



GOLDEN HOUR

This mid-century-motel-inspired Australian home was designed to ensure there's always a spot that's bathed in sunlight

PHOTOGRAPHY

Tom Blachford/Living Agency

WORDS Pip Rich





SUNKEN SEATING AREA

'There is space for a record player situated just next to the seating, to lean into that 1970s vibe,' says Berit.
'The whole area feels incredibly cocooning.'

Sunken **sofa**, designed by Pleysier Perkins.
Nelson Saucer Bubble **pendant**, Herman Miller. Tabouret **side table**, Jean Prouvé at In Good Company



t

he idea of a motel – that classic, mid-century, American version – always has such a charming, retro, faded glamour, doesn't it? Forget about the all-too-common, a-little-shabby-around-the-edges reality and instead imagine pristine 1950s architecture, the way the sunlight hits a central pool and how inviting it is to walk barefoot from the water to the room and back again.

That perfect essence was the inspiration for this project by the Melbourne-based architectural and design practice Pleysier Perkins for this one-storey home in a sleepy coastal town an hour outside the city. 'It was meant to be a holiday home for the owners, a beachy getaway,' says the studio's design director Berit Barton. 'So we wanted to play on the ideal of a motel: to shape the entrance like a reception, to pull on references from Palm Springs and to have all the bedrooms stretching out down one central corridor.'

The result is a home that encourages you to slip off your shoes, to find the corners where dappled light plays, to grab a book – or a cocktail – and take some time to relax. In fact, the design is all about catching the light – and that was built into the brief. 'The sunken seating area was very close to the owners' hearts,' says Berit. 'They asked for an area they could sit and read while tickled by gentle light. So we played on 1970s references and built the seating out of the same bricks used in the rest of the house, looking out at the kookaburras through the window, filtered by a golden cocoon from the sun.'

The brick choice was integral to the design concept. 'Another part of the brief was to use no plasterboard whatsoever, which was brilliant for us,' says Berit. 'It's such an obvious material, slapped over other surfaces to hide them, and then just painted. Instead we used natural bricks and timber to bring texture, choosing pale and creamy colours that enhanced the light. And the bricks really pick up on the colour of the sand from the beach nearby.'

Given the house is filled with this joyful holiday spirit, it's perhaps no surprise that it wasn't long before the family decamped from the city and made it their permanent base. 'The home has its roots in Australian,' says Berit. 'Over here we live half outside and life isn't always chic – we don't need everything to be super-smart and sleek. Instead, we take a more casual approach, with simple materials used well, areas to entertain and every design choice made because it aids ease of living. If it's a holiday home, then you want to be able to arrive, put your suitcase down, grab a towel and go.' Dappled by that down-under sunlight, of course.

ENTRANCE

'The circular window is a fun element. It's the first thing you see as you drive up to the home and it creates that sense of airiness you get in places like Palm Springs,' says Berit.

Dipping pendant lights, Marset

THE COLOURED GLASS IN THE PANELS CHANGE THE LIGHT, REFRACTING AND DIFFUSING IT TO CREATE A RICH AND SUBTLE SENSE OF SOFTNESS





LIVING ROOM

'This is the space where the family banters, where they spend their time day-to-day,' says Berit. 'Life here is about constantly running in and out to the outside.'

Cactus by Drocco/Mello for Gufram, Living Edge. **Artwork** (left) by Leila Jeffreys. **Artwork** (right) by George Byrne. **Rug**, Jordan. **Twiggy floor lamp**, Foscarini. **Sofa and chair** by Hans J Wegner, Angelucci 20th Century

KITCHEN

'This was inspired by a motel reception,' says Berit. 'There are two large curved elements nearby - one is a board game cupboard and the other is a powder room.'

Custom **kitchen**, designed by Pleysier Perkins; for similar units, try Naked Kitchens. Jolly **wall light**, Coco Flip. Arbour **pendant**, Ross Gardam. Terrazzo **splashback**, Artedomus

The download

THE DESIGNERS

Conceived as a holiday home for a couple and their young daughter, the build was completed by Melbourne-based architecture studio Pleysier Perkins during the various lockdowns of 2020. Surfaces throughout are natural and textured, consisting of timber, brick, stone, tiles, cork, glass and concrete.

THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom, single-level, mid-century-style new build in a beach town near Melbourne. The entrance via the carport leads into an open-plan living/dining/kitchen area, while the four bedrooms and two bathrooms branch off a corridor the length of the pool outside.



HALLWAY

Each bedroom has its own door colour, which corresponds to the colour of the joinery inside it. 'It was just a bit of fun, so when kids arrive you could say "you're in the green room" or "you're in the pink room",' says Berit.

Calais Cream cork flooring, Marques Flooring. Chillingham White bricks, Bowral Bricks. Wall lights, custom designed by Pleysier Perkins; made using Chillingham White bricks, Bowral Bricks

LIFE IS VERY CASUAL HERE - YOU
COME STRAIGHT IN FROM THE BEACH
OR POOL, THROUGH THE GLASS
DOORS AND INTO THE LIVING AREA
AND SHOES ARE NOT A REQUIREMENT



POOL

The 12-metre pool is heated by solar panels on the roof. 'It's used constantly - if not by the owners then by the local ducks!' says Berit.

Pool and patio, designed by Pleysier Perkins. Patio, created using travertine crazy paving