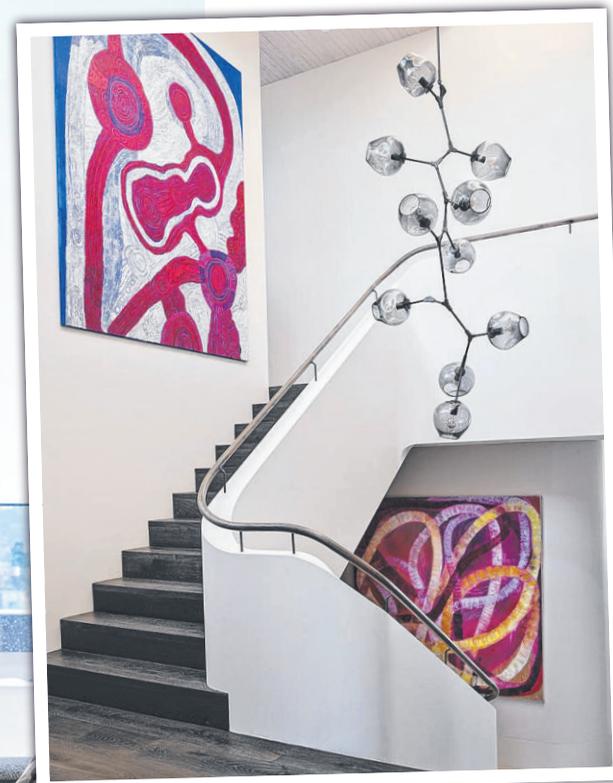


NEW BUILD

# Here for the long haul



**A collaborative approach to design leads to a refined result built to last a lifetime, writes Robyn Willis**

**E**verything about this house is ambitious. From designing the tri-level home on a steep site from scratch through to the owners' desire to make it their 'forever' home, it was not a task for the feint hearted.

So when interior designer Alexandra Donohoe Church, director of Decus Interiors, was invited to fit the house out, from the joinery to materials selection, she wanted to understand as much as she could about the owners and their four children.

"This is their forever house," she says. "They wanted it to be suitable for having their grandchildren stay for sleepovers, although their kids are still teenagers.

"They wanted something that was timeless with modern convenience but that was classic enough to withstand trends."

Alexandra was introduced to the clients by architect Luigi Rosselli, who was overseeing the design and build of the five-bedroom, six bathroom house.

## THE PROJECT

### Owners

A couple with four teenage children

### Interior designer

Alexandra Donohoe Church, Decus Interiors, decus.com.au

### Architect

Collaborations architect: Blake Letnic

Design Architect: Luigi Rosselli

luigirosselli.com

### The brief

To make a new family home feel comfortable, intimate and timeless

### The site

A steep site in the eastern suburbs

### Design solution

To create spaces to be alone and come together using layered textures and materials to imbue a sense of warmth and comfort

### How long did it take

Three years





**HOME TOP TIP**  
 Spaces don't have to be devoid of colour to be classic. Choose shades you have always loved.



*casual*  
**LUXURY**

“We were involved from the first application (to council),” Alexandra says. “The owners had purchased a house that already had an approved DA on it but they wanted to make some changes so we submitted a Section 96.”

**“ONE OF THE THINGS ABOUT BIG OPEN PLAN AREAS IS YOU HAVE TO LAYER THEM TO MAKE THEM FEEL MORE INTIMATE”**

Entry from the street is designed to direct visitors to the living and dining space on the mid level, with bedrooms on the top floor and rumpus and games rooms leading onto the pool and lawn on the ground floor.

“We came in after the layout and architecture was complete and we were asked to review all of it, including things like door height and bathroom layout.”

With a house this size, the challenge is ensuring large spaces feel inviting, with room to entertain large groups while still conveying a sense of warmth.

“One of the things about big open plan areas is you have to layer them to make them feel more intimate,” Alexandra says. “You can do that by layering materials and textures.”

The kitchen joinery, for example, has been detailed with timber panelling to avoid it looking monolithic.

Alexandra says while this project took some time to complete, it benefited enormously from the collaboration between owners, architect and interior designer.

“Luigi was very team oriented and talked everything through, which is great because the communication is very clear for everyone,” she says.

**Pictures: Anson Smart**

**Curved joinery partially separates the dining space, offering some enclosure without locking it down (above). Architect Luigi Rosselli is known for his ribbon-style staircases (top left).**

**THE SOURCE**

- Builder** Critharis Constructions, critharis.com
- Joiner** Enth Degree Projects, enthdegreeprojects.com.au
- Dining room pendant** Bolle pendant by Giopato and Coombes, Bolle Pendant from Ultimo Interiors, ultimo.com.au
- Dining chairs** Knoll Saarinen from DeDeCe, dedece.com
- Kitchen and dining room flooring** Brushed 'Classico' Travertine from World Stone, worldstone.com.au

