ELLE DECORATION Nº394 MARCH 2026

ELLE DECORATION UK

MARCH 2026

PASSION PROJECTS

LISTENING ROOMS, LIBRARIES & CINEMA SNUGS
Make space for what you love

PLUS: the AVOCADO BATHROOM is back & 'bad taste' is cool

Warm up your winter with a HOME SAUNA

UK £7.49 AUSTRAILA $15.99 CANADA $14.99
NZ $21.50 USA $14.50 PRINTED IN THE UK
03 >
0 29074 94476 8

PASSION PROJECTS

ELLEDECORATION.CO.UK

№ 5

LOCATION SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA
DESIGN STUDIO PRINEAS
WORDS BECKY SUNSHINE
PHOTOGRAPHY FELIX FOREST
STYLIST STUDIO JACK MILENKOVIC

GOLDEN SPACE

Small but powerful gestures transformed a joyless urban apartment into a sunshine-hued home for a growing family

For Sydney-based architect Eva-Marie Prineas, the art of renovation often lies in exploring what's already there. Montage Apartment, a 1990s residence in a building in Sydney's cosmopolitan, harbour-side neighborhood of Double Bay, is a study in restraint and subtle transformation. 'The space had great bones,' Eva-Marie says, describing the apartment that she first saw before her clients – a couple in their thirties expecting their first child – made the purchase. 'It was well planned, but the interior had little joy. We knew it didn't need to be gutted. It just needed to be reimagined.'

This pragmatic approach defines Studio Prineas's work. The couple's family had already commissioned the practice for two previous projects – one for the client's mother and another for his brother – creating an easy shorthand and a sense of trust. Here, Eva-Marie and her team focused on small, thoughtful gestures that would transform – emphasising light, tactility and calm – and the practicality needed for a new family, rather than pure spectacle.

Eva-Marie's first move was simple: rethinking the spatial flow. The layout was fundamentally sound, but felt disconnected. 'There was a dropped ceiling over the kitchen that closed everything in,' she recalls. Removing it brought more height and new light, while switching the positions of the living and dining zones opened up the space, drawing the terrace and kitchen into dialogue. A sheer curtain, running the full width of the façade, now softens the afternoon sun and visually unites the living areas – 'a simple device,' she says, 'but it completely transforms the atmosphere'.

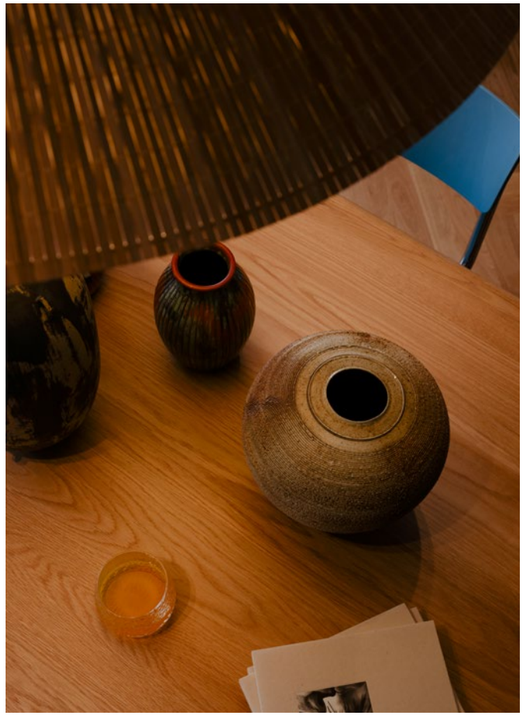
This sense of gentle coherence extends to the palette. In a bold yet serene decorative move, Eva-Marie painted the ceilings of the living areas and bathrooms a vibrant golden yellow. 'It's low cost, high impact,' she explains. 'Because the apartment faces west, it gets this incredible late-afternoon glow. The yellow amplifies it – it's like sunlight above you.' The warm tone plays off subtle greys, the composite timber-look joinery by NavLam and the tactility of microcement surfaces. Throughout, light bounces off curved edges – the softened corners of a kitchen island, a rounded study nook, curved door frames and the gentle arcs of cabinetry – lending the modern interior an unexpected softness.

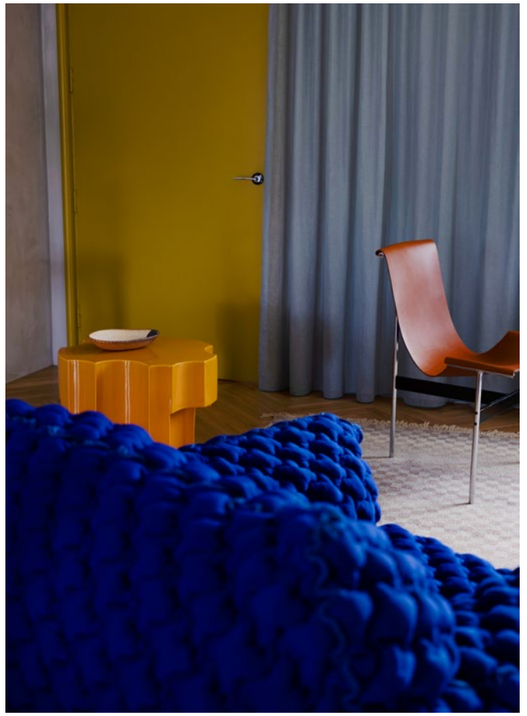
Sustainability, for Eva-Marie, is as much an attitude as a material choice. In the bathroom, for example, the studio kept the original marble, honing the polished finish and regrouting in gold. 'We believe in thinking more and building less,' she says. 'You can create luxury without starting from scratch.' By powder-coating existing hardware fittings in cobalt blue, she created a playful contrast, turning necessity into artful detail.

