

FUTURE

FORM

Dividing his time between two cities, Melbourne interior designer David Hicks has created a luxurious second home and inner-city sanctuary in Sydney that evokes creativity and calm.

Photography **TOM BLACHFORD**

This page David Hicks in his light-filled Darlinghurst apartment, where he stays whenever work calls him to Sydney. An Italian copper glass disc from eModerno fills the double-height void, while a pillar from Minimal Maker holds the *An Affectionate Creature (A Pink Friend)* sculpture by Narelle White from Charles Nodrum Gallery.





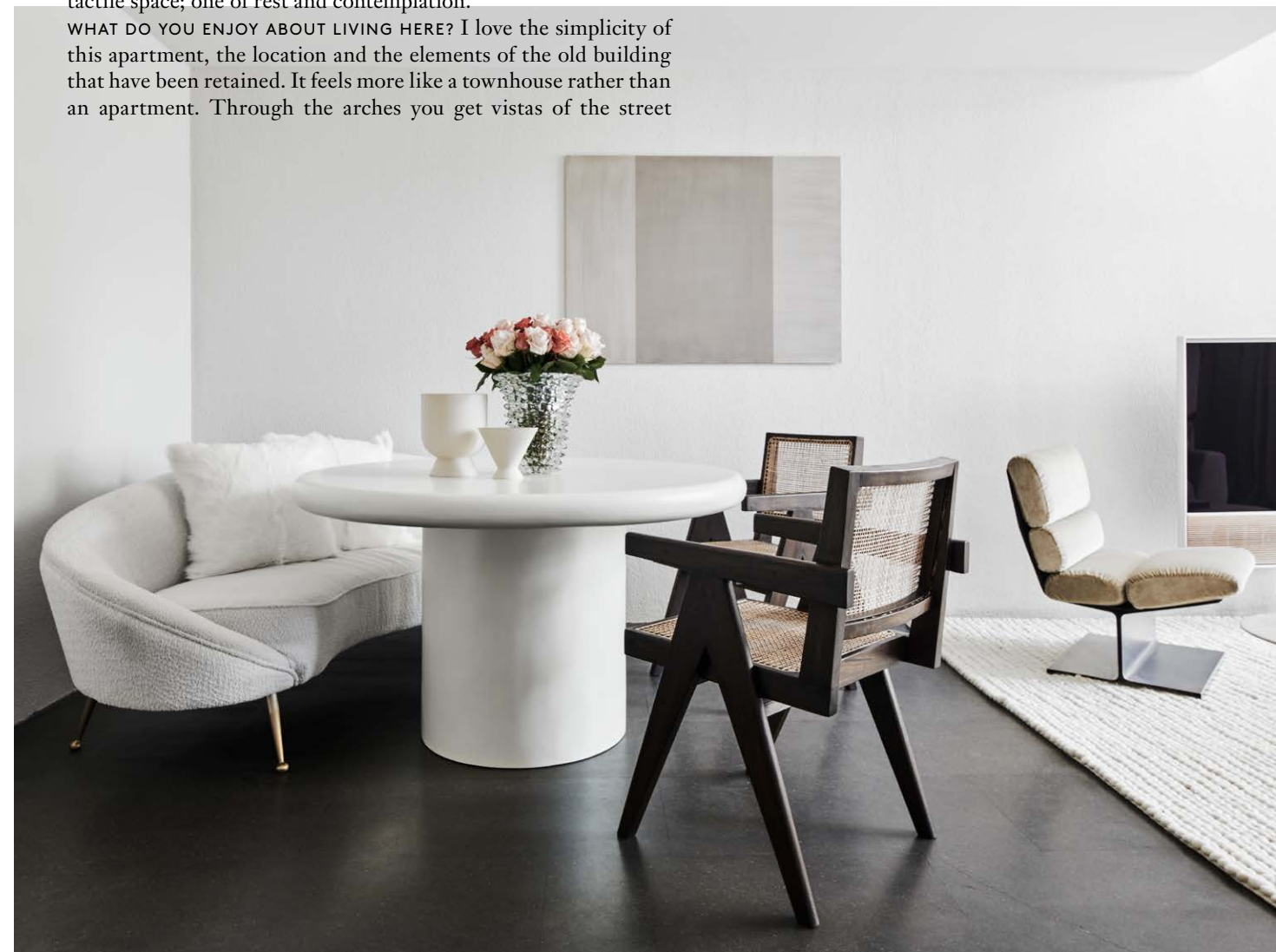
This page, from top In the living area, a pair of Paul Geoffroy for Uginox lounge chairs gather around a 'Pluto' coffee table from Future Classics Furniture, with a Bang & Olufsen TV from Premium Sound. A Knoll 'Platner' side table from De De Ce holds a David Hicks 'Leather Noir' candle; the custom handwoven wool rug is also from David's Editions range. A statement vintage Italian floor lamp from Nicholas & Alistair lights the space and James Dunlop 'Kyoto Snow' curtains close off the patio at night. Opposite page, from top Harry Seidler's Horizon building is glimpsed from the patio. Knoll 'Saarinen' table, Gong Fu bench from Admiralty Antiques and 'Zen' outdoor stools from Remarkable Furniture. Inside, meals are served at a 'Kaya' dining table from Casa Blanco. 'Benoit' sofa from Darcy & Duke and vintage Chandigarh chairs. Untitled Painting, 2019 by Mark Galea from Charles Nodrum Gallery.



