

# COUNTRY STYLE

*a place in the sun*



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**LISA WILKINSON**

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# 20 *ideas to steal for your renovation*

YOU'VE GOT BIG DREAMS BUT  
DON'T QUITE KNOW HOW TO  
GO ABOUT IT? NEVER FEAR  
— FOLLOW OUR TOP TIPS.

WORDS CATHERINE MCCORMACK

CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP RIGHT  
Painter's tins, from \$45 each,  
paintbrushes, from \$25 each, jars,  
from \$15 each, all from Seasonal  
Concepts. Linen napkin, \$49.95  
a set of six, from The Lost And Found  
Department. Float, \$25, and palette  
knife, \$15, both from Seasonal  
Concepts. &tradition 'Copenhagen'  
pendant light, \$725, and 'Raft'  
stool, \$795, both from Great  
Dane. Stepladder, stylist's own.  
For stockist details, see page 140.



# 1 MAKE A STATEMENT WITH BLACK

Black is big news in design right now, and nowhere does it shine more than on exteriors. In this home — the work of Melbourne-based Whiting Architects — Scyon 'Axon' vertical cladding and recycled steel doors found in a demolition of a 1930s crèche building combine with brick to create a contemporary urban vibe. Texture is key when using black outdoors. For timber, look to stains such as Feast Watson Timber & Deck Stain in Black Japan, which delivers deep colour without hiding the wood's grain. [whitingarchitects.com](http://whitingarchitects.com)



# 2 BLEND OLD WITH NEW

If you want to add a modern extension to an old home, contrast is imperative, according to Melbourne architect Travis Walton. He likes to highlight the change in architecture with some form of transitional space — “be it an internal corridor or courtyard,” he says. Inside, create a feeling of harmony by using a consistent colour scheme or style throughout. [traviswalton.com.au](http://traviswalton.com.au)

# 3 EMPLOY A COMBINATION OF MATERIALS

Known for her creativity, especially her innovative use of materials, Melbourne interior designer Fiona Lynch places “great focus on making sure we have a mix that works well together”. Her signature is a base of timber, concrete and natural stone, which she then pairs with pops of colour and metal to get the desired look. [fionalynch.com.au](http://fionalynch.com.au)

# 4 PAINT PERIOD DETAILS

In period homes, paint decorative ceilings, skirting, dado and picture rails in one colour — then, suggests Maree Hale of Porter's Paints, “contrast with a deeper or lighter colour on broad wall areas for a modern take”. Try Porter's Paints Pireaus teamed with Chintz Grey or Mist. For greater impact, use their Lamb's Wool with Jaguar or Van Helsing. [porterspains.com](http://porterspains.com)

PHOTOGRAPHY SHARYN CAIRNS (FACING PAGE, TOP); PHOTOGRAPHY SHANNON MCCRATHY (MIDDLE); PHOTOGRAPHY DEREK SWALWELL / VL (BOTTOM); PHOTOGRAPHY BROOKE HOLM; STYLING MARSHA GOLEMAC

# 5 STYLISH STORAGE

The horizontal lines of open shelves that stretch wall to wall and floor to ceiling — as demonstrated here by Melbourne's Studiofour (right) — add a bold graphic element to interiors and provide display space for books, artworks and treasured items. Take them over doorways for a seamless finish. [studiofournews.com](http://studiofournews.com)



# 6 MAKE A STATEMENT WITH YOUR WALLPAPER

When renovating her home in Mudgee, NSW, Hannah Logan of Logan Wines started with the wallpaper. “I wanted the guest rooms to feel gorgeous and hotel-like, and I think the wallpapers do that,” she explains. The secret to making patterned wallpapers work is to consider scale — larger prints fill a space easily, whereas small prints will add texture and depth. Also, this is not the time to hold back and be conservative. Go on, be bold... paper the entire room!

# 7 LEAD THE WAY IN ENTRANCES

The gentle folds of the oversized timber 'Lora' pendant by Weplight — available at ECC Lighting + Furniture — make a welcome statement in the foyer (right) of the Melbourne home of interior designer Fiona Richardson of Richard Hall & Son. “The space needed a large light and I wanted something to contrast with the home's traditional bones,” she says. The pendant's curves soften the space's squareness and mirror the snake form in Long Tom Tjapanangka's artwork *Red Serpent*. [richardhallandson.com.au](http://richardhallandson.com.au)



# 8 LAYER ON LIGHTING

A considered mix of lighting in an interior adds ambience and a feeling of wellbeing. Floor and table lamps, and pendant lights also help define zones within a larger living space. The key factor is height, as this design (left) proves. “So often pendants are suspended too high,” says Fiona Richardson. “If the pendant sits over a table or island bench, we tend to allow it to hang lower than expected.” >



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CREATE A SOCIAL KITCHEN

*"We always like the kitchen to be the centre of the house and the family in a traditional sense," says Carole Whiting of Whiting Architects. Here an informal breakfast bar acts as a bridge between inside and outdoor entertaining spaces, and is a place for people to sit, share and prepare.*



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UTILISE CUSTOMISED GALLERY SPACE

When it comes to showcasing your prized works of art, ensure that the focus is on them and not the background. "You can't beat a white wall — and not just for paintings," adds Carole Whiting. She loves to incorporate white display space around any house she helps design, to display craft, sculpture and objets d'art.

