

The sandstone hue of the rendered concrete walls and blue-tinged low-e glass ensure the home sits comfortably in its serene setting. Landscaping by Ric Day & Co.

# RETURN TO FORM

Inspired by the shape of a boomerang, this weekend retreat in Victoria warmly embraces its bucolic surroundings with exemplary style.

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As the last swathes of light drift across the rooms of this expansive country house, it is easy to see why the homeowners were captivated by this 650-hectare sheep and cattle station located on a view-blessed site. “We were looking for a rural retreat within an hour’s drive of Melbourne that could also be used as a viable farm,” says the owner.

For more than 15 years, the owners – both high-profile businesspeople with hectic lives – took refuge in the property’s modest cottage during weekends and holidays. Over time, they outgrew the house and began planning a larger abode, a home with a tranquil, relaxed

air and a modern design that worked in well with the rolling landscape beyond.

“Both of our [now young adult] sons were born after we bought the property,” says the owner. “We were committed to it, so we decided to take the next step and build a real rural retreat for our family.”

The couple had previously worked with architect Paul Delany of Paul Delany Architects and interior designers Atticus & Milo on their Melbourne home, and the team were reunited to make the rural retreat dream a reality. The brief was for a larger, more comfortable house to accommodate the family’s many and frequent guests. The owners also specified that the >



**'Several generations regularly congregate here without imposing on one another.'** HOMEOWNER

In the living area, cathedral ceilings and floor-to-ceiling glass amplifies the relaxed, open feel. Sofa and tables custom designed by Atticus & Milo. B&B Italia JJ chair from Space. Lamp from Elliot Golightly. Rug from Tsar. Fireplace from Jetmaster. Rug from Tsar. Windows and sliding doors from Dayview Windows (throughout). **For Where to Buy, see page 210.**

< structure should sit lightly in the undulating setting and combine the best of smart living with practical, sustainable design.

"Our clients didn't want an old-fashioned farmhouse that stands up to greet you," says Paul. "Rather, they wanted a home that was understated, where a journey through the house was like a continuation of the landscape."

By all accounts, the team achieved their goal after a two-year build and landscaping project, which included installing enough rainwater tanks to hold 200,000 litres worth of water, fencing off six kilometres of creek frontage, building an additional dam and reshaping and

replanting the rambling grounds. "Since buying the property in 1987, we have planted more than 80,000 trees," says the owner, whose eco-vision has paid off with the creek now sheltering platypus and a rising number of Macquarie perch – an endangered fish species. Visitors regularly spot wombats, kangaroos and echidnas as well as a resident flock of wedge-tailed eagles. Most of these creatures can be seen from the house, whose curved, single level shape was inspired by a boomerang.

Visitors enter from the west, at the 'boomerang's' axis, into a travertine-paved foyer where glass walls offer views over a pond and >





‘[The homeowners] wanted a house that was understated, where a journey through the home was like a continuation of the landscape.’ PAUL DELANY, ARCHITECT

**ABOVE** Designer Sarah Wood from Atticus & Milo in the elegant kitchen. Joinery by Leonard Interiors. Antique stool. Travertine flooring from The City Tiler (throughout). **RIGHT** The snug family room is a real sanctuary. Sofa and cabinetry custom designed by Atticus & Milo. Artwork by Fred Williams. **OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** The hallway is a great place to display art. Sarah and the Atticus & Milo team included plenty of storage in the study. Artwork by Ray Crooke. The home has views from every angle. The serene main bedroom ensuite. Bath, basin and tapware from Reece. **For Where to Buy, see page 210.** ➤





The main bedroom opens directly onto one of the home's four terraces. Pendant light from Artemide. Bedhead upholstery and matching cushions in Zimmer+Rohde Ardecora Glamosa. Antique armchair. Curtains in Carlucci Soho from Unique Fabrics. Supertuft Escape carpet in Chase from Don Currie Carpets. **For Where to Buy, see page 210.** ➤

Chocolate, moss and caramel accents warm the cavernous spaces, the palette inspired by the nearby creek.



'The Loft', also designed by Paul Delany, is a separate structure on the property for the couple's sons to enjoy.

< paddocks beyond. To the right, a long hallway leading to the home's five bedrooms (each with ensuite) doubles as a gallery for the owners' extensive art collection. A study, laundry, mudroom and pool room with bar are also accessed from this hallway.

To the left of the foyer, the roofline rises to five metres, creating a double-height ceiling over the open-plan kitchen/living/dining area. A grand piano marks the transition between the main living areas and the cosy family room, which can be closed off with sliding doors when required. Earthy chocolate, moss and caramel accents warm the cavernous spaces, the palette inspired by the nearby creek. "The doors are

dark and glossy like the olive-black reflective pools, and the latte tones come from the rocks," says interior designer Caecilia Potter. Columns in the living room are clad with tallowwood reclaimed from a woolshed in rural NSW.

The owner says she counts her blessings at every visit. "Several generations regularly congregate here without imposing on one another," she says. "Evenings invariably see family and friends around the piano. The acoustics are great."

**H&G**

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