



**This page** The library is anchored by a custom kilim rug from Halcyon Lake. Artwork by Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran from Sullivan+Strumpf. A Knoll 'Platner' side table from De De Ce is perched next to a Baxter 'Marilyn' armchair from Space. **Opposite page** A glossy, cherry-red Cassina '520 Accordo' low table from Mobilia sits in the heart of the family den. 'Easy' armchair by Phantom Hands. A large artwork by Laith McGregor from Station Gallery hangs beside the fireplace. On the cantilevered bench is a 'Shogun' lamp from Artemide next to a sculpture by Glenn Barkley from Sullivan+Strumpf. The floor and matching shelf are in 'Murano 210' terrazzo from Cerdomus.



# CLEAR

A group effort  
helped transform  
the owners'  
detailed wishlist  
into reality.

Words **CARLI PHILIPS** Photography **JACK LOVEL**

# CUT

Of all things, it was a garage that won the contract for this home in Melbourne's Brighton. The owners tasked three separate design firms to design a space that would fit four cars on street level within the site. Sync Architecture was awarded the project based on their scheme that included a double-car garage, a flexible, Palm Springs-style open carport and extra room for driveway parking. In addition to its practicality, the format gave the facade breathing room as opposed to dominating it with cars.

Replacing an old weatherboard dwelling one road back from the beach, the new build was set to be the owners' "forever home". Instead of providing reference imagery, they supplied architect David Tennant and interior designer Carly Tennant with a heavily detailed written brief. "It was articulate, thorough and well-written," says Carly. "The specificity helped immensely with our direction." Their functional requirements included a dedicated area to relax as parents, a zone for their kids to be with friends, a room to come together as a family and a "quiet space" by way of a library or study. >

This page A sculpture by Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran from Sullivan+Strumpf brings its cheeky presence to the kitchen's rear bench. Knoll 'Bertoia' stool from De De Ce. Splashback, benchtop and island base in 'Cloudburst Concrete' surface by Caesarstone. Rear joinery is 'Xilo 2' veneer in Flamed White by Elton Group. **Opposite page, from top** A custom Flack Studio dining table in solid walnut is paired with Cassina 'Cab' chairs from Mobilia. Textured wall in MDF vertical groove board in two-pack Dulux 'White on White'. Plume was responsible for the landscaping, creating a garden full of cowboy cactus (*Euphorbia ingens*), golden barrel cactus (*Echinocactus grusonii*), lavender cotton (*Santalina*), snake plant (*Dracaena trifasciata*) and aloe. "Some spaces offered lots of shade, some full sun, which forced us to adapt to each microclimate within the project," says landscape architect Heath Blair.



« Schematically, they wanted the look and feel of contemporary minimalism-meets-Palm Springs style. Fittingly, Carly was visiting Palm Springs the same year as working on the house and was inspired by many of the fixtures, fittings and materials such as the cedar ceilings, terrazzo flooring and Palladiana mosaic outside. Pared-back joinery in Flamed White veneer from Elton Group and 'Cloudburst Concrete' surface by Caesarstone made for a demure, less-is-more palette in muted finishes and neutral colours that would allow the furniture, accessories and art – selections curated by Flack Studio – to shine.

In response to the clients' request for "clean and crisp", David's architectural concept was measured and precise with a sunken family den, loggia, and seamless integration between inside and out using floor-to-ceiling glass across the ground floor for uninterrupted views. Double glazing reduced the need for artificial heating and cooling.

