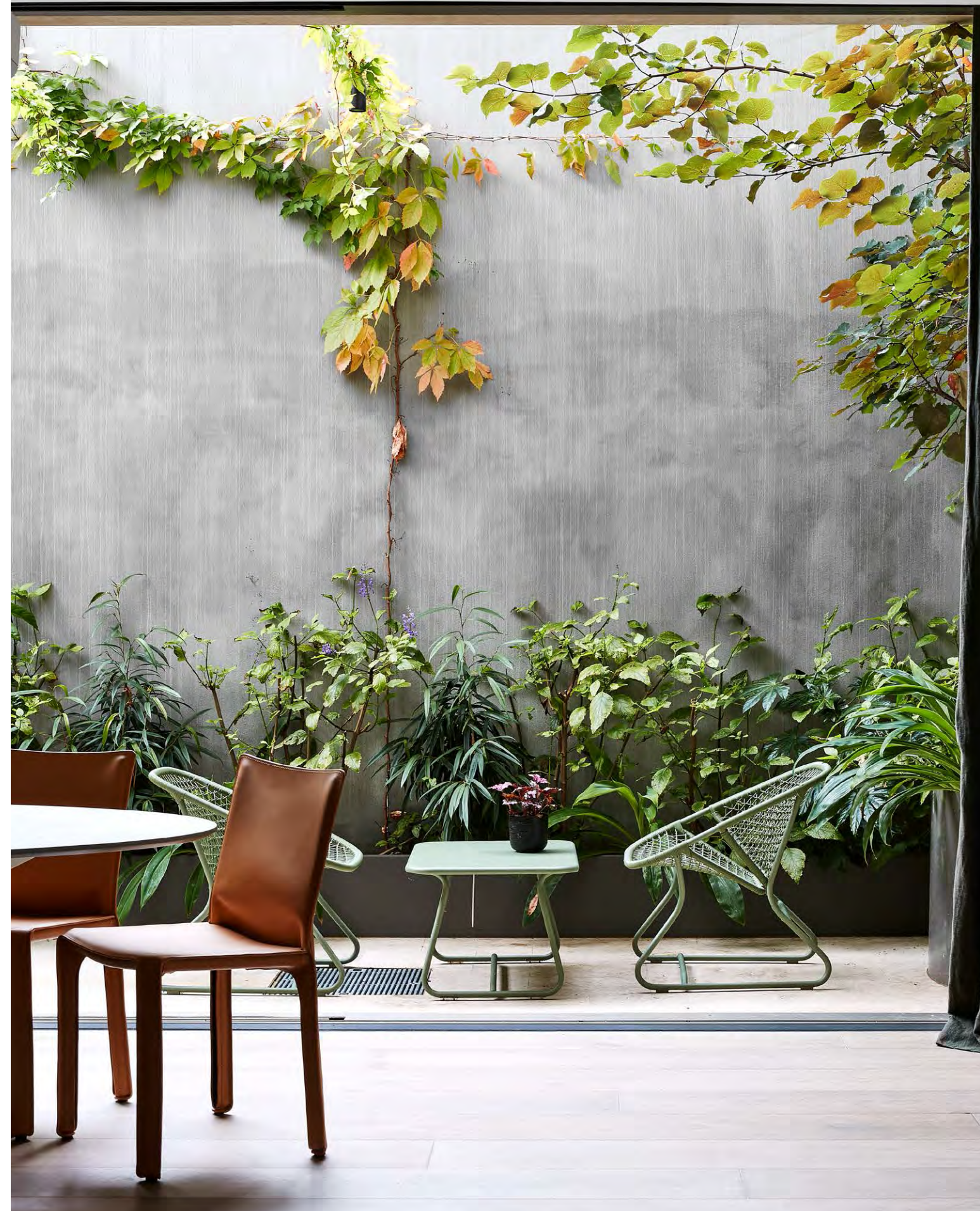
This page, clockwise from top Internal, double-height courtyards (left) and open staircase treads (right) serve to flood the house with light. &Tradition 'Shuffle MHI' table from Cult on rug from Halcyon Lake. Hasmal marble from Signorino on kitchen island and splashback. On splashback, artwork by Max Bowden from James Makin Gallery. Artwork by Angela Brennan (far right). V-Zug cooktop and Brodware 'City Stik' tap both from E&S. **Opposite page** In the television room, Ligne Roset 'Togo' fireside chair and footstool from Domo. Pianca 'Abaco' coffee table from Collective. Le Klint 'Cache' floor lamp from Great Dane. Moooi 'Common Comrades' side table from Space with Lodes 'Easy Peasy' table lamp from In Good Company.



