

### *This is the life*

Deep verandahs plus a covered outdoor dining area, gazebo and pool house make the most of the balmy Queensland climate. "We live outside for most of the year and love entertaining," says owner Dana White. "Opening the kitchen up to these outdoor zones means that I can see the kids in the pool when I am cooking and also interact easily with friends. You feel like you're still a part of everything."



**VERANDAH** Lachlan, the youngest of the family, romps with labradoodle Bonnie. Antibes Chevron acrylic fabric (seating upholstery), Schumacher. For similar plant pot, try Garden Life.

**FORMAL LIVING** A serene tableau executed in exquisite tones of silver and blue. Chest of drawers and glass vessels, Highgate House. *Still Life* artwork by Mark Schaller, Eastgate & Holst Fine Art. For similar bowl, try Papaya. For Where to Buy, see page 226.



# *Follow the sun*

Having moved north to Brisbane, this family enjoys the indoor-outdoor life to the full in their cleverly revamped home.

STORY & STYLING **KATE NIXON** ♦ PHOTOGRAPHY **MAREE HOMER**



**'WE WANTED A CLASSIC AND COMFORTABLE HOME THAT WE COULD REALLY USE.'** DANA

**KITCHEN** Dana and Bonny play in the airy kitchen. Richly veined Calacatta marble was used for the island benchtop. Polished pine flooring. Joinery by Designer Kitchens.

**DINING** A vibrant artwork by Jennifer Marshall and bold rug by Designer Rugs give the room personality.

**INFORMAL LIVING** Geometric lines and neutral tones create a cohesive space. Coffee table, Town & Country Style. For Where to Buy, see page 226.

It is now six years since American-born Dana White and husband Tony made the move from Albury, NSW, to Brisbane with their three sons, renting this sprawling two-level, seven-bedroom Queenslander in the city's inner north. "We wanted to make sure we were happy with the area, so we chose to rent first," says Dana. "We were looking to buy an established home in a nice area close to the city, the airport and my husband's business." And not too far from schools for Anthony, now 16, Declan, 12, and Lachlan, seven. As it turned out, their rental home fitted the bill perfectly and when the opportunity to buy arose in 2010, they snapped it up.

"A big house close to the city is hard to find, and this was also on a good-sized 2000m<sup>2</sup> block," says Dana. "The previous owners had completed structural renovations about 15 years ago and added the pool house, so all the hard work had been done."

Focusing on the interiors, Dana and Tony engaged interior designer Leigh Boswell of Highgate House to refresh and personalise the internal spaces. "Because of the boys, we didn't want anything too elaborate," says Dana. "We wanted something classic and comfortable that we could really use." >



## *Fine details*

Interior designer Leigh Boswell has struck a happy balance between durable practicality and sophisticated style by using hardwearing materials such as outdoor fabrics in the pool house, easy-clean leather dining chair seats and bar stools, and recycled timber that hides any dents and scratches. "We didn't want to be worrying about 'Don't touch this' or 'Don't do that' any time someone came over," says Dana.



Resene Thorndon  
Cream half  
strength,  
(gazebo, living)