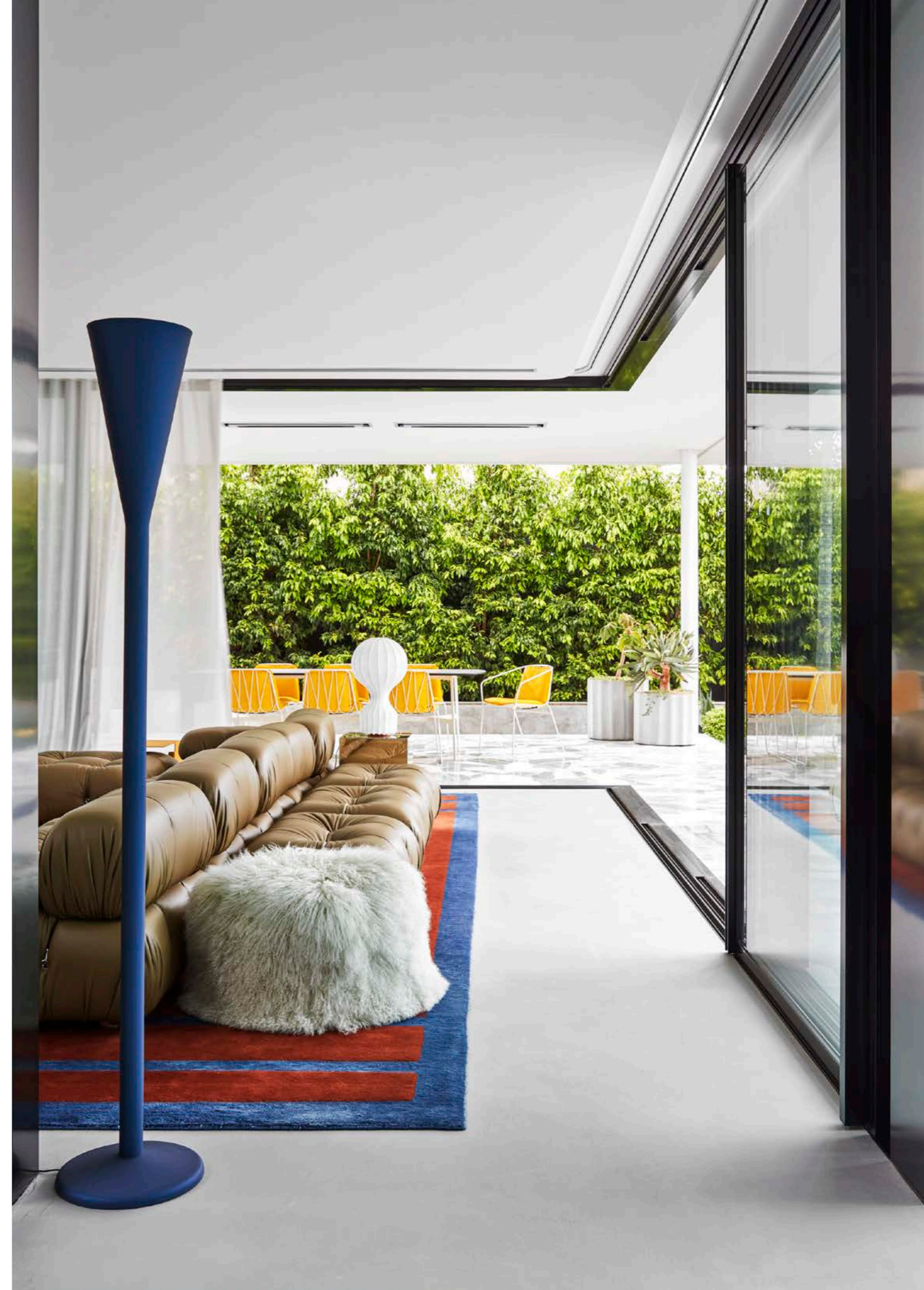
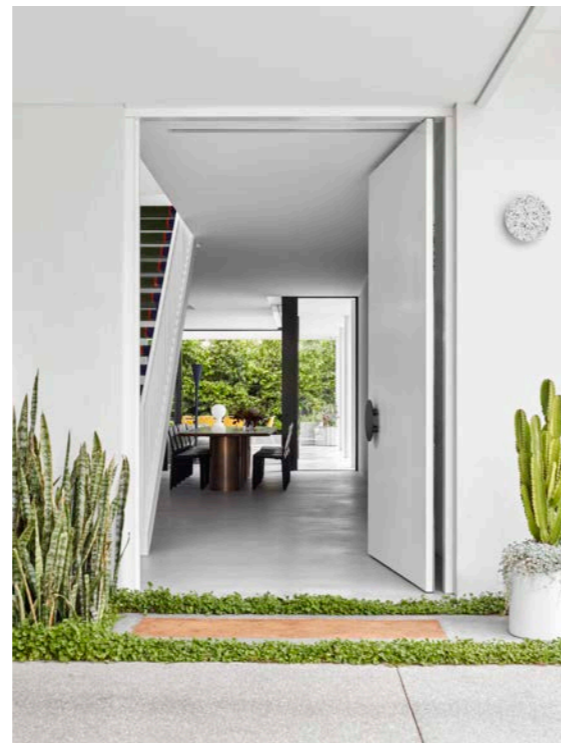
Heath Blair of landscape architects Plume worked with David and Carly from the start to develop a garden that would do justice to the aspect and take advantage of the plentiful, three-metre full-height windows. The home's central courtyard acts a spatial divider, the glass gallery both bringing in light and hugging the architecture with greenery. "We used different species of advanced palms to anchor the landscape and with their close proximity to the building there's a lovely interplay with the built form," says Heath. »



**This page, clockwise from top left** In the sunken family den, a rattan 'Easy' armchair by Phantom Hands. Blue Cassina '875 Ico Parisi' armchair, red Cassina 'Accordo 520' low table and Glas Italia 'Fountain' side table, all from Mobilia. A cedar ceiling and Baxter 'Milano' sofa from Criteria add a 70s vibe. Glas Italia 'Shimmer' side table from Mobilia. Artwork by Jahne Pascoe-White from Station Gallery. In the living room, a large B&B Italia 'Camaleonda' modular sofa from Space follows the lines of a custom rug from Halcyon Lake. ClassiCon 'Bow No.5' coffee table and red 'Diana E' side table both from Anibou. A Flos 'Gatto' lamp from Euroluce sits on a Glas Italia 'Crack' side table from Mobilia. Sheepskin pouf from CCSS. **Opposite page** Pink sculpture by Lynda Draper from Sullivan+Strumpf. The advanced palm trees in the light well were planted especially.



