



LUXE IS MORE

With a re-fit by interior designer *David Hicks* it is no surprise that this Melbourne mansion is absolutely showstopping.



This page In the loggia, cushions in Cassaro 'Okapi' from Milgate and Satino 'Onyx' from Zepel Fabrics. Opposite page In the formal living room, Guglielmo Veronesi 1950s Italian armchairs reupholstered in Groundworks 'Currents' fabric by Kelly Wearstler from Elliott Clarke. Vintage candlesticks from Napoleon Perdis Life.Style, 'Big Bang' wall sculpture by Béatrice Serre from Galerie Michèle Hayem, Paris.

Photographs SHANNON McGRATH Words CHRIS PEARSON



Grand and glamorous, the massive marble coffee table in this six-bedroom mansion in Melbourne's southeast required 10 men to manoeuvre it into the panelled living room. Custom-made, it defines the room and could be a metaphor for the house – everything is on a lavish scale, yet it's conceived and crafted to the smallest detail.

When the owners, a couple with one daughter, bought the late 1920s, Georgian-style home in 2014, it had been renovated over the years, but it needed a refresh, for which they hired interior designer David Hicks.

"The bones were there," David says. "It's a beautiful old house with large rooms, so not much space planning was required, except in the bathrooms and kitchen, which had not been upgraded. The clients wanted it to be homely, but also have areas for more formal entertaining, and for it to be a showcase of art and beautiful pieces. They requested no specific items or colours, just that we modernise but stay in keeping with the grand nature of this magnificent house."

That imposing home knows how to make an entrance – you walk into a commodious, panelled hallway, complete with a fireplace and coffered ceiling. To the left are a formal living area, study and TV room, while to the right are the formal dining and open-plan living and dining areas and kitchen. Directly in front is a triple-arched loggia, soaking up views of the established garden. The sweeping stairs lead to six bedrooms (one serving as a generous wardrobe and dressing room), a roof terrace and four bathrooms.

David knocked out walls in the bathrooms to enlarge them and remodelled the kitchen. Other rooms, bar one (more on that later), were "a blank canvas", to which he added his highly individual brushstrokes. David introduced panelling, mouldings and wallpaper in select rooms to reinstate the grandeur that had been diminished by previous renovations. Existing parquet floors throughout were sanded and stained, and the walls painted a crisp, warm white to serve as a backdrop for the richly hued and patterned furnishings he would later add.

This page Custom sofas and ottomans by David Hicks. Custom coffee table in Calacatta marble. Italian vintage 'Wheat-sheaf' side tables from Comer & Co. US. Vintage Pino Signoretto vases (on mantel) from Capocchi. Opposite page, clockwise from top left in the family room, custom armchair and leather ottoman by David Hicks. Vase on side table by Kelly Wearstler. In the hallway, vintage lacquered table by Gio Ponti from Nicholas & Alistair. Rug from Cadrys. In the original formal dining room, vintage gilded mirror by Giovanni Gariboldi from Nicholas & Alistair.





This page In the informal dining area, 'Gubi' chairs from Luke Furniture, Tom Dixon 'Bash' bowl (left) from Safari Living, Vintage Barovier & Toso 'Rostrato' chandelier from Nicholas & Alistair. Opposite page, from top In the loggia, vintage red marble coffee table from The Country Trader, Custom sofa by David Hicks in Perennials 'White Sands' canvas weave fabric from South Pacific Fabrics, Palecek 'Arena' outdoor lounge chairs from Laura Kincade, Pedestal table from Graham Geddes, Custom bronze leaf side tables, Industrial-style mirror from Parterre, Sydney, Rug from Cadrys.



For the decoration, David took cues from the architecture of the house. "We wanted something grand and impressive, but in a homely way," he says. "We also wanted an international feel, as this house could be in LA, Italy or France." A palette of materials and furnishings was chosen to reflect this vibe. Accordingly, David sourced from all over the world, including New York, LA and Paris, to create "a unique and eclectic scheme". This international layering has created a palette of fabrics, wallpapers, furniture and lighting that suits this unique house, such as the Italian mid-century Guglielmo Veronesi armchairs bought in LA and upholstered in contemporary rippled Kelly Wearstler fabric.

The colour palette is "fairly monochromatic in a silver and cream layering with punches of bold graphic for texture and depth", he says. But David amped up the depth in the informal living area, main bedroom and study, introducing warmer, darker tones for a "sanctuary feel".

Texture, too, forms an integral part in David's signature layering and adds to the sense of comfort. "There is a big play on texture, from the micro – shagreen wallpaper and intricately detailed fabrics – to the macro – bold statement lighting, vases, wall sculptures and mirrors. I love to layer patterns with smooth, rough, shiny and matt, as it creates a synergy and tension at the same time."

Mindful that the large rooms could have swallowed smaller pieces, David played with scale in his furniture selection and often relied on custom-made options to solve this design dilemma – witness the marble coffee table and the sofas in the formal living room, and the ottomans and ebony cabinet in the informal living.

"I love the house and everything in it," David says. "It is curated, but homely, a truly decadent home without being flashy or ostentatious. Beautiful spaces curated with materials, art, furniture and lighting from around the world flow in harmony." One room, however, will never receive the Hicks treatment – the more traditional formal dining room, which remains poignantly different from the other spaces. "Completed by the late Stuart Rattle, this room was retained in the existing style of the house," David explains. "We wanted to keep this room as a homage to him and his work." 11

For more on David Hicks and his new book, *Intimate: A World of Private Interiors*, go to davidhicks.com.



In the main bedroom, warmer, darker tones were added to the “fairly monochromatic” colour palette for a sanctuary feel.

SPEED READ

» The owners of this six-bedroom Georgian-style mansion in Melbourne's southeast were drawn by its huge rooms. The house was in need of a refresh, however, for which they hired interior designer David Hicks. » Having been previously renovated, it needed few structural changes, except for enlarging the bathrooms and remodelling the kitchen. David added details such as panelling and mouldings to evoke the home's architecture. Furnishings were sourced from all over the world for a unique, eclectic look. » Texture, from the macro to the micro, plays an integral part in David's signature layering.

These pages Minotti 'Andersen' leather bed and Minotti 'Shearling' plaid and cashmere throw, both from De De Ce. Custom side tables by David Hicks in crown-cut European oak with honed Monaco marble tops. Rock crystal cube lamps from Avalon, NY. Vintage Paolo Buffa coffee table from Nicholas & Alistair. Leather sofa by David Hicks. Louis XV crystal chandelier from Graham Geddes. 'Hanmadang' wallpaper from Domain Textiles. Jim Thompson Fabrics silk curtains from Milgate.