

FIFTY SHADES OF GREY



These pages, from left In the sitting room, a fluted plasterboard dado runs like a ribbon around the room. Curtains in 'Kyoto' linen in Snow from James Dunlop Textiles. Walls finished in Venetian plaster in Dulux 'Caps'. *Smoking Joe* sculpture by Mark Schaller. Custom sofa in Royal Blue velvet. Cushions in 'Brussels' velvet from Elliott Clarke. Ivory cushion in Dedar 'Caolino' bouclé in Naturale from South Pacific Fabrics. Custom Calacatta Viola cube side table, with antique bronze bowl from BC Galleries. Knoll 'Tulip' side table by Eero Saarinen from De De Ce. Custom solid oak coffee table. 'Leather Noir' candle from The Raconteur x David Hicks. Rug from Tsar. Artwork in gilt frame by unknown artist in the manner of Sir Anthony van Dyck from Grace Antique Galleries. Vintage Italian sconce from eModerno.



A serene calm resonates throughout the rooms of finished with a quietly confident refined glamour.

this deceptively practical yet elegant family home,

Words CARLI PHILIPS Photography TOM BLACHFORD



Luxurious and quiet with a splash of palpable glam, the interior of this home in Melbourne's Toorak by designer David Hicks is a lesson in tonal perfection. All shades of grey – dove, ash, smoke and mist – unite in a canvas of calm. For David, achieving balance was critical. “The palette is intentionally subtle with a layering of two disparate marble types to give the scheme an intriguing twist.”

Although they were downsizing, the homeowners still wanted all the same amenities they were used to: a basement wine room, movie theatre, gym, swimming pool, outdoor entertainment area and four bedrooms. David worked in tandem with the architect to refine the floor plan, a process he insists is an essential, symbiotic relationship necessary to keep the exterior and interiors in sync. “It allows us to design appropriately sized spaces, taking into consideration

the desired fittings and fixtures. It's no good working backwards, trying to squeeze in everything as an afterthought,” he says. “After all, it forms the bone structure we build that will then hold the beautiful draping of the interior design and decoration.”

The wide entry hall runs through the spine of the house, flanked either side by marble-clad openings. The opening to the right leads to the study, and to the left is a sitting room used for entertaining and formal occasions. “We opted not to install doors to these rooms as the client was not concerned about noise transmission or privacy and wanted to maintain an open feel to the front of the house,” says David. In the front sitting room, he used just a few materials, including smooth limed floorboards and grey walls offset with a fluted white plasterboard dado running like a ribbon around the room. »



This page and opposite, top At the entry, a Murano rostrato vase from eModerno sits on a 19th-century antique sideboard from Graham Geddes Antiques. Hanging above is a painting, *Clown on a Hill* by Andrew Baines from Adelaide Hills Gallery. Walls painted Dulux 'Natural White'. Vintage Italian sconce from eModerno. Wall openings framed in Fior Di Bosco marble from G-Lux. Dining table from Zuster. Knoll 'Bertoia' leather-covered chairs from De De Ce. Design Within Reach 'Story Bookcase' bookstand from Living Edge. Premium European oak custom flooring from Woodcut. **Opposite page, below** In the kitchen, the splashback and rangehood are finished in Fior Di Bosco marble, and the island is finished in Patagonia quartzite, all from G-Lux. 'City Stik' kitchen mixer in Aged Iron from Brodware. 'Poliedri' Murano chandelier from eModerno. 'Bash' vessel by Tom Dixon and Stelton 'Cylinda Line' salad bowl, both from Top3 by Design. Joinery painted Dulux 'Caps Quarter' in a Satin finish. Walls finished in Venetian plaster in Dulux 'Caps'.