This page, clockwise from top Cassina 'Cab' chairs from Mobilia. Custom Flack Studio dining table in solid walnut. Knoll 'Bertoia' stool from De De Ce. The inner courtyard with fully grown palm trees conjures a tropical atmosphere. "We pushed our landscape hard up to the building which provides a really tactile experience from inside," says Plume's Heath. "The full-height pivot door makes for a special entry," says Sync Architecture's David. "The sightline goes through the whole depth of the block." Bentu 'O2' outdoor wall light in terrazzo from Lighting Collective. A custom striped runner from Halcyon Lake lines the stair treads. In the mudroom beyond, the upholstered bench seat is clad in 'Xilo 2' veneer in Flamed White by Elton Group. **Opposite page** Large B&B Italia 'Camaleonda' modular sofa from Space and hand-knotted carpet from Halcyon Lake. Flos 'Gatto' lamp from Euroluce. Sheepskin pouf from CCSS. In the rear garden are yellow 'Lionel' chairs from Jordan. A curtain wraps around the glazing and hides behind the living room joinery.





### SPEED READ

» The success of this new build in Melbourne's Brighton can be attributed to Sync Architects, landscapers Plume and designers Flack Studio. » The owners presented architect David Tennant and interior designer Carly Tennant with a comprehensive brief detailing their must-haves. » Among their requirements was a relaxing adults' zone, kids' area, a space to come together as a family and a 'quiet room' by way of a library-cum-study. » The family den on the ground floor is a sunken 'Sunday space' for lounging and reading. » Long, lean architecture with cantilevered eaves and muted finishes acts as a canvas for more decorative pieces, art and furniture. » The Palm Springs-inspired garden features cacti and advanced palm trees. » Floor-to-ceiling glazing runs throughout the ground floor with an internal courtyard acting as an acoustic barrier between the living room and the kitchen-dining area.

« The house can be accessed on the south side by a path opening into the laundry as well as via the garage. However, the real 'moment' and full experience is through the front pivot door. From here, the line of sight spears straight through to the rear. To the left of the entrance is a convenient mud room and flush against the side wall is a set of stairs, the open treads lined in custom olive-green stripes, leading to the first floor.

Moving through the house, a turn to the right opens to the sunken television-free den. "It was designed as a 'Sunday morning' space where the family could be together away from their screens," says David. "There's a traditional wood fireplace and timber-lined ceiling. It's a really cool place to just hang out." Behind the den, the library has been oriented to look directly out to the pool and on the opposite side of the hall is a guest bedroom with ensuite.

The open-plan kitchen and adjacent dining room with custom walnut table is separated from the living room by a light well that creates an "acoustic barrier between the spaces", says David. Upstairs splits into two wings: one comprises three bedrooms, a bathroom and a powder room oriented around a central landing with a master bedroom, dressing room and ensuite to the rear.

While the slim lines and flat roofs appear effortless, don't be fooled by their simplicity, says David, who worked with Concept Build to achieve precision. "We had to get the proportions of the deep eaves and their overhangs exactly right. And we had to get the structural columns perfect as they were used to hide otherwise unsightly downpipes. To get long and low linearity this way is difficult and can result in thick canopies. It looks easy but a lot of thought went into it – just like everywhere else." [flackstudio.com.au](http://flackstudio.com.au); [syncarchitecture.com.au](http://syncarchitecture.com.au); [plumestudio.com.au](http://plumestudio.com.au); [conceptbuild.com.au](http://conceptbuild.com.au)

**These pages, clockwise from below** In the master bedroom, a custom Flack Studio bedhead by Inform Upholstery + Design is dressed in InBed linen. On the Maxalto 'Amphora' bedside table from Space is a Gubi 'Gravity' lamp from Criteria. Baxter 'Nepal' armchair from Space. Artwork by Dane Lovett from Sullivan+Strumpf. Plume planted a range of hardy plants in the garden near the pool. Twin basins in the master ensuite sport tapware from Astra Walker. 'Spoti' wall sconces from Articolo. Vanity top is 'Cloudburst Concrete' by Caesarstone. The flooring is X Bond by Alt Surfaces.

