

cheat sheet

WHO LIVES HERE Interior designer Dana Tosolini and her husband, Carlo, with their children: Luca, 25, and Lola, 22.

STYLE OF HOME A mid-century-inspired new build with a spacious home office.

LOCATION Narrabundah in Canberra, on the traditional land of the Ngunnawal people.

TIMELINE The project took about two years, half of that spent in planning. It was finished in March 2023.

NARRABUNDAH, ACT

high concept

A vibrant abode full of artistic flourishes fulfils dual roles as a family home and an office/showroom



OUTDOOR LIVING Designer Dana Tosolini (shown above) loves the colourful work of Mexican architect Luis Barragán. She had her pre-existing stainless-steel outdoor dining table repainted in Haymes Blushing Peach and added a custom pink glass top for a bit of fun.

WORK SPACE (opposite) Signalling the creative possibilities beyond, a Dulux Glamour Pink door marks the border between Dana's home and office. Artworks in complementary colours are the result of a collaboration between Concepts Interior Design (CID) and artist Jackson Gooch.



Built for interior designer Dana Tosolini to balance work and family life effortlessly, this Narrabundah home is located in one of Canberra's established garden suburbs and channels Palm Springs chic and sleek office energy in equal measure.

"The property is first and foremost our family home," says Dana. "I've worked from home since my children were born and have always used my private space as a type of showroom to demonstrate details and ideas." Her business, Concepts Interior Design (CID), is a small operation comprising Dana and her "incredibly talented right-hand" Alyssa, also an interior designer, as well as a part-time building designer and an intern. All members of the team are mostly based at the house.

"I work here full-time so the allocation of various zones was very deliberate," Dana says of the layout. "For instance, the office needed to be at the front of the house to

allow me to see clients without them having access to the rest of the family zones."

Dana, who lives with her husband, Carlo [owner of local Italian restaurant Molto Italian], and their two children, both in their twenties, admits that expectations were higher than usual for this project. "It was a real labour of love," she says. "I felt the pressure to produce something that was beautiful, different and practical."

Jumping in at the deep end, Dana bypassed the safe 'classic modern' route, opting to showcase her company's potential with a bold and personal design instead. "The style of my home is very me – mid-century with a fun European twist," she says. "It did concern me to risk such a directional interior, but I feel it shows CID's ability to design, document and project manage very successfully."

Keeping the facade sympathetic to local housing stock, Dana found cues for the exterior from online research. "I have always loved the mid-century style, which is quite



LANDING (above) "I went to boarding school in Victoria, studied in Paris and worked in Sydney, but Canberra is my home," says Dana (pictured). Handrail painted Dulux Electric Glow. Artwork by Andrew Powell. **EXTERIOR** (opposite, top) PGH 'Morada' bricks in Ceniza form the decorative facade. **LIVING** (opposite, bottom) A delight for the senses, the holographic ballerina artwork by Umberto Ciceri spins as you walk past. The 20-year-old lounges have been reupholstered in velvet from Elliott Clarke. Ligne Roset 'Pukka' armchairs, Domo. Custom coffee tables by Dana; the top is New York marble on a stainless-steel frame and the base is Taubmans Wild Plum. Peranakan portrait by Thornton Walker.

KITCHEN/DINING/OUTDOORS The neutral backdrop features interior walls in Dulux White on White and a splashback of INAX 'Sairin' tiles from Artedomus. Benchtop, Quantum Zero engineered stone in Alpine White. Cabinetry in Avion Grey and Polar White, Polytec. Maggie dining chairs upholstered in Copper Elk velvet, Jordan. Rug (installed as a broadloom carpet on the stairs), Tappeti. Artwork from Art Mark Gallery. Outside, Luna Chiaro limestone tiles from Sareen Stone are a natural progression from the off-white microcement internal floor. Feature wall, Taubmans Earth Tone. Outdoor dining table, as before. Custom stools by Dana with UV Pro 'Abyssal' fabric in Feather, Zepel Fabrics. EK1250 fireplace, Escea.

"The interior had to be cutting edge because of what I do, and I firmly believe that being surrounded by beauty is good for the soul"

DANA TOSOLINI, HOMEOWNER/DESIGNER

GOOD NEWS

Sacrificing natural gas in favour of energy-efficient electric appliances (namely, a BORA Professional induction cooktop and Escea outdoor fireplace kitchen) saves the Tosolinis money and reduces their net emissions. Plus, "The taste of the food is way beyond a gas barbecue anyway," says Dana.



prevalent in Canberra,” Dana shares. “Inspiration for the exterior facade came from a Modernist European home that I found on Pinterest.”

Expanding on that initial inspiration, Dana chose interesting brickwork detailing and a wall of triple glazing to complete the look. “The facade has no parapet, which was difficult to achieve,” she points out. “At almost three metres high, the glazing was hung by recessing the structural beam back into the ceiling. It’s joined by the thinnest possible steel supports.”

