



FUN PALACE

Strong lines, towering ceilings and a luxe interior combine to create a family home of five-star proportions.

TEXT: Lisa O'Neill IMAGES: Joel Barbitta

SPACE RACE: The 4.5m-high ceilings give the feel of a cavernous, almost warehouse-like, feel. Textures soften the space and the statement light anchors the room. (top right) Elegance is created with Christian Lyon's Musee dining table and Kelly chairs.



“We had a vision for a large, boxed light... Christian designed it... we're ecstatic with the way it came out.”

Luxury hotel sophistication hides behind a classic facade in this cavernous family home in Shenton Park. Here, bold lobby style, strong lines and the contrast of hard and soft interior elements bring a sense of five-star style to a home built for a young family.

It's not surprising to learn that celebrated Australian interior designer Christian Lyon is behind the luxurious interior. Teaming with fellow interior designer Carol Anne Cassidy, an aesthetic has evolved that accentuates the monolithic-style structure of the house, but also softens it to create a mix of glamorous and family-friendly zones.

Behind the impressive structure is David Reynolds, director of builder Exclusive Residence. Brought in with the initial brief to design an interim home for a young family, David instead took the design-savvy owners on a journey to creating a dream space.

The four-bedroom, 3.5-bathroom house is built on a flat 680sqm block of standard dimensions. And, being located in Shenton Park, it had to comply with stringent council restrictions to protect the look and feel of the suburb. So, David looked to Europe for his design inspiration.

“In parts of Europe, you find old French-style chateaus that have been renovated into new hotels,” he says. “The exterior skin is still the original stone, then the builders or architects come in and create a modern hotel inside with sheer glass that disappears into a really old, stone cavity wall.”

To ensure harmony between the new house and its surrounds, David took his design and material cue from traditional-looking homes in the area.

“We call the style ‘modern classic’. It feels classic, but has a modern edge to it,” he says. “We used a lot of straight lines and squares... and a lot of classic materials, like travertine, but we used a silver travertine (on the facade and pool area), so it looked modern.”

The day-to-day rooms of the home – bedrooms, bathrooms and lounge, dining and kitchen zones – are all at ground level.

“I'm not a fan of stairs, so the main focus of the house was to have the main living areas all on the ground floor,” says the owner of the home. “The high ceiling here is to create that sense of space throughout the open-plan room.”

High? Let's term it ‘towering’. They extend up 4.5 metres and are accented by a striking

HOME SHENTON PARK

NEUTRAL GROUND

A timeless look was achieved in the interior thanks to a neutral palette. However, colour has been carefully used to highlight areas of the home without overpowering the overall harmony. "We've had fun working with (Cottesloe-based) interior designer Christian Lyon as we've really dressed up the place with soft furnishings and artwork," says the owner. Most of the furniture here was sourced from local businesses, including refurbished vintage lamps in the main living space, one of which is made of Murano glass. However, the main attraction in the home is the oversized pendant – made from a lightweight aluminium frame and fabric – over the lounge zone in the main living area.



strip of floor-to-ceiling marble in the main living area that surrounds the fireplace, while stone-coloured tiles anchor the space.

These design elements can bring a cold feel to an interior, but designer Christian has softened the impact through the use of textures through carpet, rugs and soft furnishings, plus materials with sheen.

The most jaw-dropping feature of the main living space, however, is a ceiling pendant, called the Box Kite Light, designed by Christian. The visual impact of this statement piece gives a strong focal point to the cavernous room and brings a cocooning feel to the lounge area of the home.

However, while the ceiling height gave the designers great freedom in creating and decorating the interior (not to mention the scope to create such a pendant), it also posed a logistical nightmare.

"That was the most challenging part of the project, realising you can't just get in a plasterer to plaster, your painter to paint or your bricklayer in to do his thing," says David. "You have to get scaffolding up in the

room. And the sheer size and volume of the walls was a challenge!"

Below and above the main living level are the fun zones of the home: a purpose-built games room for the owners' sons and a workshop and storage room, which allow the owners to indulge in their hobbies, are on the lower level; a guestroom with additional adults-only lounge zones is on the upper level.

True to the grand scale of the house, the sons' games room includes a miniature roller coaster and plenty of room for them to play. "The idea was to let the boys get all their toys out, leave them around and make an absolute mess, and we could close the door and be none the wiser! However, we did put a camera in the room, so we can keep an eye on them," says the owner,

The workshop and storage room are where the big boy's toys are kept. "The workshop is my playroom!" the owner adds. "There are a couple of dirt bikes, road bikes and paddling skis in there, plus radio helicopters and paintball markers. You name it, it's down there, and it's a real boy's room."

The rear of the home features a second level where there are a guest suite (for the owners' parents), a study and library, plus a lounge.

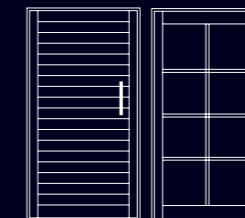
"The lounge is very cool, we've made it into an adults' games room with a cocktail arcade game, air hockey table and a Wii," says the owner. "There's also a lounging area within that space."

Despite the multitude of areas to run amok, the family loves entertaining and spends much time outdoors in the alfresco dining area by the pool.

"We love to fire up the barbecue and have family and friends over," says the owner. However, with the cooler weather on its way, we are confident the family will have no problem entertaining and enjoying life indoors, too. ❶



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