

## Victorian beauty

A respect for the past teamed with a modern approach returned this kitchen to a state of grace

WORDS VERA KLEIN STYLING WENDY BANNISTER  
PHOTOGRAPHY SHANIA SHEGEDYN

DETAILS  
Wash & Wear 101  
Barrier Technology  
in Dark Walnut,  
\$89.45/4L,  
Dulux.

*colour* The palette in this 1860s apartment was chosen to reflect the era in which the home was built, while still giving a modern vibe. Moody soft greys dominate, with cabinetry painted in Dulux's Deep Walnut and walls in Old Stone Wall from Porter's Paints. "I love the overall colour scheme," says homeowner Marylou, "but the wide floorboards totally make the place." The American oak boards in Mink Grey are from Royal Oak Floors. >



**storage** A clever open shelf tucked neatly in a corner was a design choice based on practicality – it's the perfect spot for Marylou's well-thumbed cookbook collection.



**sink & tapware** Another play on the modern-meets-Victorian design scheme, an Acquello butler's sink from The English Tapware Company is paired with a contemporary matt black gooseneck mixer from Astra Walker's Icon range.



**STYLE BUY**  
Patricia Urquiola  
'Azulej Mutina'  
tiles, \$145/sqm,  
Academy  
Tiles.

**splashback** Adding a welcome jolt of pattern and style, glazed porcelain Patricia Urquiola 'Azulej Mutina' tiles from Academy Tiles are Marylou's favourite feature in the kitchen.

A VICTORIAN-ERA HOME in bayside Melbourne that had seen better days captured the hearts of Marylou and her husband Bertus as soon as they stepped inside. "We had to look beyond the poor layout, pale peach carpet and lemon-coloured walls – leftovers from a bad 20-year-old renovation – to see the beautiful setting and old-world charm," recalls Marylou. "The potential for a modern overlay soon became clear."

For keen cook Marylou, who spends her spare time either reading about food or preparing it, overhauling the kitchen was a top priority. Working to a tight time frame, she and Bertus turned to interior designer Fiona Austin, briefing her to respect their new home's traditional Victorian architecture while imbuing it with a modern sensibility. Together they decided on a design scheme reminiscent of a New York brownstone; "though to some extent, we did refine and tweak our ideas as we went along," recalls Fiona.

The first priority was to reconfigure the space, moving doorways to maximise the kitchen's footprint. This approach added about two metres to the room, creating the opportunity for a top-of-wishlist oversized island bench. "I love cooking for people – it's a very social thing for me," says Marylou. "The island bench really was the cornerstone of the whole renovation and I now call it my office! I give Fiona 10 out of 10 for that bench – she did really well."

"THE COMMERCIAL-LOOK COOKER AND BUTLER'S SINK OFFER THAT TRADITIONAL *New York* FEEL"  
~ FIONA AUSTIN, DESIGNER

• SOME COSTS ARE BASED ON OWNERS' AND DESIGNER'S ESTIMATES AND WILL VARY. PRICE IS A GUIDE ONLY



**lighting** A striking 'Madison' brass pendant from Dunlin Home provides effective task lighting above the island bench. "It emits enough light to be functional without being too harsh," says Marylou. Meanwhile, the natural light filtered through the shutters provides additional ambience. "The effect is so serene," remarks Marylou.

**benchtop**  
The couple chose Carrara marble benchtops to link back to the home's original Victorian fireplaces – a clever design decision to blend old with new.

budget breakdown	
Accessories .....	\$2965
Appliances .....	\$10,170
Cabinetry & benchtops .....	\$29,000
Flooring .....	from \$129/sqm
Sink & tapware .....	\$1745
Tiles .....	from \$132/sqm
<b>total: \$48,000*</b>	
SOURCE BOOK: Fiona Austin, (03) 9592 6411, austindesign.com.au. Precision Cabinets, (03) 9702 4138, precision-cabinets.com.au. Stockists, page 252	