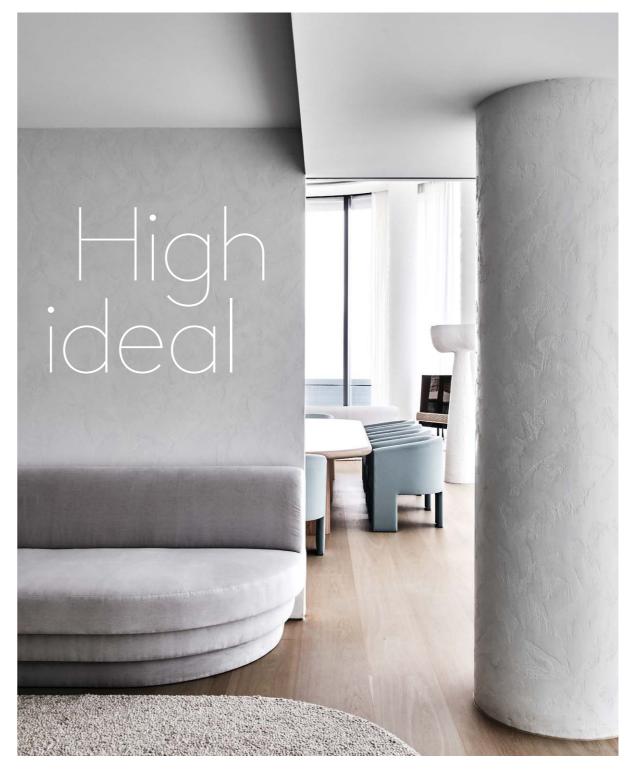


An imposing penthouse perched above a beach in south-east Melbourne presents living on a grand scale, yet it's also a warm and welcoming home for a large family.



This page In the TV room, looking towards the dining area, solid European oak floorboards with coloured light-grey oil from Dinesen. Walls in Venetian plaster by Who Plastering, Byron Bay. Custom banquette in Mokum 'South Beach' outdoor fabric from Zepel. Custom wool loop rug by Halcyon Lake. Custom dining chairs upholstered in Kravet outdoor fabric from Elliott Clarke. 'Eole' floor lamp by Pierre Augustin Rose from Studio ALM. Sheers in Mokum 'Lino' in Whitewash from James Dunlop. Opposite page In the main bedroom,'Kore' carpet from Halcyon Lake. 'Roly-Poly' coffee table in Chalk from Toogood, London. Apple sourced from Paris flea market. 'Classique V' pendant light by Joseph Dirand from Ozone, Paris. Gubi 'Pacha' lounge chair from In Good Company. Bench seat custom upholstered in Dedar 'Amaral' fabric from South Pacific Fabrics. Solid bronze sheep from Antiques on Old Plank Road, Chicago.



his is penthouse living on a grand and dramatic scale. Port Phillip Bay sweeps before the curved, double-height facade like a VistaVision movie, while the apartment, designed by David Hicks, provides a sumptuous, dresscircle seat of the unscripted spectacle beyond. He has deftly ensured that neither the interiors nor the view upstage each other – the head-turning penthouse and its epic panorama share star billing. But, paradoxically perhaps, despite its imposing scale, this is also a cosy and comfortable family home.

In 2018, David was asked to design the interiors in the St Kilda waterfront development, created by architects Fender Katsalidis in the style of a plush resort. From lobby to library, private dining rooms to spa, even a cinema with gold-class seating, the spaces exude his signature classic luxe, with marble taking a leading role.

He customised many of the apartments, including this owned by media mogul Antony Catalano and wife Stefanie, shared with the younger six of their nine children, aged four to 19. "A dramatic shift in apartment design recently has created more appeal to families," says Antony. "Our 800sqm property has the space of a family home, including four living areas, with amenities to rival a six-star hotel."

