Dalgety Street House



+ Coco pendant

ARCHITECT
Ha

DESIGNER
Kate Stokes and Coco Flip



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The heart of the foodie's home





The kitchen really is the heart of this Melbourne home. Steel-framed windows open up to an urban garden, and a walled deck extends the kitchen and dining room to the outdoors. This Victorian terrace in inner-city St Kilda has been transformed by Nick Harding of Melbourne architecture practice Ha, whose brief from the owner was to bring in light while creating privacy from an adjacent block of apartments. Now a sense of openness and flow extends throughout the house, and enclosed rooms at the front of the house have been opened up, making these living spaces more flexible and light-filled. Harding had a mission to create a clear line of sight from the front door right through to the back. This involved carving into the walls and removing two doors into the ground floor front rooms. All the walls are still there, but they are punctuated by huge openings.

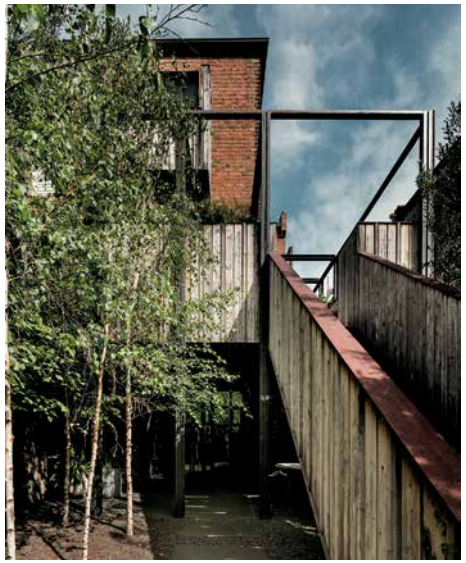
The kitchen is distinctive, with black cabinets and graphic black-and-white floor tiles, and is designed to have a flexible configuration. In winter, opening the steel-framed glass bi-fold doors at the end of the kitchen makes the full-sized pizza oven accessible and brings in crucial northern light, with the small opening keeping out cold air. In warmer weather, the west-facing doors parallel to the dining table can be opened, allowing the dining table to be taken outside for outdoor dining. Alternatively, both pairs of doors can be opened up to create freedom of movement across a seamless indoor–outdoor space.

^ The kitchen's steel-framed bi-fold doors contain windows that open individually.

< Geometric floor tiles and a green splashback bring the black kitchen cabinets to life.

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^ Open bi-fold doors create a seamless transition from the kitchen to the deck.

┐ Birch trees screen the kitchen and deck from neighbours.

› Black lines are echoed in the living room shelving and Halo pendant light.

The walled deck features built-in garden beds and seating nooks, shielding the occupants from the neighbours, while tall birch trees planted on the level below reach up to create another privacy screen. 'We had this idea of creating almost a walled garden which framed the entire kitchen,' explains Harding. 'It's like a huge timber sequence of planter beds that look like they've been chiselled out of this timberwork.'

The black steel frames of the windows in each of the rooms create a graphic language that is repeated throughout the house in the vertical lines of the black kitchen cabinets, the black-and-white tiles on the kitchen floor, the black-framed shelving in the living space and the black circle outline of the living room pendant light, Halo, by Australian designer Christopher Boots. Other finishes include concrete and white marble, with the only real splash of colour entering in the kitchen splashback, which echoes the greenery outside.

The house is situated on a steep slope. The living space and kitchen are on the ground floor at the front of the house, but at the back of the house they form the first floor above a basement bedroom suite where the dark, moody Melbourne colour palette once again reigns. 'We wanted it to be very intimate and warm when you're inside,' explains Harding. 'Dark finishes are more common in Melbourne, without a doubt. It's the climate – it gets cold here in winter and people like the intimacy.'



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— Nick Harding

Offering a subtle contrast to the black-and-green palette of the kitchen design is the Coco pendant light by Melbourne designer Kate Stokes. The light features black metal against light brown timber, tying in with the timber dining table and chairs. 'We wanted to have a pendant light that was largeish and creates a lovely downward cast of light over the dining room table,' says Harding.

For Harding and his team, this house was about creating a warm, intimate Melbourne house for an owner who is passionate about food. What they achieved in response to a difficult site is also a delicate balancing act between opening the house up to light and screening it from the neighbours.

The black steel frames of the windows create a graphic language that is echoed throughout the house with select pieces of lighting and furniture.

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^ The ensuite is connected to the bedroom via a long walk-in wardrobe.

> The dark wardrobe joinery blends with the finishes in the rest of the house.

>> The downstairs bedroom looks out onto a garden of tall birch trees.

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DALGETY STREET HOUSE

LOCATION
St Kilda, Victoria

DETAILS
Victorian terrace; 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms; 282 m²

ARCHITECT
Ha

BUILDER
Richard Tate Construction

PHOTOGRAPHY
Tom Blachford and Kate Ballis

STYLIST
Ruth Welsby



Much of the joinery in the house, including the living room shelves, was custom-designed.



Juxtaposing metal and timber

COCO PENDANT

DESIGNER
Kate Stokes

MATERIALS
Victorian ash, powder-coated aluminium

DETAILS OF CONSTRUCTION/MAKING
Hand-turned timber, spun aluminium

BRAND/MANUFACTURER
Coco Flip

PHOTOGRAPHY
Haydn Cattach

The Coco pendant by Melbourne design studio Coco Flip is so tied to the fortunes of the studio itself that it is often mistakenly referred to as the 'Coco Flip pendant'. Kate Stokes designed the light and launched the studio brand at the same time in 2010. She has received critical acclaim for her design, which took off immediately in the design press worldwide.

The original idea for the light was to combine timber and metal in a seamless way. 'At the time, there weren't many lights around with timber in them,' says Stokes. 'We wanted to create something that had a lot of presence in the room and would hang with ease.' Stokes met with local manufacturers, such as timber turners, early in the process to see what they could do, then worked with her partner, Haslett Grounds, on the 3D-modelling of the piece. The final design is sourced from different makers and packaged up in the studio, twenty at a time.

The Coco pendant – simple, yet proportionally elegant and materially balanced – has become very popular with Australian architects and interior designers, but it is only one of a number of different designs sold by the studio, including several lights and other furniture items. It is fantastic to see the success of this Australian design brand, which has achieved steady growth over the past decade.

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