

Seaside sanctuary

A RUGGED STRETCH OF VICTORIA'S GREAT OCEAN ROAD IS HOME TO AN OFF-GRID FARMHOUSE WITH 360-DEGREE VIEWS.

WORDS RACHEL WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY MARTINA GEMMOLA



Port Campbell Vic HOME

The kitchen and dining area features Polytec cabinetry in Agave, White Zellige splashback tiles from National Tiles, a Riva ceiling pendant in Antique Brass from Florabelle, a dining table and chairs from MCM House, and Jeremy Carver chairs from Arthur G in custom fabric selected by Maine House Interiors. **FACING PAGE** The bluestone external wall and bluestone lounge chairs are from Bamstone in Port Fairy, while the Tuscan topping gravel was sourced from Aussie Rock Wickliffe Quarry.



BUFFETED BY THE TEMPESTUOUS WINDS that give Victoria's Shipwreck Coast its forbidding name, Port Farm is a hilltop home bolstered against the weather by firm foundations and lofty ideals. Located near the seaside village of Port Campbell on the Great Ocean Road – on Eastern Maar and Kirrae Whurrong lands – the home was designed as a weekender, and potential Airbnb, for its owners, cropping and livestock farmers Georgie and Richard Selman.

Hailing from Kolora in the state's west, the Selmans have holidayed in Port Campbell for years, often driving down on weekends for fish and chips at the beach with their kids, Jimmy, 10, and eight-year-old twins Rosie and Angus.

"Port Campbell is a world apart," says Georgie, 40. "It's not just different from our home – I think it's an amazing place compared to anywhere in the world. There's something about it that makes you feel very small. I think because the sea is often so brutal and the weather can be so extreme, it makes you feel more connected to nature."

It was on one of their weekend jaunts back in 2019 that Georgie and Richard, 44, first spotted a 'For Sale' sign

on their future 68-hectare property, which they initially bought as an adjunct to their main farm. "I wasn't sure about buying a farm this far south, but when the real estate agent took us to the farm's highest point, I started thinking about the possibilities and, unlike Richard, they had nothing to do with grass and water supply," says Georgie.

While Richard and the real-estate agent discussed soil quality and drainage, Georgie soaked in the dramatic views and salty air, dreaming of a home built to frame the site's breathtaking views of the Twelve Apostles hinterland, Port Campbell and the wild Southern Ocean.

"All I could see was the most amazing view of ocean framed by rolling hills and a patchwork of paddocks," recalls Georgie. "And every time I went back, the view was better than I'd remembered."

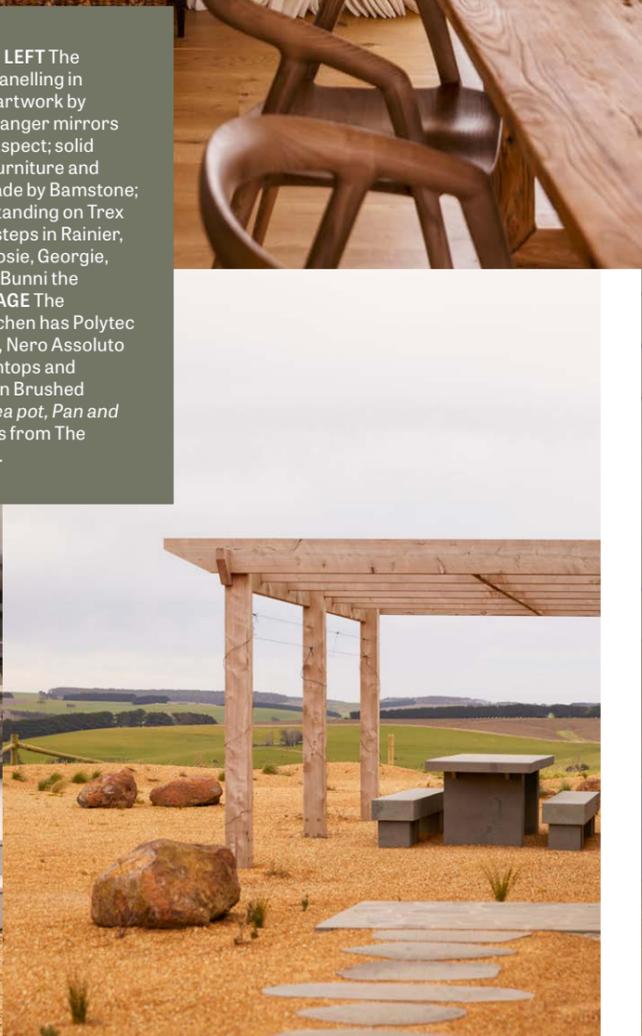
After initially leasing the site to their neighbour, in 2023 the Selmans decided it was time to build. They enlisted Amy Spargo, interior designer and director of Maine House Interiors, to help realise their vision of a home in harmony with its surroundings. >

The inviting lounge room features a French provincial-style Radiante 700 fireplace from Cheminees Philippe Australia, Jordan Sunny sofas in custom fabric by Maine House Interiors, and a Jordan Memphis coffee table. The Superior Weave rug from Carpet World keeps feet cosy throughout winter. The *Fierce Raged the Tempest* c1890 archival print, from The Winsome Collection, adds a moody touch on the wall. **FACING PAGE** The Port Campbell jetty is popular with anglers, tourists and boaters.





CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT The entryway features panelling in Dulux Briar; a large artwork by local artist Lauren Danger mirrors the home's coastal aspect; solid bluestone outdoor furniture and steppers custom made by Bamstone; the Selman family, standing on Trex Transcend Lineage steps in Rainier, (from left): Angus, Rosie, Georgie, Richard, Jimmy and Bunni the labrador. FACING PAGE The farmhouse-style kitchen has Polytec cabinetry in Botanic, Nero Assoluto honed granite benchtops and Brodware tapware in Brushed Nordic Brass. The Tea pot, Pan and Iron, 1990 artwork is from The Winsome Collection.



“The rugged cliffs we interpreted through our natural material choices in fabrics, floor finishes and bespoke furniture.”

Bathing bliss awaits in the Stoked stainless and cedar outdoor bath, which has a Torrens lever bath filler in Weathered Brass from CB Ideal. A Lorient stool from Provincial Home Living holds all-important items, while a Creswick Wool alpaca blanket provides post-soak warmth. The decking is Trex Transcend Lineage in Rainier.

ABOUT THE HOUSE:

- The external cladding is Colorbond Custom Orb Matt in Monument. The home's internal walls are painted in Dulux White Cloak Quarter, with feature cabinetry from Polytec, and Thermosmart uPVC windows and doors.
- The landscape design was completed by Renata Fairhall Garden Designs.
- Craig Irving Builders took on the house build; 0409 020 270, while Howe Kitchens & Joinery oversaw the cabinetry fit-out; 0438 084 383.
- Off-Grid Energy Australia installed 10.7 kW solar panels mounted on the roof, 24 kW battery storage, 7.5 kW of continuous battery power, a 12 kW back-up generator and a 130,000-litre rainwater tank; offgridenergy.com.au



“All I could see was the most amazing view of ocean framed by rolling hills and a patchwork of paddocks.”

CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE The bathroom vanity is from Vanity By Design, with Halo Brushed Nordic Brass tapware by Brodware. A Mini Glo-Ball light from Euroluce adds a gentle glow; checks meet greens in the master bedroom, which is painted in Dulux Coalition. The bedhead was custom-made by Maine House Interiors, while the bedside table, from Grazia & Co, holds a Pottery Barn Miller ceramic table lamp base with custom shade by Maine House Interiors. Cultiver linen tops the bed, along with a cosy woollen blanket by L&M Home; sleek Marrakech Olive gloss tiles, from National Tiles, line the shower; stump seats, made by owner Richard with excess wood, surround the Angelina firepit from Aussie Heatwave Chimineas; snugly Cultiver linen in the guest room.





CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT A serene scheme is achieved in the bathroom with Masia gloss tiles in Jade and Elegante Terrazzo in Verde, both from National Tiles, a Victoria + Albert Barcelona 2 bath, a Reel stool from Mark Tuckey, and a fluted glass screen; the laundry features a splashback of Denim mosaic tiles from National Tiles; Georgia wanted bunk beds, designed by Maine House Interiors, to make it possible for two families to holiday together comfortably. The bold wallpaper is a Charcoal check print from Milton & King. **FACING PAGE** The off-grid home offers luxury with a lighter footprint. "The house is powered by the sun and our tapwater is captured rainwater," says Georgie. The Selmans say that even in overcast weather when every appliance is in use, the back-up generator will kick in to make up the difference.

"Georgie and Richard approached us with a brief for a home that sat within the environment, with a focus on sustainability, natural materials and accessibility. A house that felt like a home away from home for visitors," Amy says.

"It was important to us that the house didn't sit heavily on the hill," adds Georgie. "Being on farming land, we wanted it to look more like the sheds we'd grown up with, so when people passed by on the road they'd question if it was a house or a shed – if they noticed it at all."

Amy looked to the natural world to dictate the palette throughout, allowing the setting to influence every design decision from the external cladding to the internal tapware: "We mimicked the contrast of the sandy shores and deep blue ocean as it transitions from cool to warm tones, which we introduced with warm timbers and cool paint colours. The rugged cliffs we interpreted through our natural material choices in fabrics, floor finishes and bespoke furniture."

An inspired collaboration, Georgie and Amy each pushed the other outside their comfort zone. Georgie's desire to create an off-grid home that's also a welcoming space for all people made Amy and her team think deeply about accessibility. "It was our first project where we had to take accessibility

into consideration for all areas of the design," says Amy. "It pushed us into more research in the space, which we're grateful to Georgie for; it has made us better designers."

Amy repaid the favour in full, pushing Georgie to make bold choices with colour and pattern. "We knew Amy would nudge us towards something more daring," says Georgie. "We absolutely trusted her and it's a lot of fun staying at Port Farm – the finishes are tough, but they're interesting and really connect this home to what lies beyond the windows."

Ultimately, Port Farm is more than a holiday home – it's a way for the Selmans and their visitors to connect with the landscape and the story of agriculture that's right at their doorstep. "Many people come to this part of the world to take a photo of the Twelve Apostles and then leave," says Georgie. "There is so much more to see and do here."

"I hope Port Farm will, in its own small way, encourage people to stay longer; to walk along the clifftops, swim in the bay and better understand where their food comes from when they visit local producers dotted along the Twelve Apostles Food Artisans Trail." *CS*

Visit portstays.com.au

For more beautiful homes, head to homestolove.com.au

