

From design concept down to the last piece of silverware, this apartment functions as a seamless whole.

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# DESIGN MEETS FUNCTION





## BEHIND THE SCENES

**FAVOURITE ROOM** Karen's favourite room is definitely the master bedroom with its luxurious fully upholstered wall behind the bed. Tailor-made wardrobes, reminiscent of an up-market men's fashion store, gave our fastidious client the organisation he required. A hydraulic lift mechanism in the bed allows for additional storage, something that's hard to find in most apartments.

**FAVOURITE FEATURE** Without a doubt, our favourite feature is the stunning view of Sydney Harbour. With this in mind, the colour palette was kept neutral, bringing splashes of colour in with soft furnishings, artwork and accessories.

**CHALLENGES** Designing an interior in a high-rise, you're bound to encounter challenges. The apartment's existing ceiling height was already quite low, but due to floor levelling and acoustic treatments to the new floor, ceiling heights were lowered again. This in turn created a problem for lighting and meant we had to create as small a ceiling cavity space as possible for downlights.

**KAREN'S TOP TIP** Maintain a fairly neutral palette for your main finishes such as floors, walls and custom joinery, injecting colour into feature walls, soft furnishings and accessories. This allows you to easily change the look and feel of your home seasonally without a huge cost.

It pays to invest a little extra money in items and finishes that bear the brunt of traffic and daily life. Flooring is important as it forms a base from which the rest of the interior will evolve. Investing in good-quality carpet, full-bodied vitrified tile or natural stone is essential as this is an area you want to stand the test of time.

The owner of this contemporary apartment has spent 15 years in the building, including a move up 14 floors to take in the incredible views.

It was in original condition when he made the move, and needed updating to make the most of the position, so talented interior designer Karen Wallace of KW Interiors was called in to manage the project. In consultation with her client, Karen took complete control of the design process right down to choosing the cutlery, crockery, linen and towels. "We even hung the towels, ironed the linen and made the beds!" she says. "It was a fantastic way to work, as everything could be coordinated – to the last tea towel!"

### PERFECT PARTNERSHIP

"I wanted an apartment that suited a bachelor," explains the owner. "I needed an uncluttered, open space, as I'm very methodical in the way I live. I prefer modern design, but required something that wouldn't







One of the owner's favourite features is the retractable 42" plasma TV in the living area that's very cleverly concealed within the kitchen island bench. A similar TV built into the bedroom wardrobe incorporates a swivel arm to allow viewing from the bathtub.

Marble flooring gives clean lines and enhances light.







## COLOUR CODE

Bristol Stone Fish on the walls throughout provides the urbane masculine look the owner was after and this effect is strengthened with a feature wall in Bristol Glenrowan in the lounge. Burnt orange accessories bring the rooms to life.

Strong neutral tones are complemented by custom artwork and accents of burnt orange.

date overnight. I work from home and wanted to surprise people with a wow factor when they came in the door."

Karen explains, "My brief was for guests to open the door to style and cutting-edge design. The mood was to be airy and minimal, with no clutter. Low-maintenance fittings and maximum storage were key features."

She worked closely with her client over a six-month planning period. "We changed the initial drawings a number of times – that's the upside of working on a computer," she says, "but nothing was altered after that."

For his part, the owner considers the beauty of three-dimensional design is that you can see how things will appear before they're built. Karen was also able to add the colour to give me an appreciation of how it would look. She understands the concept of building too, and to hear her discuss how the construction worked was amazing."

Major decisions – such as removing the wall that separated the galley kitchen from the living area, opening up the living area to the huge views – had a strong impact on the design. Original skirtings and cornices were removed to make way for sleek new design featuring a state-of-the-art kitchen, and a dining area with an adjacent bar and wine storage for easy entertaining.

The result is a functional apartment that provides everything the owner wants without straying from his brief for orderly contemporary surroundings.

"Function and design are our primary concerns," says Karen, "and this update was

[left] The living area is low-key but visually exciting, the whole look pulled together by the distinctive patterned rug.





a success on all counts." The owner is equally delighted with his home, saying "the layout is fantastic. It's airy and uncluttered, with modern, contemporary furniture. I love everything in here! It all seems tailor-made."

#### TEAM PLAYERS

Karen's designs were brought to life by Mende Seljanovski of Van & Son Detail Joinery. Three-dimensional imaging of design concepts and the latest technology in computer programs meant that, here as well, no changes were made once work was under way.