Furniture and art selections continue this dialogue between refinement and vitality. A 'Nuvola 05' armchair by Gervasoni, the sculptural 'Flare' floor lamp by Pierre Yovanovitch and the 'August' dining table by Jardan in raw oak ground the space in texture and craftsmanship. Vivid paintings by Gemma Smith and Kasper Raglus animate the walls with colour. The mix of pieces – from a Tacchini 'Orbit' console by Faye Toogood to a 'Polar' side table by Michele De Lucchi for Memphis – reflects Studio Prineas's flair for blending classic forms with a distinctly Australian informality.

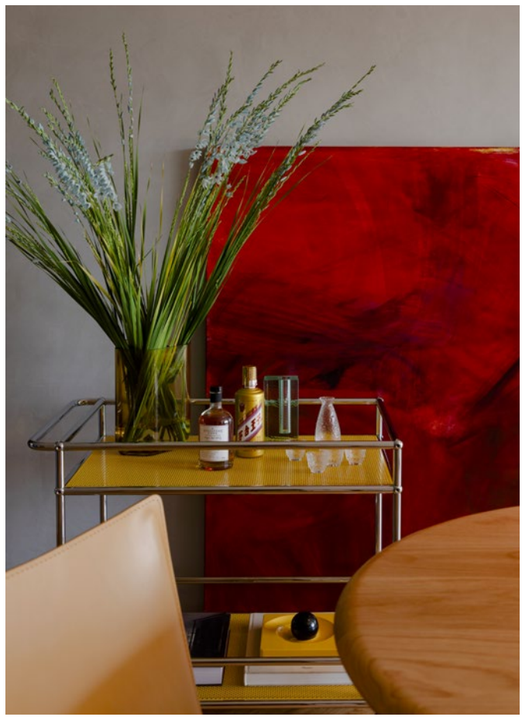
Perhaps the project's most charming gesture is a built-in bench seat at the end of the kitchen, perched in front of full-height doors to the terrace. 'It's a place to sit half inside, half outside,' says Eva-Marie. 'You can open the doors, pull back the curtain and be right in the fresh air.' It's a quietly poetic move – capturing the essence of a home designed through intelligent, human-scale moments of light and connection. *studioprineas.com.au*

Dining area A large yellow painting by Gemma Smith from Sullivan + Strumpf echoes the golden tone of the ceiling over the raw-oak dining table by Jardan. The table is paired with Mario Bellini's 'CAB 412' leather dining chairs for Cassina – sourced from Mobilia – and Thonet's 'GMBH S43' design from Anibou. A selection of vases from 506070 Shop and by Astrid Salomon at Bastard Ceramics sit on the table; the red painting is also by Gemma Smith ➤





Eva-Marie and her team focused on SMALL, THOUGHTFUL gestures that would TRANSFORM, emphasising LIGHT, TACTILITY and CALM rather than spectacle



Living area Primary colours bring a cosy, playful feel to the living area, with a blue-upholstered 'Nuvola' lounge chair by Paola Navone for Gervasoni from Anibou Furniture and a yellow and striped 'Polar' side table by Michele De Lucchi for Memphis from Living Edge. The 'Flare' floor lamp is by Pierre Yovanovitch from Criteria Collection and the 'Orvel Navi' rug is by Rug Establishment
Clockwise from top left A vintage vessel from 506070 Shop is displayed on the dining table; in one corner of the living room stands a vintage leather '3LC' chair designed by Katavolos, Littell and Kelley, sourced from 506070 Shop. Beside it, EWE Studio's 'Altar' side table for Tacchini holds a Tenshin Juba bowl from Fineworks Paddington; in the dining area, a USM Haller serving trolley from Anibou sits in front of Gemma Smith's painting, sourced from Sullivan + Stumpf ➤

'We believe in THINKING MORE and building less. You can CREATE LUXURY without starting from SCRATCH'

Kitchen Studio Prineas reimagined the custom microcement and timber kitchen, adding more yellow accents in the form of Missoni cushions from Spence & Lyda, along with American-oak barstools by Daniel Boddam and a ceramic 'Hex' side table by Bzippy from Criteria Collection ➤

Bathroom Studio Prineas added colour to the room, as well as finishing touches such as a side table in the style of Albert Larsson sourced from 506070 Shop. The blue-glass vase on the counter is from Spence & Lyda
Bedroom The 'Saia' chair is by David Lopez Quincoces for Gervasoni, and the yellow painting is by Kasper Raglus, sourced from Curatorial + Co. The vases and objets are from 506070 Shop and Planet Ceramics
See Stockists page for details ED