Cabin fever

STUDIO ESTETA

A judiciously planned dwelling on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula is an idyllic setting for quiet repose.

Photography by Tom Blachford

Truth be told, Studio Esteta's clients fell madly in love with their guesthouse post-renovation, and decided against renting it out as short-term accommodation. Instead, they now use the two-bedroom "cabin," which sits behind the main dwelling at the rear of their four-hectare property, as a holiday retreat for family and friends. Like so many homes on the Mornington Peninsula, its refurbishment was informed by the region's verdant surrounds. "We wanted to celebrate the site's natural environment rather than implement a design that's trend-driven," says director Sarah Cosentino, who, together with co-director Felicity Slattery, established Melbourne-based Studio Esteta in 2015. "The muted, neutral tones of the cascading hills, which the property overlooks to the west, served as inspiration for the palette, as did the existing structure's rustic cladding."

Sarah and Felicity's goal was to create visual continuity between the interior, the aged timber shell and the lush surrounding greenery, and they succeeded in doing so. Their considered approach to materiality and a minimalist aesthetic is what distinguishes this project, as does their clever reconciliation of a spatially compact interior. By introducing a smoked oak-clad pod that houses the new bathroom, they have provided an anchor for the living areas, which were previously in an unstructured, open-plan arrangement.

Inside the pod, the bathroom occupies an elegantly pared back, narrow space, judiciously embellished with a mottled-grey stone vanity and bathtub splashback. A full-height, fluted-glass window faces south, bringing the outside in and naturally ventilating the space. The slate-coloured tile floor subtly contrasts with the smoked oak flooring used throughout the rest of the interior. This is clean, simple design at its very best, providing a quiet sanctuary. As an architectural insertion, the bathroom pod is hard-working, offering functionality and a sense of cohesion to the surrounding living and kitchen areas. On its outer edges it integrates a pantry, major appliance compartments, a coat cupboard, display shelves and plenty of storage room. From the kitchen, the pod simply appears to be an extension of the area's joinery, thus enabling the small space to be free of clutter.

By concentrating storage space within the pod's walls, Studio Esteta was able to design the living and kitchen areas with flexibility in mind – the dining and lounge don't feature any additional built-in joinery, for example, and the kitchen's island bench is freestanding. Positioning the sink and stovetop on the perimeter further futureproofs the kitchen. Should the clients ever wish to reconfigure the living areas or rent out the house, they could easily do so, but for now things are idyllic just as they are.

01 This is a crisp, minimalist kitchen in a house that serves as a holiday retreat for the owners' family and friends.

02 The kitchen joinery extends and wraps around to form a pod-like insertion that not only provides an anchor for the living areas, but also houses the bathroom.

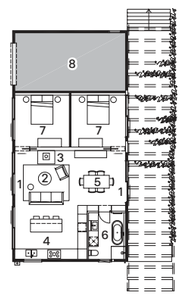


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Kitchen products

Internal walls: Walls painted with Dulux Wash and Wear Low Sheen in 'Narrow Neck'
Flooring: Woodcut engineered oak floorboards in 'White Smoked'
Joinery: American oak veneer with custom finish to match floorboards; splashback in Signorino New Grey Tundra stone tiles; Made Measure Leather recessed pulls in 'Chocolate' with a black oak core
Lighting: Rakumba Highline pendant in antique patina waxed brass, designed by Archier; architectural lighting from Ambience
Sinks and tapware: AFA Exact double bowl undermount sink; Brodware Yokato sink mixer in 'Vecchio Organic' finish
Appliances: Bosch oven, induction cooktop, integrated dishwasher and integrated fridge with bottom mount freezer; Qasair Argyle rangehood in bronze powdercoat finish

1 Entry
2 Living
3 Freestanding fireplace
4 Kitchen
5 Dining
6 Bathroom/ laundry
7 Bedroom
8 Garage



Plan 1:400 0 5m

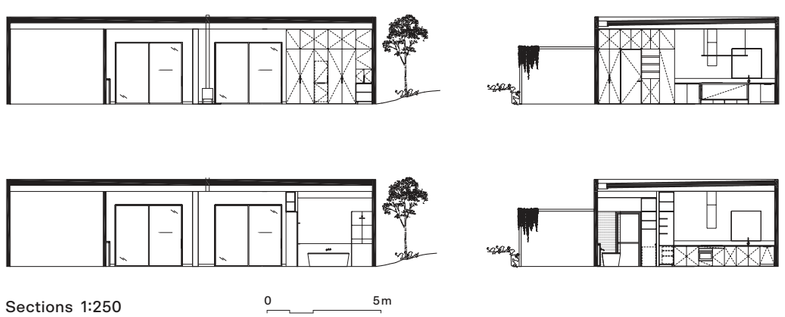


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03 Inside the pod, the bathroom has a clean, simple design, providing a quiet sanctuary for its inhabitants.

04 Neutral colours and materials, such as smoked oak and mottled grey stone, subtly embellish the compact, narrow space.

05 A full-height window at the end of the bathroom and directly opposite the door makes the space appear larger than it is.



Sections 1:250

Bathroom products

Internal walls: Walls painted with Dulux Wash and Wear Low Sheen in ‘Narrow Neck’; Signorino New Grey Tundra stone tiles and Cotto d’Este limestone tiles in ‘Clay’
Flooring: Signorino Cotto d’Este limestone tiles in ‘Slate’
Joinery: American oak veneer in custom finish; benchtops use Signorino New Grey Tundra stone tiles
Lighting: Architectural lighting from Ambience
Tapware and fittings: Brodware Yokato tapware in ‘Vecchio Organic’ finish
Sanitaryware: Kaldewei free-standing bath, Roca The Gap Rimless toilet, ADP Scoop undermount basin all from Reece
Doors and windows: Custom full-height timber door; windows from Eagle Aluminium and powdercoated with Dulux Electro in ‘Dark Bronze’



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