Fun twists were injected with vibrant accents and oversized artworks. “I was yearning to have some fun and be adventurous with colour,” says Dana. Bright fuchsias, zesty citrus shades and sweet pinks pop against a neutral backdrop of soft whites and greiges, giving the building surprising flexibility.

Although the home is full of personal objects, one-off pieces and a tailored colour scheme, a neutral base palette means it can be adapted to a range of interior styles with

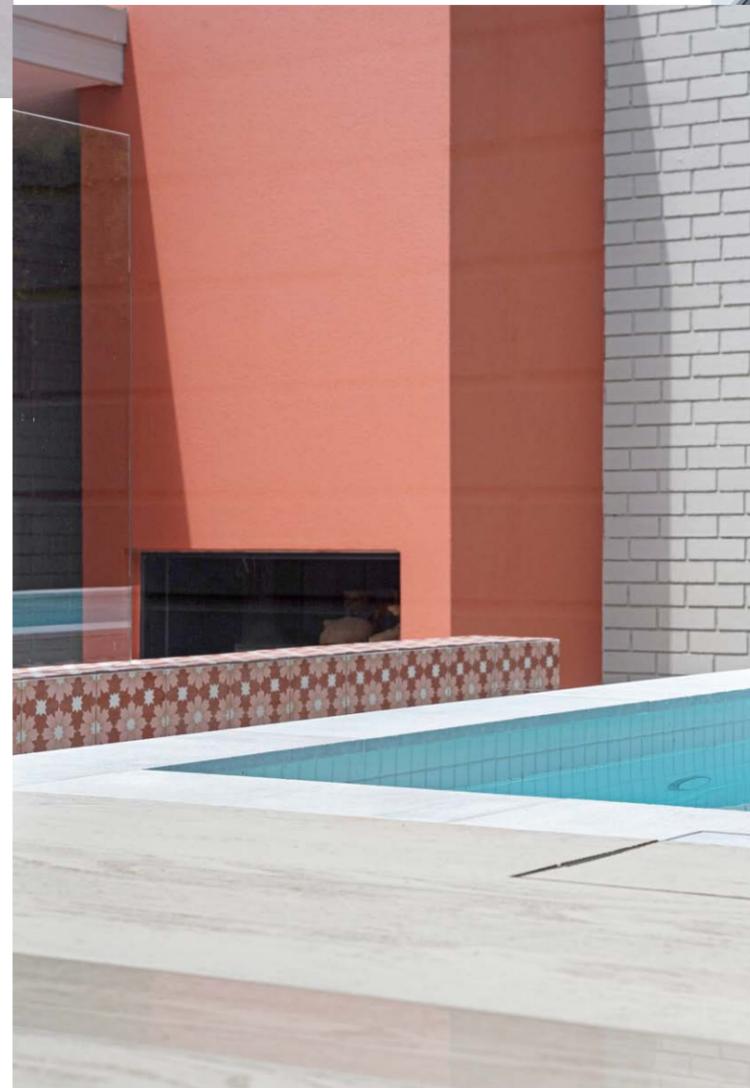
ease. “The balanced use of colour was very deliberate, with consideration given to resale potential,” says Dana. “Colour adaptability was important to enable a future purchaser with different taste to adjust the interiors at little cost.”

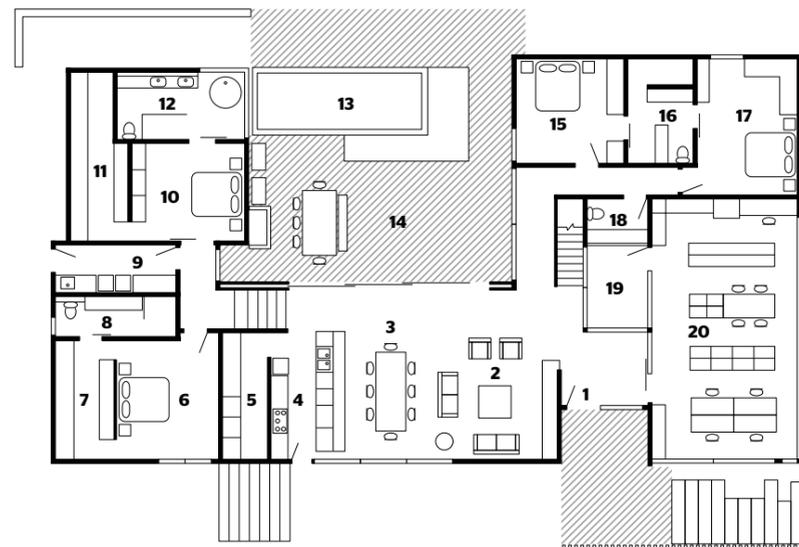
The layout is also dynamic. For instance, the home office is spacious enough to run Dana’s business from, “but one day, when my ‘babies’ move out and we downsize, it will make the perfect formal living area for the next owner,” she says.