This page In the family room, custom sofas in Belgian linen from Libeco. Cushions in Dedar 'Karakorum' bouclé fabric in Ivory from South Pacific Fabrics. At the rear is a Knoll 'Platner' side table from De De Ce. Custom ebony-stained oak coffee table. A 'Twister' side table in plaster from Sophie Davies sits between two 'Groovy' cream bouclé chairs by Pierre Paulin from Paulin, Paulin, Paulin. Vintage Flos 'Snoopy' lamp. Curtains 'Kyoto' linen in Snow from James Dunlop Textiles. Birches 79 artwork by Robert Bateman. **Opposite page** A vintage 'Poliedri' Murano chandelier from eModerno hangs above the Patagonia quartzite island bench from G-Lux. Dining table from Zuster. Knoll 'Bertoia' chairs from De De Ce. Design Within Reach 'Story Bookcase' bookstand from Living Edge.



« Two mirror panels are set flush into the sitting room walls – one is a pivot door to the side entrance of the house and mud room, the other conceals a dry bar. A quilted, arc-shaped sofa and decorative rug introduce plush elements to the room's more reserved base tones.

Behind the study is a lift and powder room. A staircase runs parallel along the corridor opposite. The rear family living and dining zone is serviced by an elegant yet practical kitchen complete with scullery, with a small study space, cool room and laundry behind. A playroom connects to a bathroom that leads to the alfresco area.

Anchoring the house, the kitchen island is a mammoth hunk of auburn-veined Patagonia stone, its slightly curved corners contrasting with the stormy Fior Di Bosco marble on the rear bench and the satin lacquered panelling in a hue akin to Dior Grey (a nod to the fashion brand's famous shade). A large 'Poliedri' Murano chandelier hangs over the island, its ornateness a stark contrast to the contemporary, pared-back profiles of the surrounding environment. "It's a

glamorous touch that dresses up the practical and functional kitchen, making it feel more like a bar," explains David.

A hallway splits the first floor in two, with three bedrooms and ensembles on one side and a generous master wing complete with an oversized walk-in robe along the other. "We have created a few amazing dressing rooms for this client in various houses, however this one is my favourite," says David, who has worked on a number of retail stores throughout his career. "With a love of fashion, the client wanted us to create a mini boutique, a space to feel special in. Everything has been considered, from the storage of clothing – both hanging and folding – to shoes, bags, and accessories, some of which are on display." In the centre of the room, a creamy granite slab with amber-hued veining and dark chocolate chunks tops an island with drawers on either side measured specifically for sunglasses, scarves and jewellery. Above, a dramatic vintage pendant illuminates the room with a moody glow. Dripping with a cluster of glass and gold tubes, it's the star of the show. davidbicks.com

This page, clockwise from top In the main ensuite, 'Zen' round bath in Glacier from Apaiser. 'City Plus' shower head and 'Minim' basin mixers in Aged Iron from Brodware. Walls finished in Venetian stucco solid plaster in a custom colour. Curtains in 'Kyoto' linen in Snow from James Dunlop Textiles. Vanity in Patagonia quartzite and floors in Fior Di Bosco marble from G-Lux. A vintage Murano chandelier from eModerno hangs above the island in the dressing room, with joinery finished in 'Alpi' veneer in Drapery Wood from Elton Group. 'Transpire' wool carpet in Fascinate from Bremworth.

SPEED READ

» Despite downsizing from a large family house, the owners of this Toorak property still wanted all the same amenities, including four bedrooms, a movie theatre and gym. » Designer David Hicks devised a grey palette layered with accent marble. » The more formal rooms have openings rather than doors to maintain an open feel to the front of the house. » The contemporary profiles and pared-back silhouettes of the interiors have been dressed up with intricate vintage glass pendants. » The hero of the home is the generous walk-in wardrobe, a "mini boutique", where there's a designated spot to store everything from sunglasses to handbags.

5 SIGNATURE STYLE KEY PIECES



- 1 Carrier and Company 'Cadence' small tiered sconce, \$1390, from The Montauk Lighting Co. 2 Louis XV-style over-mantel mirror, \$6800, from The Vault Sydney. 3 Calacatta Viola marble, POA, from Signorino. 4 Cattelan Italia 'Camilla ML' chair, \$2495, from Milano Furniture. 5 Cattelan Italia 'Butterfly' table, POA, from Milano Furniture.