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COSY UP YOUR OPEN-PLAN AREAS

It's all well and good to get into the 'open plan' frame of mind — but use key furniture and accessories to define zones within those open-plan living spaces, then add layers of warmth and texture with upholstery, rugs and soft furnishings. Play with scale, too. A tall floor lamp beside a low couch or side table can create a sense of space.

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LIGHTEN THE MOOD

With its clean lines and subdued colour palette, modern Scandinavian style looks right at home in the Australian setting. To get the look just right, start with the floors — think lime-washed oak or boards painted white — then 'wrap' the room in shades of white and grey. "The contrast between floors, skirting, walls and ceiling should be kept subtle," advises Maree Hale of Porter's Paints.



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LOOK AT THE PAST IN BATHROOMS

*When updating a bathroom in a period home, including fixtures that give a nod to the original era is a great way to add character — such as in this bathroom (above). It was designed by Whiting Architects for a woman with "a very traditional Edwardian house," says Carole Whiting. "It's a very neutral palette with contemporary fittings, but the decorative tiles and clawfoot bath allow it to remain in context."*

(TOP LEFT AND TOP RIGHT) PHOTOGRAPHY SHARYN CAIRNS (BOTTOM) PHOTOGRAPHY THOMAS DALHOFF/HINDENBURGDALHOFF PHOTOGRAPHY (FACING PAGE) PHOTOGRAPHY MARK LOBOT

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INVEST IN THE CLASSICS

To create an interior that stands the test of time, skip replica furniture and invest in the real deal, advises Richard Munao, founder and director of Cult. "While replicas become valueless, the real ones become priceless," he says. Picks include the 'Wishbone' chair from Carl Hansen & Son, Fritz Hansen's 'Egg' chair and the BeoSound 9000 6-CD/Tuner from Bang & Olufsen. [cultdesign.com.au](http://cultdesign.com.au)



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ADD A MUD ROOM

Usually located at a side or back entry, mud rooms add practical punch to country homes and can provide an aesthetic and emotional transition into the house itself. For a rustic touch, as in this Whiting Architects design, use roughly textured natural materials or mimic the joinery elsewhere in the house. Storage is also vital. Include plenty of hooks and consider a bench with under-seat storage — it's perfect for sitting on to get shoes on and off.

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HANDMADE BEAUTY IN YOUR BATHROOM

Sydney interior designer Karen Akers' trick to achieving a high-end finish in bathrooms? Choose tiles that create texture and depth. Here (right), 'VMI45' red travertine mosaics from Bisanna Tiles are paired with white wall tiles. "I love the scale of the herringbone, the warmth of the colour and the texture they bring," she says. [karenakers.com.au](http://karenakers.com.au) >





# 17

## TRY COPPER IN THE KITCHEN

*Metallics, such as copper, brass, pewter and gold, are an ‘on-trend’ finish for tapware and can also be successfully integrated into your kitchen joinery. In this example, Fiona Lynch has wrapped the kitchen island bench in copper sheeting, which ties in with the timber flooring and provides a warm contrast to the white ‘Fish Scale’ tiles by Artedomus.*



# 18

## CONNECT YOUR BEDROOM TO THE GARDEN

The best master bedrooms feel serene and restorative. Connect them directly to the garden — whether it is through large picture windows, a window seat or, as is the case in Fiona Richardson’s home (above), French doors that open onto a courtyard. “It is especially nice to be able to throw open the doors when the wisteria is in full bloom,” she says.

# 19

## INSTALL A FAMILY OFFICE

Ideally located in the kitchen, where it’s easier to supervise the kids online, a family office helps with the smooth running of any household. Include space for a computer, pin board, power points for chargers and lots of storage.

# 20

## CLASH PATTERN AND PRINT

*Interior designer Anna Spiro of Brisbane’s Black & Spiro is a big fan of mixing pattern and print, which she’s done to great effect in boutique hotel Halcyon House at Cabarita Beach, NSW (right). “The different colours, patterns, scales and prints must all be linked in some way,” Anna says. Incorporating different tones of the dominant colour is key as “this helps create movement and life”. [blackandspiro.com.au](http://blackandspiro.com.au) *