A milestone, both professionally and personally, this project was the designer’s first attempt at managing a build from excavation to completion. The experience was something Dana describes as a “steep learning curve” and “extremely satisfying and educational”.

“I feel like I’m eternally on holiday here,” she says. “Our relationship as a family and my relationship with my husband have been affected in a very positive way by living here. It has been well worth all the hard work.” ¹⁰
See conceptsinteriordesign.com.au and [@conceptsinteriordesign](https://www.instagram.com/conceptsinteriordesign). Also check out gfcabinetworks.com.au and [@icwptyltd](https://www.instagram.com/icwptyltd)

KITCHEN/DINING (above) “I reused or refurbished all my old furniture,” says Dana. Purchased in Bali 20 years ago, the dining table has been sanded, bleached and limed to give it a new lease of life. **COURTYARD** (opposite, top left) Next to the internal lightwell is an original lithograph by George Baldessin, gifted to Dana by her mother. **LANDING** (opposite, top right) “The neutral base of the walls creates a striking contrast against the pops of colour in the art, furniture and painted handrail,” says Dana. Handrail, Dulux Electric Glow. Artwork by Andrew Powell. **POOL** (opposite, bottom left) Simple blue tiles in the pool are a spectacular foil for the Taubmans Earth Tone on the outdoor area’s fireplace. **OFFICE** (opposite, bottom right) A work by Lismore artist Jackson Gooch stands out in the light-toned office where Dana and her team work.





- 1 Entry
- 2 Living area
- 3 Dining area
- 4 Kitchen
- 5 Butler's pantry
- 6 Bedroom
- 7 Walk-in wardrobe
- 8 Bathroom
- 9 Laundry
- 10 Main bedroom
- 11 Walk-in wardrobe
- 12 Ensuite
- 13 Pool
- 14 Outdoor area
- 15 Bedroom
- 16 Bathroom
- 17 Bedroom
- 18 Powder room
- 19 Courtyard
- 20 Office space

MAIN BEDROOM (this page and opposite, left) "I think quality and good design should last," says Dana. "The bedhead was designed by me and made 23 years ago." It's covered in green velvet, with a decorative knob salvaged from an old pair of shoes. Custom bedside table in Dulux Silver Grass. Tube pendant light repainted dark blue, Lighting Collective. **ENSUITE** (opposite) This serene space features Raku finger tiles in Kyoto Green from Rivoland, along with a Ukiyo freestanding acrylic bath in Matte White and chrome tapware, both from ABI Interiors. Madoka wall tiles, Artedomus. Venette cabinetry in Avion Grey, Polytec. Kerlite porcelain flooring, Ceramic Surfaces Australia.

"The layout is everything I've always wanted, with light pouring in at all times" DANA



LESSONS LEARNT
“Use a designer you have researched well”

DANA TOSOLINI, OWNER/DESIGNER
 Having practiced as an interior designer for more than 30 years, Dana suggests hiring a professional who appreciates your aesthetic goals completely. “Designing your home and its interior is a very personal experience, so you need to ensure that your designer understands you, your requirements and your ‘vibe;” she says. “A good designer should be able to adapt to your style, not just put their stamp on your home.”

OUTDOOR LIVING A flowering crepe myrtle takes centre stage next to an eye-catching wall of warm pink and deep terracotta Pink Azule tiles from Jatana Interiors. Blush pink Ligne Roset ‘Pukka’ armchairs can be seen behind the large sliding doors. Meanwhile, the pink and peach glass-topped table casts a rosy glow across the neutral Luna Chiaro limestone flooring from Sareen Stone.



GET THE LOOK

ADDITIONAL PRODUCT SOURCING: KATE LINCOLN

- 1** *Bleed #202376* Plexiglas-backed artwork by Paul Snell, \$5500, Studio Gallery. **2** Kartell FL/Y suspension lamp in Orange, \$665, Space Furniture. **3** Joy upholstered ottoman, from \$1244, Jordan. **4** Holly velvet dining chair in Matt Amber, \$499, Life Interiors. **5** Velvet cushion in Pink and Tan, \$119, Bonnie & Neil. **6** Miele DGC 7860 HC Pro VitroLine Combi steam oven in Brilliant White, \$12,599, Harvey Norman. **7** J'ai Soif carafe and glass in Amber, \$89, Maison Balzac. **8** Love At First Sight ceramic tiles (300mm), \$151.90 per sq m, Coco Tiles & Mosaics. **9** Floor-mounted bath filler in Chrome, \$219.90, ABI Interiors. **10** Ukiyo freestanding acrylic bath in Matt White (1280mm), \$3399.90, ABI Interiors. **11** Pebble wool rug in Tofu (1.7m x 2.4m), \$1400, Inartisan. **12** Wild Side acrylic console in Fuchsia, \$2200, Fenton & Fenton.