

# SIMPLY DECEPTIVE



## DESIGN NOTES

1. "White box" architecture echoes earlier Hobart styles. The simple two-storey rectangular plan was easy to construct, cost effective and reflects earlier Art Deco and '80s styles.
2. Upper level living areas with downstairs bedrooms capitalise on views and sunlight. The layout reverses the usual arrangement and includes a lift for convenience.
3. Flexible zoning of open-plan upper floor provides for all uses in one large space. All functional areas, including kitchen, dining, study and living areas, are independently provided for.
4. A generous north-facing balcony provides year-round indoor-outdoor living. The partially covered outdoor dining barbecue terrace receives sun all day enabling glazed doors to be left open much of the time.
5. The flat-roofed building form is enlivened by the dynamic roof profile. Pitching the roof diagonally across the plan provides an arresting interior and assists zoning.

## WORDS TRACY RENKIN

Having lots of natural light streaming through her windows was at the top of her wish-list when Jane Whitton started dreaming up her east-facing, double-storey home at the city end of Goulburn Street.

She sold her adored 1825 sandstone cottage at the front of the block and, with the help of Hobart's H2o Architect Tim Hurburgh and his colleague Teresa de Miguel, designed her "forever" home built by Phoenix Constructions at the back of the block.

Whitton remembers sitting at the top of the block when Hurburgh suggested she make use of the back of the block for the house.

The decision enabled the designers to engage with the whole urban environment of the area and capture the vista and sun beautifully.

She's been in it now for two months and it already feels like home.

"I just love the light," Whitton says. "I walk up to the living area in the morning and it's just so bright and light it makes me feel happy."

Whitton says she's always wondered why traditionally double-storey homes have

bedrooms upstairs and living spaces downstairs. She's turned that tradition on its head.

Her open-plan, contemporary living space with kitchen, sitting area and dining space takes up the entire second floor with bedrooms and the main bathroom downstairs.

The floors are white-washed timber that match the white and pale grey bench tops and appliances in the kitchen.

Simplicity is also the key to her furnishing selections which allows her to embrace the space.

"I didn't want it to look minimalist, but it was important to me that I was able to keep the spaciousness in the living areas," Whitton says. "I didn't want to lose the feeling of space."

Off the kitchen is a partially covered, tiled deck that not only gets morning sun but is well lit right through the late afternoon.

Whitton likes to sit out there in the warmth with her cryptic crossword puzzles and her labradoodle Polly perched at her feet.

If she's stumped on one of her puzzles, she thinks about the answer while overlooking the beautiful walnut tree and her cityscape view over Hobart rooftops towards Mt Direction.

"I've actually been quite surprised how much I'm using the deck," Whitton says.

"It's lovely and warm and the doors are open most of the day because it really brings the outside in."

Not that she needs it now, but she had an internal lift installed which, she says, her friends with dicky knees and dodgy hips really appreciate.

"I did want to build something I could stay in forever," Whitton says. "We are all in our 70s now and when my friends come up in the lift many of them just say 'wow'."

From the outside she says her home looks like a white box.

"It is very geometric," she says. "It's a white box but it doesn't feel like a box when you are in it. The architects designed the roof to look like a Frenchman's beret set at a jaunty angle and the inside ceiling follows those same lines. The house is hardly even visible from the road."

Hurburgh likens his creation to the white and flat art deco buildings in Sandy Bay.

"Its simple forms don't attempt to be complicated or replicate other forms or shapes," Hurburgh says. "It just sits there very elegantly and simply."

Clockwise from main: The bold exterior of Jane Whitton's West Hobart unit; Jane with her labradoodle Polly; the kitchen area, one of Jane's cute sculptures and the dining area.

Main picture: JOHN GOLLINGS  
Interior pictures: MATT THOMPSON

