



Holiday AT HOME

Once an “ugly duckling”, this 1990s home on the NSW Central Coast is now a welcoming family retreat.

STORY John McDonald | STYLING Stewart Horton | PHOTOGRAPHY Alexander McIntyre



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FIRST-FLOOR TERRACE Louvres on all sides deliver fresh air, shelter from the elements and privacy. Verona outdoor sofa, Lincoln Brooks. Livorno Boulder coffee table in White Speckle, Globe West. Cementa floor tiles, Surface Gallery. **FACADE** Charlie the cavalier King Charles spaniel is on hand to give guests a friendly greeting. The lattice screen is designed to be softened by vines. Norwest wall light, Beacon Lighting.

The palette

Dulux Vivid White (interior, throughout)

Dulux Surfmist (exterior)

Silver Casa limestone (kitchen)

KITCHEN "I love the high-quality ovens and cooktops," says keen cook Kathryn. "The Ilve ovens, in particular, are wonderful to use." Charing barstools, Lincoln Brooks. Chippy limestone planter, Den Holm. Perrin & Rowe mixer, The English Tapware Company. Benchtop and splashback in Caesarstone Statuario Maximus. Thermo-laminated joinery in Ultra White, Polytec. Silver Casa honed limestone tiles, SNB Stone. Oak Botany ceiling cladding, Havwoods International. Artwork by Brett Piva.

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Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.

This home on the Central Coast of NSW is beautifully bright and breezy. But it wasn't always that way. Recalling its previous incarnation, owner Kathryn Garton says the home was "a bit of an ugly duckling", albeit with plenty of potential for improvement. It was a bland beige-on-beige weatherboard and masonry structure, but the location - backing onto the beach - was so wonderful that she and her husband Ian couldn't resist. Today, it's the perfect coastal getaway for the couple, their daughters Andrea, 16, Georgia, 15, and beloved cavalier King Charles spaniel, Charlie.

Kathryn and Ian bought the home in 2014; in 2017, they were ready to renovate and engaged interior designer Stewart Horton of Horton & Co for the project. Stewart had renovated their main residence in Sydney's west, so the couple had complete faith that Stewart would come up with just the right design and scheme. The project took

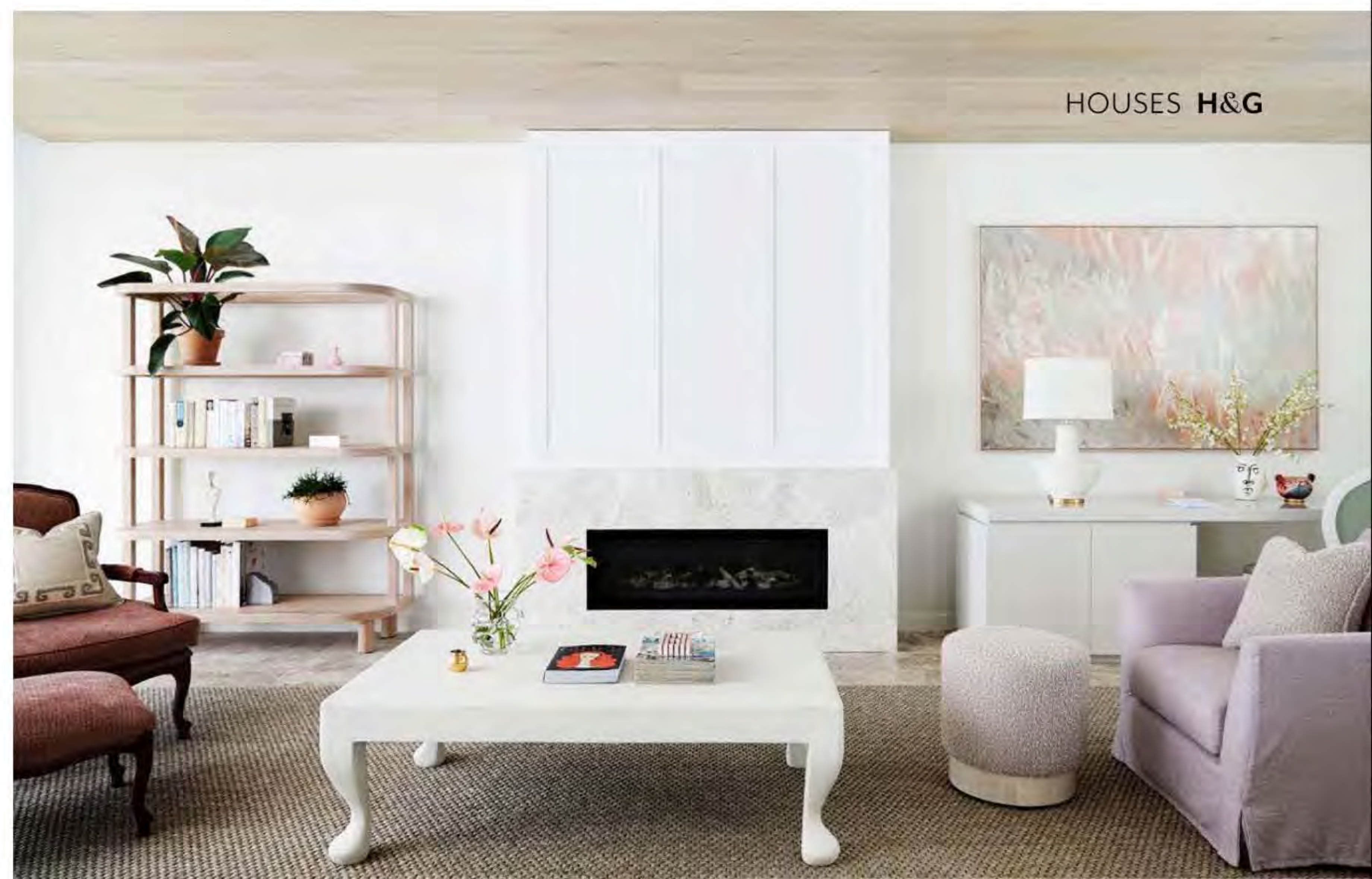
almost two years to complete, including receiving the necessary council approvals, but the Gartons say it was definitely worth the wait.

