

CASE STUDY

heart of gold

Flocked wallpaper and tired carpet has given way to a welcoming white-and-timber entertaining space that forms the central hub of activity in this Sydney waterfront apartment

WORDS **JOANNE HAWKINS** STYLING **JILLIAN DINKEL**
PHOTOGRAPHY **JACQUI TURK**

Who lives here:

Semi-retired couple
Chris and Pauline Cordwell.

The project:

A tiny and dated kitchen was opened up to create an airy, bright space at the heart of a 1970s apartment in Sydney's Manly, incorporating plenty of storage and an entertaining area.

POINT OF VIEW

A mirror insert above the sink reflects light, as well as glimpses of the harbour view. Keeping within the minimalist look is a sleek tap from Phoenix Tapware. Eveneer 'Palings' timber veneer and Venture Plank flooring from Havwoods add pattern and warmth.

FELT BASKET (IN LAUNDRY), COUNTRY ROAD, COUNTRYROAD.COM.AU
LAUNDRY FLOOR TILES, ARTEDOMUS, ARTEDOMUS.COM

Pauline Cordwell freely admits it was the location of her two-bedroom Manly apartment that prompted her and husband Chris to pay a record price in the prominent building. "We purchased it because of the sensational view of the harbour," she says. Inside, the view wasn't quite as rosy, with the apartment being in original condition, complete with flocked wallpaper, coloured carpets and dated fittings. The small kitchen, in particular, was dark, had very limited storage and featured patterned carpet on both the floor and the cabinets. Wanting a "top-end apartment that was minimalist in design with quality products and finishes", the couple hired interior designer Jillian Dinkel to help them haul the entire space into the 21st century.

DREAM IT

Pauline and Chris really wanted the kitchen to feel connected to the stunning view. "Like a lot of older homes, the kitchen was totally separate from the rest of the apartment, which meant that when you were in it, you didn't see the expansive harbour view at all," Jillian explains. As the couple were downsizing from a larger property, storage was also key, particularly if they were to get the minimalist look they were after. Pauline and Chris were also keen to create an informal entertaining area. The solution was to take out two walls which not only opened the kitchen to the rest of the apartment – and the million-dollar vista – but created space for a seating area behind the island bench in space that had previously been a dark corridor.

DESIGN IT

With such a small space to work with, incorporating the all-important storage was achieved by utilising every millimetre available. "It was a big exercise in space planning to be able to maximise it and make it usable," Jillian says. She achieved this partly by installing floor-to-ceiling cupboards and under-bench drawers. The minimalist look was also realised with the inclusion of an appliance cabinet with retractable doors which keeps the kettle, coffee machine and toaster out of site, until needed. "It also means that Pauline and Chris can both comfortably use the kitchen at the same time because one of them can be making breakfast while not impeding the flow of the other walking back and forth from the sink or stove," she says.

WHITE OUT

Madden Bespoke Interiors made the two-pack polyurethane joinery in Dulux Peplum Quarter.

COME CLEAN

More custom-built timber veneer shelving and cabinetry was installed in the nearby laundry to maximise the space and link in with the kitchen.

“The couple wanted their kitchen to be a showpiece, a place where they could relax and entertain”

JILLIAN DINKEL, INTERIOR DESIGNER

DO IT

While Pauline was keen on a light, white kitchen, Jillian was worried it could look a little clinical. Her solution was to mix the white cabinetry with timber veneer floating shelves and cupboards in both the kitchen and adjacent laundry. Another masterstroke was the inclusion of the gold shadow line from Rimex Metals in the finger pulls of the drawers and cabinets. "I used that to really warm up the space and give it a bit of a special considered detail beyond plain white cabinetry," Jillian says. Combined with the statement Parachilna pendant light and oversized MadeMeasure handles on the cabinetry, it creates the luxe look the couple were after. Finally, a high-quality Corian benchtop, splashback and integrated sink in Glacier White were chosen to create a seamless look. Not surprisingly, Pauline is thrilled with her new space. "The kitchen, like the rest of the apartment, is fabulous and we are delighted with Jillian's considered and stunning design choices," she says.

To see more of Jillian's work, visit jilliandinkel.com. The builder of the project is Warrane – see warrane.co