Master craftsmen, Van & Son undertook the joinery and fit-out to the same exacting standards as the design brief, using architectural joinery of uncompromising quality.

"Mende made the design a reality," explains the owner. "He supervised the whole project." Pure function is also a feature of the wardrobe system they installed. "I have a long wardrobe with all the suits hanging





The kitchen is a seamless part of the living area.





together," he continues. "Sports coats and shirts fit perfectly, and there's a place for everything." And plenty of natural light helps when selecting clothes.

### BACHELOR PALETTE

A sophisticated and masculine colour scheme of strong neutrals was chosen, complementing the flooring and joinery fixtures. The walls throughout are painted in Bristol Stone Fish, with a darker feature wall in Bristol Glenrowan in the lounge. The floors are composite Ambra marble from Quarella, and accessories in burnt orange add accents that bring the rooms to life. The

neutral tones were carefully judged. "With this kind of view, you need to keep the focus looking out of the window," explains Karen. "You wouldn't want the eye to fight against anything that magnificent."

Abstract artworks were commissioned from Botany Bay Productions to enhance the interior. "We gave them samples of the wall and fabric colours, and discussed what shades should be in the paintings," says Karen. The strict brief included details of the media to be used, the size of the pieces, and even the proportion of the colour orange to be included – which was 15 per cent.

The living area features contemporary

furniture from Fanuli Furniture, with a Zenith chair and footstool in mocha leather, and a Biba lamp table and coffee table in starphire sandblasted glass. Profile sofas upholstered in Stone macrosuede and scatter cushions in Chilli macrosuede from Jordan, along with a rug from Designer Rugs, complete the look.

The dining area features a table in sandblasted starphire glass and Annie chairs from Fanuli. A fridge, a limed-walnut wine-storage cabinet and a wine-storage bench in Quarella Ambra marble composite and starphire glass make entertaining easy.

The natural stone and marble bathrooms





[above] The master bedroom features Stone macrosuede fabric from Warwick Fabrics, and bedside tables, a lowboy and a blanket box in Linchen Tulip veneer from Woodstock. The wall is upholstered in Velveteen Biscuit from Warwick Fabrics.

[top right] Neutral tones and luxurious textures give the bedroom a relaxed mood.

[right] There's a place for everything in this customised storage system.



follow the theme of clean, uncluttered lines. Composite marble flooring carries through from the living areas and the walls are full slabs of marble, minimising grout and keeping the look open and clean.

### STATE OF THE ART

Cutting-edge C-bus technology is a major feature, with a single remote control operating the lighting, blinds, underfloor heating, plasma screens and music. "The state-of-the-art system has separate wall-mounted screens, which can be pre-programmed to various mood settings for entertaining, dining or night time," says Karen.

As the owner works from home, the kitchen needed to be a seamless part of the living space. "I didn't want a kitchen that looked like a kitchen," he explains. The latest technology follows through here too,



The Kohler Sok bath is unique due to its depth as it enables you to fully immerse yourself in the water for a luxurious soak. It incorporates an overspill channel that allows water to smoothly fall over into a cavity, similar to overspills in pools.



with a plasma screen that can be concealed within the benchtop when not in use, solving the problem of where to place the television without spoiling the lines of the interior. "The mechanism – by Ultra Lift – is the perfect solution," says Karen. "We also made a veneer box around the back of the screen, so it looks great from all sides." The benchtop also conceals a DVD, CD and sound amps on the living area side, with kitchen cutlery on the other side. It's made of Ambra composite marble, giving continuity of design, with a glass splashback in starphire Rich Biscuit. Veneer cabinetry in a limed-walnut satin finish from New Age Veneers provides a contemporary touch.

#### ALL IN THE DETAIL

Thoughtful design features and attention to the smallest detail make everyday living here a pleasure. The plasma screen in the master bedroom has a pivot hinge so it can be

watched from the bath, and a motorised blind descends from the ceiling when privacy is required, dividing the bathroom from the bedroom. "The way these rooms work is fantastic," says the owner. "The bathroom opens up across the bedroom and, whether I'm in the shower or bath, I can see through to the view outside."

Surprisingly, the marble laundry features high on the owner's list of successes. "The best part of the apartment is the way this worked out," he says. "Many people don't bother with the laundry, but this design works very well. It has more cupboards than most, the washing machine and drier are built in and there's a hanging rack and cupboards for brooms. Best of all, it doesn't look like a laundry, but like a miniature room!" ■

[above] The deep Sok bath from Kohler is designed for luxury bathing.