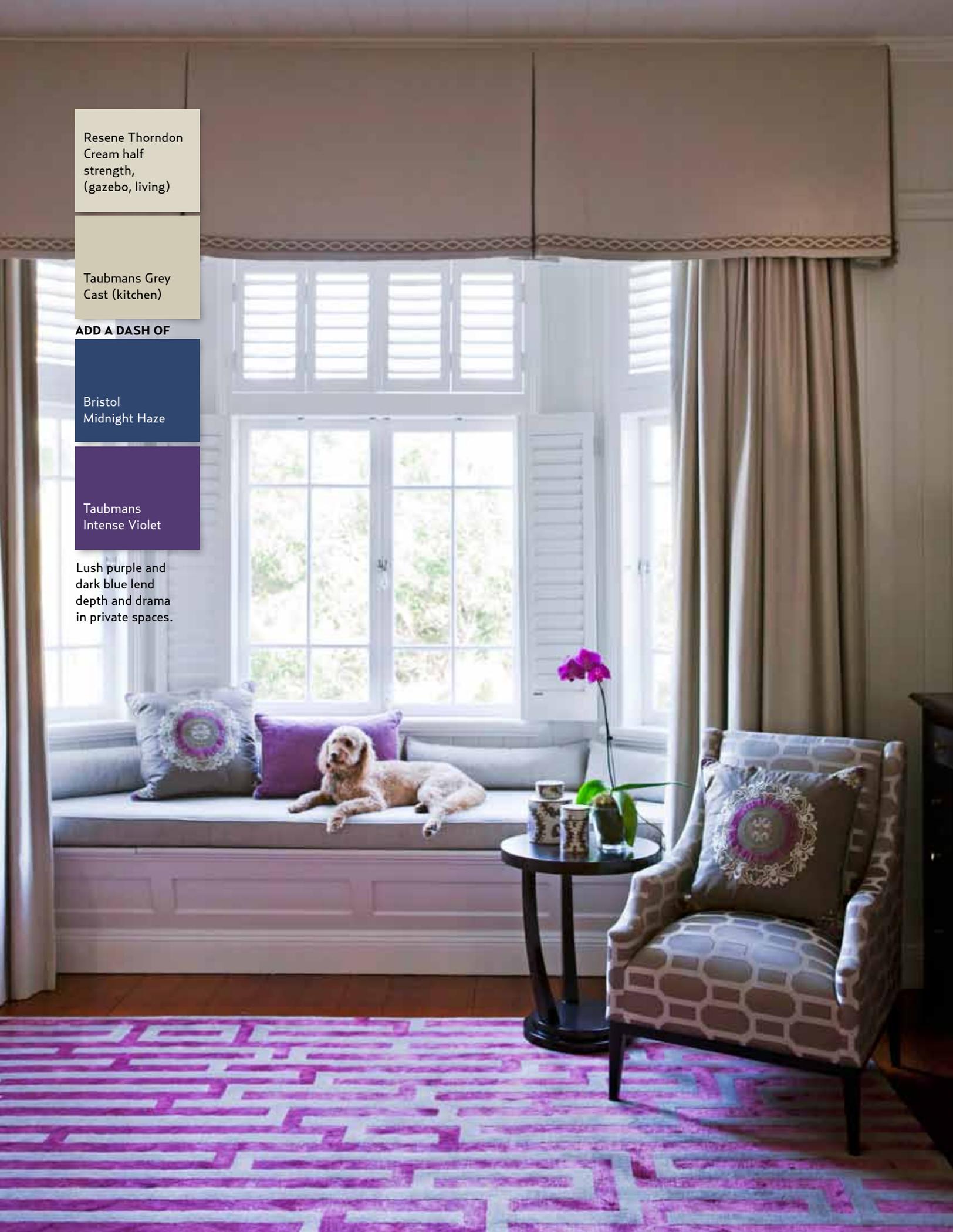
Taubmans Grey  
Cast (kitchen)

**ADD A DASH OF**

Bristol  
Midnight Haze

Taubmans  
Intense Violet

Lush purple and  
dark blue lend  
depth and drama  
in private spaces.



**'THE LOOK IS SOPHISTICATED AND VERY USABLE, WITH EVERYTHING BEAUTIFUL BUT NOTHING TOO PRECIOUS.'** LEIGH BOSWELL, INTERIOR DESIGNER

**MAIN BEDROOM** Opulent textiles in jewel tones raise the level of luxury. Bonny (opposite) lays claim to the cosy window seat. Chair upholstered in Romo Octa Clematis, Marco Fabrics. Shutters, Verosol. Rug custom-designed by Highgate House.

**BATHROOM** Mosaic tiles adorn the walls. Joinery in Eveneer timber veneer in EvenAniseed, Elton Group. Floor tiles and bath, Elite Bathware & Tiles.

**Designer buy:** Sicis PX104 glass mosaics, \$123/29.5x29.5cm, Elite Bathware & Tiles.

**For Where to Buy, see page 226.**



Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes will allow.

◀ Starting with the pool house, Leigh introduced a neutral palette with accent shades to complement the family’s art collection. “The house originally had a lot of colour in the walls and finishes, which wasn’t Dana and Tony’s style,” says Leigh. “They still wanted colour but we introduced this via rugs, fabrics and soft furnishings, while painting the walls a mix of warm whites and greys.” Specifying durable materials such as outdoor fabrics, recycled timbers and leather ensured a practical, livable finish for the growing family.

To the left of the wide entry hall, the open-plan family living/dining area was refreshed and a new kitchen installed. Soft grey veneers, stainless steel and Calacatta marble benchtops set the tone. The splashback was replaced with a panel of windows, drawing in natural light and opening up views to the pool, tennis court and outdoor entertaining spaces beyond. The gazebo – an enclosed central verandah connecting the pool house, alfresco dining zone and kitchen – was upgraded into a cosy sitting nook with draw-down screens to keep out the weather.