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This page In one of the series of courtyards created around the home, Tacchini 'Split' side table by Claesson Koivisto Rune from Stylecraft and Cassina 'Cab' chairs from Mobilia. Fermob 'Sixties' low table and armchairs from Classic with a Twist. **Opposite page** Over the years, the owners have collected the glassware which is displayed in the sitting room and study. Cassina 'Maralunga' maxi armchair by Vico Magistretti from Mobilia. 'Parliament' floor lamp from Cult. Artwork by Myles Young. 'Flo' coffee table from Anaca Studio with 'Kaymet' tray from Mondopiero. Custom rug from Halcyon Lake.



SPEED READ

» The owners of this leafy Malvern home envisaged having their children at home for the next decade, so they briefed Robson Rak to craft a floor plan to enable each to have their independence. » All of the first-floor bedrooms have their own ensuite and large three-metre desks with a sliding door gently dividing this wing from the master suite. » Hard-wearing, long-lasting materials with solidity were called for, so Robson Rak selected an easy-to-maintain palette of zinc and stone. » Designed to be like a separate studio apartment, the basement is a place for the kids to entertain their friends. » The strategic placement of atriums throughout the house means it gets natural sun and “the lightness of the interior is a surprise”, says Kathryn Robson.

« they pierced the house with transparent hollows that pour sunlight from the first floor down to the basement. “We needed less of a garden, and more areas for the children to spend time with friends away from the main living areas of the house,” say the owners. “Down here there’s a gym they use daily and a multipurpose TV and living room where they can close the door and have their own space to hang out with friends. We wanted it to feel like another level of the house rather than an underground basement.” While there are blackout curtains for watching films, there’s also an airy courtyard and natural light thanks to an atrium above.

Accessible via the side rather than directly from the street, the home has a soaring 6.4-metre glass entry that abuts a cavernous limestone blade to create a dramatic foyer at the end of an intimate verdant path. “It’s like a journey of discovery that moves through a green wonderland,” says Kathryn. To add depth and colour separation on the exterior, the facade’s lower element is wrapped in limestone with the first floor set back and clad in zinc. “The stone’s ashlar pattern acts as a softener, banding the skin around the external building and internal walls and floor. It’s the perfect balance between a gentle presence and wow factor,” says Chris.

The sitting room and study is to the left of the entry, while the rest of the footprint is largely composed of a central spine with open spaces on either side and strategically placed three-storey voids that pool light into a series of small, foliage-fringed courtyards. On the east side, a butler’s pantry and kitchen unfold to the living room with a dining room opposite. This area, outfitted with a generous extendable table, is linked to the piano room by a covered courtyard and floor-to-ceiling sliding doors. All three levels have the same travertine flooring underfoot so they can form one large, seamless area. “They’re zoned to be separate but are completely transformative. We’ve designed it so that spaces can link and become communal or remain independent,” says Kathryn. At the far rear, materiality was used to form a physical connection, with a slab bench in Hasmal marble from Signorino running all the way from the servery and along the back wall, culminating in an integrated fireplace hearth in the living area. While it’s a spot to come together, there’s always somewhere else to go to. ■

robsonrak.com.au; e-ga.com.au



These pages, clockwise from left This bedroom features a custom banquette and desk with (from left) black-and-white vessel from House of Orange, small ceramic bowl from Sophie Ceramics and Marset 'Theia' table lamp from Mobilia. Gubi 'Masculo' swivel chair from Cult. Bed linen from Abode and throw from Adairs. Gubi 'Gräshoppa' bedside lamp by Greta M Grossman from Cult. Artwork by Carlo Golin from Fletcher Arts. 'Riga' carpet from Halcyon Lake. The walk-in robe joinery sports Joseph Giles 'Montgomery' knurled solid brass handles and T-bar cabinet pulls from The English Tapware Company. Vase by Sarah Ellison. The vanity in the master bathroom is clad in Hasmal marble from Signorino. Brodware 'City Stik' tapware from E&S. Custom mirror by Robson Rak. Alterfact vase from Sophie Gannon Gallery.