



Big change Experimental techniques such as oversized features and distressed paint highlighting original brickwork give the warehouse apartment individuality.



Grand facade The exterior of the historic foundry building was preserved, while (right) sympathetic alterations were made to the entry point.



Room to grow Architect Eva-Marie Prineas and her newborn son, Leon Dimitri, in the revamped open-plan kitchen/diner.

Industrial strength

This metalworks makeover has retained its hard-working heritage with a touch of fun.

Sleek, black interiors, dark, glossy floors and a wall of shimmering mirrors make this glamorous warehouse conversion an unusual home for a couple with a new baby. But architects Eva-Marie Prineas and Peter Titmuss, who remodelled their two-bedroom apartment in inner-city Sydney with their baby in mind, say children love it. "Lots of little kids come in and draw on the mirrored glass and babies love to look at themselves in it," says Prineas, who used magnetic paint in the nursery and corridor to create colourful letter boards for toddlers.

The first-time mum admits it is her dream home. "I went to Sydney University and I used to walk past this building and imagine living here," says Prineas of the four-storey block, which once served as a metalworks for the railways.

The landmark Victorian building, which later became a bootmakers, was turned into apartments four years ago and has retained its hard-working heritage. Solid, oregon beams and exposed timber floors characterise living spaces. But while the couple love

these original features, they primarily wanted to experiment in a space flooded with natural light.

"We bought this place because it had windows on three sides, which is rare for an apartment," says Prineas. "We wanted to create something particular to this building."

As the nature and scale of the structure was originally industrial, the couple started by removing domestic-size elements such as standard-height doors to bedrooms.

The open-plan living room, with its multicoloured kitchen and glass-encased winter garden room, was untidily zoned with carpet and timber boards.

"The idea of the winter garden was to have an outdoor space in the apartment but it was quite internal," Prineas says.

Cross-ventilation was poor and the glass partitions blocked leafy views. As a result, the internal glass was removed and given to a friend who was renovating. This allowed the living room to stretch to the edge of the building, highlighting three beautiful windows.

To suit the grand theme, Prineas installed ceiling-height, pivoting doors to bedrooms which, when opened, frame parts of the building's original structure. Matching oversized features include a chic, chocolate-stained floor made from large pieces of plywood and a central, black kitchen pod. The latter rises from floor to ceiling, concealing fridge, bins, pantry, dishwasher and overhead storage cupboards.

"We made the kitchen pod a full-sized object rather than a series of walls," Prineas says. "Doors to bedrooms are full width and height so the pod defines the spaces – not the doors. They are on pivots so when they're open they almost disappear."

Cool, industrial and Scandinavian look furniture appears to float on the reflective floors, a feat emphasised by clever lighting. Custom-made joinery down one side of the living room-diner has concealed under-lighting while designer Italian lights, which hang from the ceiling on weighted cords, can be swivelled or adjusted up and down for the perfect inner glow.

"It seems so natural," Prineas says. "Pieces fit together. It doesn't feel like we have made any interventions at all."

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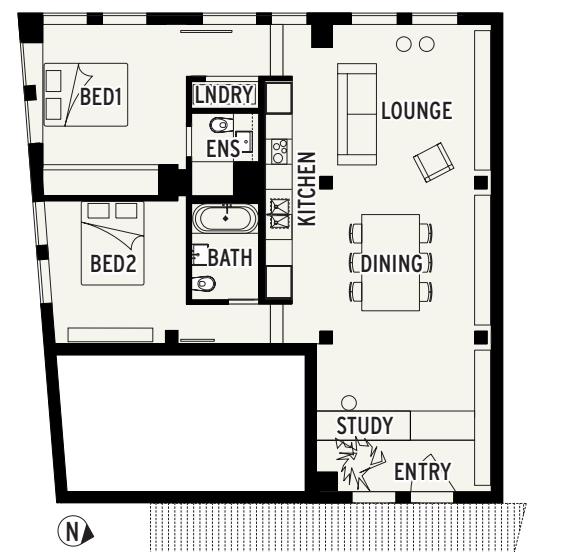


Light sleep Enormous warehouse windows flank the south and west walls of the airy master bedroom. "There's a beautiful quality of light," says Prineas.

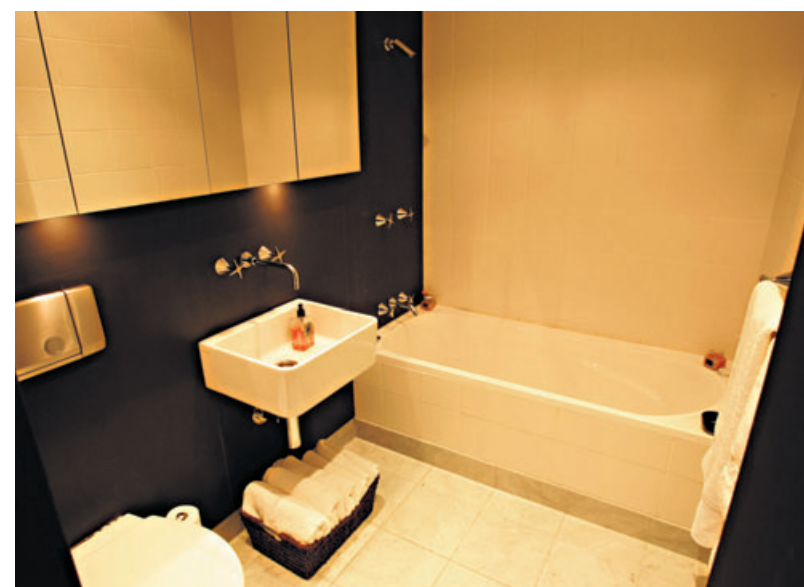
Revised plan An obtrusive winter garden room was removed to maximise the open-plan living area. Mirrored panels below a floating TV cabinet give a luxurious sense of space.



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Work place A dual-purpose desk by the front door serves as a neat work space on one side and a handy bench on the other. The artwork is by Peter Poulet.



Fresh thinking The owners replaced existing bathroom sinks which were positioned too high. Slim mirrored cabinets and dark hues were chosen to match interiors.



Baby grand The second bedroom has been transformed into an uncluttered nursery. A pigeon-hole wall unit creates a smart feature as well as offering ample storage space.



Practical solution Corridor space outside the master bedroom was converted into a laundry and tool shed.



Drawn in Visiting children love to draw on the mirrors below additional storage at the front door.

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