“Tony especially loves that area,” says Dana. “He loves to sit on the sofa with Bonny [the family’s labradoodle] and read or snooze.” ▶

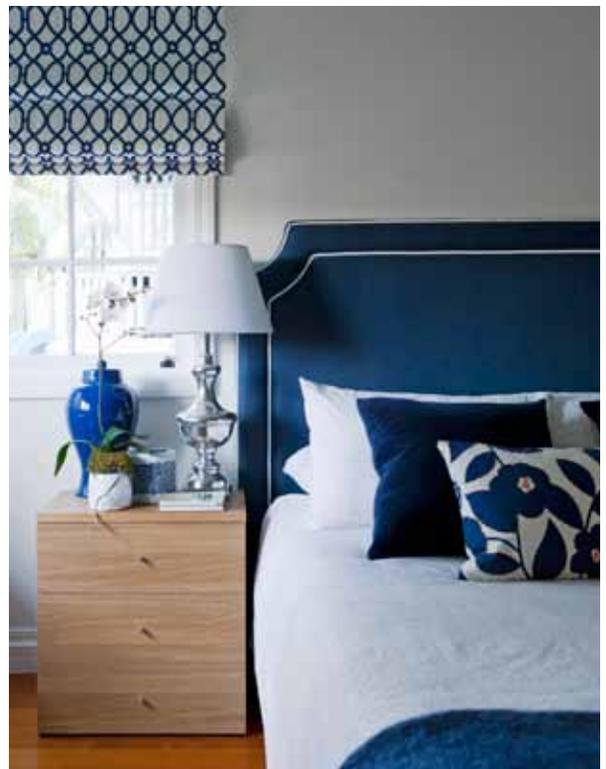


**FORMAL LIVING** Traditional wall panelling is a feature in the home. Coffee and side tables sourced from the US. Lamp, Bloomingdales Lighting. *Roig i Negre* artwork by Antoni Tàpies, Eastgate & Holst Fine Art.

**HALL** Metallic and mirrored elements magnify light in this thoroughfare. Pendant lights and custom-designed hall runner, Highgate House.

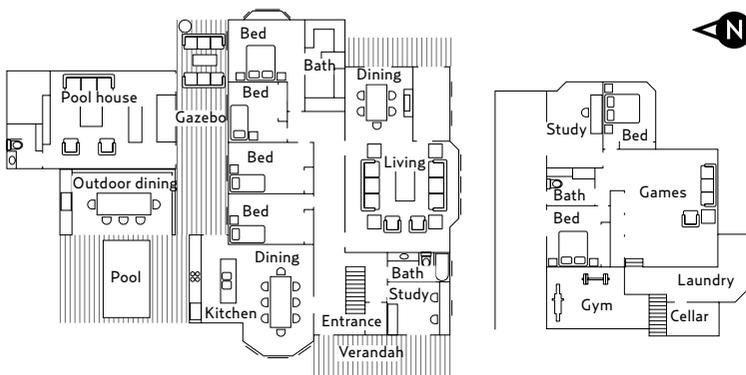
**GUESTROOM** Self-contained quarters downstairs are ideal when grandparents come to visit. Lamp, Highgate House.

**UPSTAIRS STUDY** Declan at the computer. Curtains and blind in Gardenia fabric, Harlequin. Joinery by Designer Kitchens. For Where to Buy, see page 226. ➤



GROUND FLOOR

LOWER GROUND





'THE BOYS USE THE TENNIS COURT, POOL, GAMES ROOM AND GAZEBO WITH THEIR FRIENDS.' DANA



**'WE NEEDED THE HOUSE TO LOOK FABULOUS BUT STILL TAKE THE WEAR AND TEAR THAT BOYS CAN INFLICT.'** LEIGH BOSWELL, INTERIOR DESIGNER

**OUTDOOR DINING** The built-in barbecue makes entertaining a breezy affair. Laminex joinery in Cherished Wood. Metallic mosaic splashback tiles, Amber Tiles. Designer buy: Mosaic table, from \$4500, Brannelly Outdoor. **EXTERIOR** Unframed glass fencing keeps the sightlines between house and pool open. Sunlounger, Rausch. **GAZEBO** An imposing *Yucca elephantipes* completes the outdoor room. Coffee table, Highgate House. Coral Gables acrylic fabric (cushions), Thibaut. For Where to Buy, see page 226.



◀ The four bedrooms are at the heart of the home. Another bedroom, to the right of the entry hall, was converted to a study. All the bathrooms were redesigned and refitted with classic, natural finishes. The formal living and dining rooms were redecorated with a touch of Regency-style glamour and Hamptons chic.

“I worked in references to Dana’s American heritage with quality imported furniture and a laidback, East Coast vibe,” says Leigh. “The look is sophisticated and very usable, with everything beautiful but nothing precious.”

Downstairs, two refurbished guestrooms come in handy when family from interstate and the US come to stay. There’s also a bathroom, gym, cellar and laundry, Tony’s office and a games area with table tennis and pool tables and arcade-style game stations.

The overall result is a practical, extremely livable family home with an enviable air of casual chic. “Some people have immaculate homes that they don’t really live in at all,” says Dana. “We definitely live in ours!”



Highgate House, Clayfield, Queensland; (07) 3256 0860 or [www.highgatehouse.com.au](http://www.highgatehouse.com.au).