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THE HOME OF DESIGN & ARCHITECTURE

THE  
KITCHEN  
ISSUE

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INTERIORS...  
DECORATING...  
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LATEST TECH...  
NEW BUILDS...  
ARCHITECTURE...  
& TRAVEL...



enki curates kitchens

# CHARCOAL SKIES

Painted brickwork and oak ceilings create  
an authentic voice for this revamped family home

Words Eleanor Rice Photography Shannon McGrath



"THE HOUSE NEEDED TO  
PROVIDE SANCTUARY FROM  
THE HECTIC WORLD OUTSIDE"

Hygge, the Danish term for a moment of pure contentment or a feeling of cosiness, is now rooted as one of the core values of a Scandi-inspired interior. Its circulation around the design world has seen a resurgence in mindful interiors and for Australian architects Studiofour, it became the driving force behind this renovation project. Tracing back to 1978, the original property was enshrouded in heavily patterned wallpaper and an eclectic collection of ornate embellishments that, while characterful, did not suit the contemporary clients. Despite this, a desire to keep costs down and respect the history of the site led the architects in the direction of working with the existing architectural elements. "We recognised that the strength of the existing house lay externally," explain Studiofour. In particular, the brickwork was utilised and extended inside to solidify the identity of the home and reinforce its stark horizontal form. Considering the neutral colour palette of the interior, which had been inspired by an admirable collection of the client's existing design pieces, inviting texture into the home was vital. Thus brick and timber have been scattered throughout to add interest and variety to the property without over-styling and decorating. The simplicity and raw nature of these materials exude a truthfulness and imperfection, which in this case, was crucial for developing a sense of hygge in the home.

To the naked eye, the brickwork extends seamlessly into the home thanks to the clever use of black paint which acts as a camouflage and complements the oak ceilings. "The synergy achieved between the materiality of the brick and timber led to a blurring of boundaries between inside and out," say Studiofour



As a professional couple with three children, the layout of the home needed to respond to their busy schedules. Thus, the floor plan was designed to be flexible enough to feature open social spaces but without the noise levels and lack of warmth that a large, airy space can possess



"THE LANGUAGE OF THE EXTERIOR BRICKWORK IS CARRIED INSIDE TO DEFINE VOLUMES"



Highlight windows, sitting above the kitchen and living areas, were a defining element of the original structure. These have been maintained to allow natural light to flow deeper into the more sheltered rooms



"THE KITCHEN HAS BEEN DESIGNED IN THREE DIFFERENT LAYERS"

"OUR VISION WAS TO DELIVER A MORE  
FLUID, CASUAL DINING EXPERIENCE"

To provide a completely  
adaptable kitchen space,  
Studiofour have segregated the  
design of this hub into three  
sections: a five-metre-long  
workbench, a cooking zone and  
an admin or homework area



"WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO RE-PURPOSE AN EXISTING HOME  
AND CONSERVE THE HEART AND SOUL OF THE FORGOTTEN"

## HOME PROFILE

### PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

A one-storey brick property has been renovated and revamped. While its over-decorated interiors have been transformed into a neutral, design-led setting, the main structural elements have been kept in tact. Its original brickwork now continues inside and fills the gaps between vertical joints to reinforce the unique horizontal nature of the building. The floor plan showcases a range of open and private spaces which have been interspersed with glass walls in an effort to control the acoustics without sacrificing visual openness and connection.

### LOCATION

Malvern, Melbourne, Australia

### PROPERTY SIZE

490 sq. m

### BUILD TIME

10 months

### ARCHITECTURAL BRIEF

With three children and busy work schedules to keep in mind, the clients were looking to turn the house they had been living in into a soulful home which at its heart was the definition of hygge.

While the kitchen offers space to sit and eat, the official dining room purposefully feels more formal for times where the family want to get together and celebrate. This space boasts a Hans J. Wegner dining table which was one of the design pieces that informed the material and colour palette of the interior design





An intriguing mix of open, social spaces and more confined, private rooms, has produced a range of sensations and different levels of intimacy throughout the interior. During the more social times of the day, the kitchen will be thriving with chatter, but a quick walk to a bedroom offers an escape from this buzz

## MEET THE ARCHITECT

Studiofour is a Melbourne-based holistic design and architecture studio who focus on residential projects.

**In your own words how would you describe the term 'hygge'?**

Before this, our understanding of hygge was quite limited and perhaps cliché. During the design process our understanding was deepened and informed much by our clients. We were taught that it was not necessarily an aesthetic, but rather it was a feeling that was generated by context and at its core was a celebration of warmth, happiness and togetherness.

**What inspired you to use dark hues?**

It is difficult to remember if there was ever a moment when the vision for this house was not dark. It seems we never considered it could be anything but charcoal black. Dark colours also provide a level of camouflage, when tying in new brickwork this seemed like an advantage.

**What is the relationship between the timber ceiling and brickwork?**

In order to give the house a clear and focused voice, our design ensured the language of the exterior brick slid inside to inform the interiors. Our next challenge was to limit the plasterboard ceilings and create additional texture with the inclusion of an oak-battened ceiling. This provided a contrast, softness and warmth that was not achievable through the use of the brick alone.

"NO EMBELLISHMENTS HAS ALLOWED TRUTHFULNESS TO BEEN RETURNED TO THE HOME"



## PROJECT NOTES

### ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN

Studiofour  
studiofour.net.au

### BUILDING SURVEYOR

The Good Men  
Building Surveyors

### BUILDER

Grenville Architectural  
Construction

### STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Webb Consult

### KITCHEN

Vola; V-Zug; Vintec; E15

### NOTABLE FURNITURE

Fireplace, Riva; Side tables, Vitra; Chair, Borge Morgenson; Pendant, Louis Poulsen; Coffee table, Jasper Morrison; Dining furniture, Hans J. Wegner; Bar stools, Norm Architects



"OUR FOCUS WAS TO PROVIDE A HEALTHY HOME FOR THE MIND, BODY AND SOUL"