

Overlooking Bouddi National Park and the Pacific Ocean, this weekender feels like a five-star boutique hotel – only private. Tribù daybed from Cosh Living and Tonk stool from MCM House.

Pure ESCAPISM

| CENTRAL COAST, AUSTRALIA |

A luxurious beach hideaway brings pieces of Italy and France to a quintessentially Australian setting





“
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Artwork by Tim Summerton from Olsen Gallery and Terracotta Gardenia ceramics from Living Edge. **OPPOSITE PAGE** Alexandra Donohoe Church, wearing Artclub by Heidi Middleton, enjoys the view. The custom coffee table by Decus Interiors is complemented by a rug from Robyn Cosgrove.

Surely, no one could ever tire of this sparkling view. The potent cocktail of isolation, elevation and fresh sea air goes straight to the head as whole stretches of time are lost to the way the infinity-edge pool fades into the Pacific Ocean. With nothing in front of you except Bouddi National Park and beaches, the view provides a truly spellbinding backdrop for this part-time home of a semi-retired couple, who share a passion for both Italy and France. Building their weekend, the couple engaged interior designer Alexandra Donohoe Church of Decus Interiors to infuse the property's architectural shell with equal measures of *la dolce vita* and *je ne sais quoi*.

The challenge was designing an interior that stood up to the scene stealer outside. “We wanted to create breathing space away from the view, with moments of darkness and moodiness to let the view sing,” Donohoe Church explains. Her brief was for an interior that works in a coastal setting

but eschews the usual design language of ‘sailboats on the wall’. In addition, the owners wanted impact but without “high-octane drama”, she recounts. “The response had to have a sense of authenticity, a connection to natural light and contrast; compression and expansion. Texture and colour.”

In a well-paced arrangement of thrills and quieter scenes, Donohoe Church delivered a riveting piece of pure escapism. Moving through the house, panelled walls slide away to reveal hotel-worthy bathrooms. And in one corner, there's even a bookcase that pivots to reveal a speakeasy.

Tying the home to its context, the designer teased out a colour palette from the landscape: “a lot of bottle-green and petrol-blue tones.” At the same time, she reinterpreted the colourway with a classical execution of velvet, brass and hand-woven wallpaper throughout the home. Steel-framed windows and a huge imported fireplace are a nod to the owners' love affair with Western Europe. “It was important to them and, by default, to us that the house has a European sensibility,” she says. “The house is an extension of the owners' personalities and that always feels right.”



Concordia-honed marble from Artedomus and a Lindsey Adelman light fitting continue the inky-blue tones in the kitchen. **OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP** In the dining zone, an artwork by Tim Summerton from Olsen Gallery sets off a custom brush box timber table from Original Finish and Knoll 'Saarinen' chairs from Dedec; interior designer Alexandra Donohoe Church of Decus Interiors; the home's striking concrete and stone exterior.





CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE Each of the guest rooms is identified by its colour. The pink room features Phillip Jeffries hemp wallpaper from The Textile Company and Society linen textiles from Ondene; the bathrooms feature handmade floor tiles sourced by the owners in Europe and custom joinery topped with Calacatta marble; Form bowls by Tom Dixon from Dedeece. **OPPOSITE PAGE** A breakout space becomes a 'design moment' featuring vintage French teak and cane chairs sourced from LA, a Classicon Bell coffee table and a rug from Loom.





CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT The concrete architectural shell is brightened by an artwork by Martine Emdur, and Tom Dixon bowls; Porter's paint in Admiralty Navy and Buster + Punch Hooked pendants from Living Edge add drama to the stairwell; dark and moody, the speakeasy is a moment of intensity set off by a custom brass table and velvet banquette. OPPOSITE PAGE The richness continues into the bathroom, where a pair of Kelly Wearstler wall lights and a Nicholas & Alistair mirror pop against a backdrop of Porter's paint in Obsidian.



“
Balance is important and every space has to have something unexpected”



The bathroom features a hydrotherm towel rail, steel-framed doors and an Ochre pendant light from the UK. **OPPOSITE PAGE** The three guest rooms downstairs display a more liberal use of colour than the rest of the house, says Donohoe Church. "Guest rooms are a nice opportunity to experiment – you don't have to stare at them every day." Bedding from Ondene.

