

Designer dream BEACH LOVER

Moving the kitchen into the heart of this home has created an inviting entertaining zone adored by cook and guests alike.

The brief

This three-storey townhouse in Newcastle, 160km north of Sydney, is blessed with a beachside location and stunning views. Built in the 1990s, the decor was looking tired by the time the current owners bought it last year, so they called local interior designer Stewart Horton for help. The original kitchen, located on the middle level, was tucked into a corner with a low ceiling and little storage. The brief was to promote it to the heart of the living space so the cook could enjoy the magnificent views.

The solution

Stewart reconfigured the entire middle level, moving the kitchen toward the view and pushing the TV room to the rear. "This left the bright, airy side of the apartment free for an entertainer's kitchen and dining space," he says. A cosy bench seat was added to retain the option of lounging with a view. To reference the location, Stewart opted for a palette of limestone, marble, limed timbers and white. ▶

Horton&Co Design, New Lambton, NSW; (02) 4957 1672 or hortonandco.com.au.

PALETTE PLEASERS

Intriguing combination of contrasting surfaces

Dulux
Lexicon
Quarter

Alabaster
vener,
Slice Veneers

'Mirrorshield'
smoked
mirror

✦ To dress the windows, Stewart went for something "clean and architectural yet soft". The curtains are in 'Cavalier' fabric, a sheer polyester-linen from James Dunlop Textiles, on a ceiling-mounted track. "They let the light in and give a sense of the view, even when closed."

✦ The 2650mm bench seat adds colour and softness among the hard surfaces. The upholstery fabric is in eye-pleasing blue/green, to echo the ocean tones outside. Under the seat are four 600mm-wide drawers.

✦ The splashback is smoked mirror. "We really wanted to amplify the view, but silver mirror would have been overpowering on this scale. The smoked mirror gives a softer, more subtle reflection," says Stewart.

✦ The Caesarstone Noble Grey benchtop simulates natural marble while also delivering a hard-wearing surface for this family with teenage boys. There's a deliberate play of textures between the engineered stone and the grain of the timber veneer.

Photograph by Alexander McIntyre. Artwork by Scott Petrie.



✦ Tall overhead cupboards were designed for maximum built-in storage. “There’s room to pack everything away, making the whole room appear larger.”

✦ There was space to spare in the ceiling cavity, so Stewart designed a 33cm-deep circular coffer from which hangs a statement pendant light. “It emphasises the room height and anchors the pendant light to the island,” he says.

✦ The curved joinery, clad in in timber veneer (right), houses a walk-in pantry. The rounded corner was intended to “give a sense of ease as you walk through the space – and I love the Jetsons vibe!” says Stewart.



THE DETAILS

Total cost About \$75,000.

White cabinetry Two-pack polyurethane in Dulux Lexicon Quarter.

Timber joinery Alabaster veneer, Slice Veneers.

Benchtops Caesarstone Noble Grey, from \$1100/m² (installed).

Splashback ‘Mirrorshield’ smoked mirror, Australian Glass Group.

Tap ‘TA6301B Sinos’ pull-out, \$874, Franke.

Sink ‘CR720 Piazza’ undermount, \$1064, Abey.

Pendant light Vibia ‘Flamingo’, \$2484, Koda Lighting.

Stools Hay ‘About a Stool’ with upholstered seat, \$790 each (as shown), Cult.

Dining table ‘Ottawa’ with oak top, from \$3719, BoConcept.

Dining chairs Hay ‘J104’ chairs, \$459 each, Cult.

Flooring Madagascar porcelain tiles in Blanco (660x400mm), \$105/m², Earp Bros.

THE APPLIANCES

Oven Neff 7-function 60cm pyrolytic built-in oven.

Cooktop Neff 826mm flex induction cooktop.

Fridge/freezer Liebherr freestanding fridge/freezer.

Dishwasher Fully integrated design, Miele. ▶