

RESTORED DAIRY

Out of the BLUE

A meticulous approach to colour, teamed with carefully curated furniture, has imbued Belinda Hall's Melbourne home with style and soul

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LIVING AREA

Ignoring the commonly held belief that walls and woodwork should be different colours, Belinda has used an intense shade of blue on both to eye-catching effect.

Similar paint colour: Hague Blue, Estate Emulsion, £39.50 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball; farrow-ball.com. **Ro wingback chair:** from £2,186; **footstool:** from £630; both Fritz Hansen at Ambiente Direct, ambientedirect.com.

LIVING AREA

"I love the fact that we can all be here together, but each doing our own thing – reading, watching television or cooking," says Belinda of the open-plan room, which has steps leading down to the kitchen and dining area.

Claude sofa, from £1,930, Pinch, pinchdesign.com.
Sofa in Linara in Shadow, £35m, Romo, romo.com.
Etched Arcadia wallpaper mural, £218, Anthropologie, anthropologie.com.





DINING AREA

Belinda's love of classic design from around the world comes through in the kilim by Spain's Sandra Figuerola, Italian designed dining chairs, and the drinks trolley (also far right) by Hungarian Mathieu Matégot. Interior design, Belinda Hall, Richard Hall & Son, richardhallandson.com.au. **Canasta armchairs**, €167.15 each, Arrben, arrben.it.

SITTING AREA

This corner of the dining area (left) is the perfect spot to enjoy a pre-dinner drink. "I love having plants in the house, their graphic shape and colour pop against the deep blue walls. The bigger the better," says Belinda.

Similar armchair, Lille in Triumph Blue, £369, Swoon Editions, swooneditions.com. **Palermo reversible kilim**, from £399, Sandra Figuerola for GAN at Woven, woven.co.uk.

The unwritten rules of home ownership decree that successfully renovating one property behoves you to take on a more challenging project. Stylist Belinda Hall had no qualms about ignoring this custom when she plumped for a former Victorian dairy in one of Melbourne's oldest suburbs that had already undergone modernisation. This meant that she, husband Patrick and their two children – Charles, then aged two, and babe-in-arms Ted – could settle straight into the double-fronted home with its modern open-plan rear extension.

TAKING THE PLUNGE

Eight years on and the interior has now been transformed. "The back extension was a vast, white, boxy space with no atmosphere, which was difficult to make feel homely," says Belinda. "I was thinking of adding

personality by choosing a dark shade for the walls and mentioned it to Fiona Richardson, a mum from my sons' kindergarten, who is now my business partner. She immediately showed me her home, which had a deep charcoal scheme."

Galvanised, Belinda began researching the perfect shade. "I thought about grey, but I wanted something intense that wouldn't be too cold. I eventually singled out Farrow & Ball's Hague Blue and took the paint chart to a specialist, who mixed it for me. This colour has an earthiness to it, with green and ochre tones, so it's not stark. At night, it's very vibrant and during the day it feels cool."

Breaking with convention again, Belinda extended the rich cerulean hue over skirting boards and window frames throughout the property. "Painting out all woodwork makes the depth of the colour feels endless," she says. This, and the later decision to paint

KITCHEN

Buoyed by the success of the rich cerulean hue used elsewhere in the house, Belinda has tempered the starkness of the existing white kitchen with the same shade on the wall cabinets (below and right). Glossy brick tiles lift the otherwise matt-look space.
Similar tiles Biscelado Metro Bevelled Brick in Azul Zafiro, £14sq m, tilers-world.com.



the kitchen cabinets and fit glossy metro tiles in an identical blue shade, ensured the success of the scheme.

SINGULARLY CURATED

Within the azure shell, Belinda has carefully edited furniture and accessories to create distinct spaces reflecting specific eras and styles. One end of the living area features a meticulous selection of mid-century classics, such as Gerrit Rietveld's Zig Zag chair, while the main part is given over to a 21st-century industrial vibe. Yet three steps down, an intimate seating area has an unmistakably baroque feel with French furniture and an Arcadian mural.

Not that Belinda allows herself be restricted by genre; the odd crossover is allowed, as long as it is within her palette of blue, black, white and grey. "This, together with the natural wood flooring

used throughout, helps make the space feel cohesive. The floorboards are Victorian ash, but they had a reddish-orange finish on them, which didn't look too bad. As soon as I stripped and limewashed them, however, they looked far more contemporary."

The floorboards echo those in the original part of the house, and create a relationship between the two distinct schemes used in each. Belinda has enhanced this connection through a similarly immersive shade for the entrance hall, which runs from the front door through to the extension. This time, however, the intense blue is restricted to the lower half of the walls so it does not overwhelm the hall, with white above the dado rail to link with the pale colours in the rooms either side. It is this consideration of every detail that defines Belinda's home as a masterpiece, where colour and content are equal partners in a design that is rich in tone, yet subtle in presentation.



ENTRANCE HALL

The gold dado line, which helps draw the eye down the hall, is a good match for the gold framed portrait of Belinda's mother. "My great grandfather, Frank Wells, started painting at the age of seventy-four; my mother must have been about six when she sat for him." **Similar gold paint**, Ardenbrite Metallic Paint in Antique Gold, £29.98 for 500ml, [Decorating Direct](http://DecoratingDirect.co.uk), decoratingdirect.co.uk. **Similar Turkish runner**, from £275, [Rug Store](http://RugStoreOnline.co.uk), rugstoreonline.co.uk.



MAIN BEDROOM

The Maurice Golotta diptych (right) is a nod to couple's passions: the Florentine statues reference Belinda's studies in Renaissance art, while Patrick's beloved Aussie rules football features in the sporting image. To preserve the sense of calm, furnishings have been kept to a minimum (below), allowing each individual item to command the eye.

Lustre 3 Petit Cargo pendent light, €1,558.80, Design Heure, designheure.com. **Eye on the Prize diptych**, acrylic screen print, Maurice Golotta, msggallery.com.au. **Bedspread** in Cosimo 2666-50, £50m, Sahco, sahco.com. **Daphine Terra floor lamp**, £302, Lumina at Ambiente Direct, ambientedirect.com. **Similar paint**, Slipper Satin, Estate Emulsion, £39.50 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball, farrow-ball.com.



DAUGHTER'S BEDROOM

"This scheme (right) started with the wallpaper, which is a nod to both my grandmother's decorating choices and my daughter's name, Rose. For me, it harks back to happy childhood experiences," says Belinda.