WHAT APPEALED TO YOU ABOUT YOUR HOME? It was the double-height void and expansive glazing. It's rare to find such scale, especially in a small apartment. The proportions make it feel more spacious, and you don't get that confined feeling you get in spaces with standard-height ceilings. Located on a corner, the apartment also has original timber sash windows that allow light into the stair void, and views to the street below. Located within an old part of the building, the existing arched windows have been retained and opened up to allow light into the patio area. The appeal of this is that it feels like a room, but it's outside; it extends the internal living spaces outwards.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE INTERIOR? Compact and streamlined. I reduced the material palette down to only a few finishes. The existing basalt stone floor was restored and used as a dark grounding base for a more serene layering of tones. I introduced a textured render to the walls in a double strength natural white to give the space a more natural, organic feel. White Corian was used in the kitchen with a seamlessly integrated sink, and was continued into the laundry/powder room. This was teamed with satin lacquered cabinetry in Dulux 'Russian Toffee' and a splash of more glamorous Arabescato marble. A feature vintage Murano glass wall light was added as an embellishment alongside a mirrored wall. This simplicity is carried upstairs to the loft-style bedroom, with nude-coloured silk carpet and tonal furniture. The bathroom is covered in microcement for a seamless and effortless feel, again with a touch of marble and mirror for some elegance and another vintage Murano wall light to add sparkle. I wanted this apartment to be a simple, yet warm and tactile space; one of rest and contemplation.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY ABOUT LIVING HERE? I love the simplicity of this apartment, the location and the elements of the old building that have been retained. It feels more like a townhouse rather than an apartment. Through the arches you get vistas of the street





This page The kitchen features satin-lacquered cabinetry in Dulux 'Russian Toffee', a white Corian marble benchtop, Vola tapware from Mary Noall and Gaggenau appliances from E&S Trading.

trees, some older buildings across the street and Harry Seidler's iconic Horizon building beyond, framed perfectly. The compact space ensured I considered everything in the design, and it is extremely enjoyable to be in. I like to simplify my life as much as possible and have learnt, over time, to eliminate unnecessary items or objects, to invest in key pieces and have fewer, but nicer things. The simplicity of this space allows these items to be fully enjoyed.

