

MOROCCAN MAGIC

Sustainability and striking interior design
come together in this stunning home
envisioned by two discerning professionals

Words Carrol Baker Photography Chris Groenhout





A shimmering pendant and gold-etched mirrors add a splash of luxury in the dining area

we love

THE FLAVOURS OF MOROCCO MIXED WITH CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE



Clever layering, and a neutral colour pallet feature in the living room

When a well-respected interior designer and her sustainability consultant husband decide to build their own contemporary home, you have the perfect marriage of aesthetics and energy efficiency. Designer Frances Cosway says they wanted to create a home that was extremely liveable, but at the same time ticked all the boxes for sustainability. Their meeting of sensibilities, eco awareness and good design has created a home that is vibrant and welcoming, with plenty of room for a young family.

The five-bedroom three-bathroom residence is located in Hampton, in Melbourne, and was constructed by Blue Chip Builders. The new build is a far cry from its predecessor, a neglected circa 1940s home that was bereft of any of its finer architectural detail. "It was in such a poor state that the floors were like a trampoline, with no joists or supports," says Frances.

In the new build, many low-environmental-impact building materials were used in keeping with the couple's sustainability tenet. It has high-efficiency glazing, insulation, draft proofing and ceiling fans. It's built on a thermal mass concrete slab and boasts solar hot water and high-efficiency LED lighting. The home electrical energy requirement is supplied by a 4.25kW rooftop PV array, it has heat recovery ventilation HRV, and Haymes low-VOC paints were used throughout.



Carefully selected decor inspired by the earth-friendly Moroccan theme, completes the look

“I like to use a neutral base and then build on that with other textures and layers of colour”
– Frances Cosway





This eco-friendly home is packed with sustainability features

houses & apartments white pebble house

Green furnishings include the living room bamboo ceiling fans (Big Ass Fans), dining table, TV console and coffee table crafted from recycled hardwood, as well as desks and numerous chairs. “Sustainable 100-per-cent pure wool carpets with natural dyes have been used throughout,” says Frances. “The porcelain tiles for the main floor are supplied by Australia’s first and only Green Certified tile supplier.”

The versatile design ensures the interior living spaces can grow with the family as their needs change. “We love our open-plan living,” says Frances. “It’s so adaptable.”

As a family, their favourite space is the winter room. “It’s a cosy spot we created especially for winter or for escaping from the main areas of the home. There’s an open fire, heavy drapes and carpet, so we love being there in winter and we only need to heat that room,” says Frances.

She adds that they have definitely found their forever home and it’s easy to see why. This urban sanctuary has a quiet serenity, yet it’s also infused with vitality. It’s a family home with style, comfort and its own signature statement — a mix of contemporary and modern elements in a neutral colour palette with warm influences. “I like to use a neutral base and then build on that with other textures and layers of colour,” says Frances.

The inspiration behind the design of the home’s exterior was the Kaufmann house in Palm Springs, along with modernist architecture. The Kaufmann house was built in the 1940s and was an architectural triumph, way ahead of its time, mixing materials like steel, glass and stone and blurring the lines between indoors and out.

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This stylish white bathroom is filled with light and has a generous shower



A beautiful etched mirror complements the tiles

ed's fave

THE BEAUTIFUL CONTEMPORARY TILES IN THE BATHROOMS

To create her beautiful home, Frances says sourcing the right materials was crucial. "We love the look of timber and the warmth it provides, however we needed a product that would work with the thermal mass of the concrete slab, so tile was the best product for this," she says. The flooring is maintenance-free and flows to the outdoor spaces, creating a seamless flow.

At the heart of this family home are the central living spaces, including the contemporary kitchen. The kitchen tiles, by Patricia Urquiola, were also chosen well before other aspects of the build. The cabinetry is Albedor vinyl wrap and benchtops are Hi-MACS.

One of the bathrooms has a textured white tile (Bisazza), which served as the inspiration for the rest of the bathroom. In another, Frances says the wall tiles mimic the Moroccan plaster called Tadelakt, which is similar to Venetian plaster. The vibrant cultural melting pot of Morocco, with its souks and trademark tile patterns, has inspired some of the design features. This theme runs subtly throughout the home.

The outdoor spaces have a Zen-like quality, with plenty of room for relaxation. "The front garden uses the gradient of the land to create a waterfall with a rockery pond," says Frances. "The rear garden is zoned and has a natural billabong for swimming, veggie patches, lawn area and large alfresco for outdoor dining." **HD** whitepebbleinteriors.com.au

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Intricately patterned tiles are a feature