Embracing the seventh and eighth floors, the penthouse boasts glazing on three sides presenting views across the bay and back towards the city. "The clients are young and fun, with a large family," says David. "The focus was on creating spaces for their diverse needs." That included a mix of generous entertaining areas and private spaces for precious time-out – for both parents and children, together with six bedrooms. And, while the luxe materials and fittings had to cater for discerning adults, they also had to be hard-wearing, with no sharp corners, for impetuous children.

"We required individual spaces where adults can retreat and find peace away from the chaos that comes with a big family but also spaces where the kids can have fun," says Antony. "Our kitchen bench had to be five metres long, so we could have nine barstools!" And a humungous dining table, seating 14, would offer "a special place to come together. Some elements are dramatic because of the sheer size and scale, but our home also had to be warm and welcoming," he adds. "We asked David to blend rich textures and minimalism to create rooms that are uncomplicated, yet inviting."

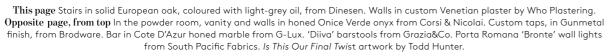
With access to a front balcony and a rear outdoor area, respectively, two vast living spaces occupy opposite ends of »





This page, from left In the kitchen, solid European oak floorboards in light-grey oil from Dinesen. Benchtop in Calacatta Paonazzo honed marble from G-Lux. Custom plaster stools with seat pad in Pavoni 'Veneto' leather from South Pacific Fabrics. Joinery in European oak veneer stained to match floorboards. 'Highline' pendant light in white from Archier. In the living and dining areas, custom sofa and dining chairs upholstered in Kravet outdoor fabric from Elliott Clarke. Opposite page Custom dining table in solid oak, stained to match floorboards, from In Good Company. Custom dining chairs upholstered in Kravet outdoor fabric from Elliott Clarke. 'Mushroom' pendant light by Stephen Antonson from Liz O'Brien, New York. Walls in custom Venetian plaster by Who Plastering.







« the lower floor, with the main bedroom suite between. Living, dining and kitchen enjoy bay views, dramatically enhanced by a soaring double-height void. Meanwhile, at the opposite end, a family lounge with a large semicircular bar abuts the garden and pool.

The hallway sports three sets of double doors. "This creates a sound lock, enabling both ends of the floor to be used while the central area remains private," says David. The upper level boasts five bedrooms all with ensuites, a family bathroom with a mammoth marble tub and a huge kids' lounge. "For the finishes and fittings, while Antony and Stefanie wanted warm minimalism, using only neutrals, they still had to be elegant and glamorous. The aesthetic is about oversized pieces, special materials and refined detailing," he says. And it's largely inspired by the beachscape beyond.

Copious curves on fittings and furnishings echo the sinuous facade and the ocean waves while being child-friendly and playful, highlighted by a sheep in the stairwell which reflects the mood and the palette, white, grey and black, with black-veined white marble, black metal trims and bleached-oak floors.

In the family area, Cote D'Azur marble on the bar top and fascia is "reminiscent of a stormy sea. Featuring a light bluegrey background with lashings of dark blue and charcoal, this stone is dramatic, yet paradoxically calming," says David. "It mimics the tones of sand, water and sky." By contrast, he clad the powder room in green onyx from top to bottom, creating a jewel-like space.

"The generous space enabled us to use slabs of this unique stone providing a big gesture with its organic green and cream patterning," he says. Similarly "the vast sea" of solid oak flooring boasts widegauge boards to reflect the sheer size of the areas they cover.

David coated walls throughout in textural Venetian plaster. "It gives a layered, organic three-dimensional finish – large flat »















1 Kelly Wearstler 'Melange' sconce in Alabaster and Antique Burnished Brass, \$1850, from Becker Minty. 2 'Majuli' stool, \$2990, from Boyd Blue. 3 'Elysian' kitchen mixer in Matte Black, \$230, from ABI Interiors. 4 Isabelle Beaumont 'Sami' coffee tables, \$4213/set, from 1stDibs. 5 'Lisa' sectional curved sofa, \$15,060, from Boyd Blue.