DO YOU HAVE A WORK-FROM-HOME SET-UP? I am based in Melbourne and my primary place of residence is there, however, we undertake a lot of work in Sydney. Instead of setting up an office in Sydney, I purchased this apartment where I could not only stay, but base myself for work when away from home. The space is perfect for this, as well as hosting client meetings, both formal and informal. To me it is the new way of working remotely; it's a showcase of what we can do and a point of difference in terms of the traditional office. The apartment is also open for others to enjoy and can be booked through our website.

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR ART COLLECTION? The pieces I purchased for this space were considered along with the material palette and the soft furnishings. The large copper coloured glass disc is from Italy and was purchased through eModerno. I placed it higher than usual on the wall to help fill the double-height void and to give some reflectivity, whilst adding warmth. The painting, *Untitled painting*, 2019 by Mark Galea was purchased from Charles Nodrum Gallery. I have long been a fan of Mark's minimalist works

and the colourway in this piece was perfect for the apartment. The sculpture I love for its organic shape and texture, but also its refinement. Placed atop the plaster-finished plinth, it speaks to the disc hovering on the wall above it. Made from sand and porcelain, it's called *An Affectionate Creature (a Pink Friend)* by Narelle White and was also purchased through Charles Nodrum Gallery.

WHAT'S YOUR NEXT PURCHASE? I am very much into sculpture, especially ceramic. It has to be the right piece though, so I'm taking my time.

WHAT PROJECTS ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO? We're currently working on some amazing projects in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. We are very excited about working on a boutique building of six full-floor luxury residences in Elizabeth Bay, a large multi-residential offering in St Leonards and an apartment development in Bondi, which will see luxurious penthouses and hotel-like amenity spaces. We're also working on a couple of harbourside homes, which are very special due to the amazing views they command. In Melbourne we're working on some beautiful, large family homes, both refurbishments and new builds.

IF YOU DIDN'T LIVE HERE, WHERE ELSE WOULD YOU LIVE? I love being able to live between the two cities – it keeps things fresh and allows me access to exciting projects that are unique to their locations.

IS THERE A COMMON ELEMENT, AESTHETIC OR APPROACH THAT RUNS THROUGH YOUR WORK? I would say my work has evolved and that I have, in a way, come full circle to when I



started my practice. I have been embracing minimalism again, tapping into my love of simplicity in design and the refinement of ideas. On the flipside, playing with decorative layering allows embellishment, taking streamlined, resolved spaces to a new level. DESCRIBE A TYPICAL WORK DAY? I usually wake at 6.30am and do 30 minutes of cardio followed by 20 minutes of meditation. This allows me to calm my racing mind and find clarity for the day ahead. I get ready, take my two dogs out for a quick walk and then we all go into the office. I generally don't eat breakfast and tend to eat lunch on the run. My work day is hectic – emails, production and meetings. My office day tends to end around 7 or 8pm. Dinner and emails usually round out the day and I'm into bed by 10.30pm. WHICH OTHER CREATIVES ARE INSPIRING YOU AT THE MOMENT? I tend to find inspiration from people I follow on Instagram. I'm terrible with names, but there are so many people producing amazing work and sharing ideas. I often screenshot things I like and store them in a folder on my computer. This allows me to go back through them when looking for inspiration for new projects.

davidbicks.com

This page, from top The bedroom features an 'Osaka' bed from Noa Home, vintage Chandigarh bench, 'Isla' ceramic lamps from Milk & Sugar and a Serge Mouille ceiling light from 1stdibs. Edel 'Vanity' silk carpet from Whitecliffe Imports feels luxurious underfoot. A Knoll Saarinen 'Tulip' chair sits at the 'Slab' console from Trit House, with a 1960s Italian mirror from a Paris flea market hanging above. Bathroom walls were treated to Marius Aurenti 'Voile' microcement by Pure Deco, with Caroma 'Luna' tapware from Reece, Arabescato stone from Stone Factory and a Murano glass wall light from Paris.