Prior to renovating, the house, guest quarters and garage were standalone structures without internal access. The home's main living area and kitchen were located on the first floor, the latter elevated on a raised level to accommodate the ceiling of the bedroom beneath. The ground floor contained the home's three bedrooms and a bathroom that could only be accessed from the garden. Entry to the guest quarters was via this bathroom.

The awkward layout was a problem, but the family had another, more pressing issue. "When we purchased the property we needed to put a lift in somewhere for our daughter who has mobility difficulties," says Kathryn. "Because of the awkward plan, the lift ended up in prime real estate - right in front of the main window with the best ocean views."



KITCHEN/LIVING/DINING The Hamptons-style joinery above the fireplace conceals a TV. Sofa, armchair (at right) and ottoman, all H&J Furniture. Vintage Louis armchair with footstool in Alhambra Toscana Siena 02 fabric, Chapman Upholstery. Arte dining table and Preston bookshelf, Jardan. Custom leather-upholstered dining chairs, Casa Mia. Visual Comfort & Co 'Liaison' chandelier, Laura Kincade. Kelly Wearstler 'Armato' table lamp. European Kassala sisal rug, International Floorcoverings. Alza bowl (on dining table), Ferm Living. Aerin 'Abel' vase (on coffee table). Artwork by Brian Jones.



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Stewart did a great job of replanning the layout, Kathryn says. The L-shaped home now has four bedrooms (two with ensuite), a family room and a terrace downstairs. Upstairs, there's an open-plan kitchen/dining/living and, at the rear of the house, a dining terrace overlooking the ocean. Outside, the 800m² block was beautifully landscaped by local company TruNorth Landscapes.

At the Gartons' main residence in Sydney, Stewart used darker, bolder colours; Kathryn says they were keen for the beach house to be a bit different. "We wanted something coastal but not too obvious. Something soft and comfortable. Being so close to the sea, there are the inevitable rust and corrosion issues but I guess that's the price you pay for such an amazing location." The decorating palette - natural, textural materials teamed with white and pastel-toned furnishings - delivers on that brief.

Right now, the home is the family's go-to destination for weekends and summer holidays, but when Andrea and Georgia finish school, Ian and Kathryn plan to relocate to their beautiful Central Coast abode permanently. "There's sun, sand and a gorgeous house to live in," says Kathryn. "What more could you ask for?"

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THIS IS THE LIFE

The beach is an obvious drawcard, but so is the living area, where the family loves spending together time. "It has spectacular ocean views plus a cosy fireplace that sees a lot of use in winter. It's the best of both worlds," says Kathryn. "We also love the louvred terrace. There are strong winds around here, being so close to the beach, but this indoor/outdoor room means we can enjoy the outdoors in any weather."

BATHROOM All of the home's bathrooms feature the same glam finishes and fittings. Vanity fronts in Ayous engineered-timber veneer in Alabaster, Slice Veneers. Brass drawer pulls, Style Finish Design. Silver Casa honed-limestone wall tiles, SNB Stone. Vogue ceramic floor tiles in Tortora, Classic Ceramics. Icon+ tapware and Icon shower fittings and towel rail, all Astra Walker. Aphrodite Deux Fois bust, Degoey Planet. **ANDREA'S BEDROOM** Victoria headboard in Zepel Langham fabric in Rattan, H&J Furniture. Belgian linen bedlinen and Pillar table lamp, all West Elm. Cushions in Matrix Tape linen-viscose fabric by Schumacher. Sonoma Florida sunlounger and side table, both Globe West. *For Where to Buy, see page 192.* H&G

The layout

