



life on the
LAKE

PHOTOGRAPHY TANYA ZOUDEV / WORDS BETH GRESHWALK

By the sparkling shores of Lake Macquarie in NSW, Anna Moore and her husband Aaron have achieved a coastal-chic home that's perfect for their family.



ENTRY A small nook by the staircase has been given an affordable makeover with the addition of a mirror from Kmart and a console table found on Gumtree.

THRIFTY FINDS “I am always searching for cane items on Gumtree and Facebook Marketplace because I have a real soft spot for anything rattan and cane,” explains Anna. “I found these cane chairs on Gumtree and I knew I needed them for the dining room. At just \$80 for five, it was a no-brainer. They complement my cane bar stools, which are also a Gumtree find.” Dining table from Early Settler and rug from Freedom.



If there's anything most families would truly appreciate, it's a forever home that feels like a holiday. And that's just what Anna and Aaron Moore have created for themselves and their children, Hallie (11), Jake (8) and Alahni (5), in Newcastle, NSW.

Anna, a furnishings showroom consultant, and Aaron, an electrician, began phase one of their renovation within the first six months of purchasing their two-storey, split-level home on Lake Macquarie in 2013. Aaron tackled the labour with trade assistance as needed, while Anna, pregnant with their youngest child, designed the home's overall look.

The first upgrade on the agenda? An open-plan living area, which meant removing the archway that separated the lounge and kitchen. “Having the wall separating the spaces made the house feel dark, small and dysfunctional,” Anna recalls. “We have so much light in the kitchen now, and being able to see the lake from the kitchen is a bonus.”

Next came a fresh white coat of Taubmans ‘China Doll’ throughout the home. The flooring also needed replacing; Anna opted for bamboo floors in the main living areas.

And, while the kitchen's layout was workable, the Moores revived the heart of the home with all-new appliances, benchtops and cabinetry.

In the meantime, Anna (who went on to achieve a Diploma of Interior Design in 2017) was busily harnessing her inner creative (and Pinterest!) to create a stunning new scheme for the entire abode. “Living by the lake, I wanted the

house to feel like you were on holidays, with a coastal look,” she explains.

Selecting a neutral palette with a blue nod to the shoreline, Anna used texture to create interest. “White walls with warm timber flooring and jute rugs was the base, and I've added secondhand and vintage pieces, like my rattan dining chairs, to give the house a not-so-perfect polished look.”

After pausing to welcome baby Alahni to the family, the Moores began phase two of their renovation on the downstairs level in 2017. Formerly a self-contained unit with a bedroom, bathroom, kitchenette and living area, “it didn't really suit the needs of our family,” says Anna. “So, we turned the kitchenette into a fifth bedroom, and made the bathroom a ‘two-way’ that you could access from both bedrooms.”

They later extended the outdoor deck upstairs to create an elegant space for dining and entertaining.

Even the Moore children lent a hand in the reno, helping Anna to style their bedrooms. Hallie's “arty-crafty” personality inspired an injection of bolder yet complementary colour in her room, along with a framed watercolour she'd painted.

In Jake's room, his fondness for blue is evident in artwork set against walls half-covered in Taubmans ‘Stormy Shadow’.

LIVING “We have a lot of glass at the front of the house to take advantage of the view. Glass can sometimes feel a little cold, so we installed sheer curtains to soften the space, and it has made a huge difference to the look and feel of the living room,” says Anna. “We used a long piece of bamboo and S hooks to create the rod and the sheer curtains are from Freedom.” Sofa from Harvey Norman; pendant light from Wanderlust 4 Lighting; occasional chair from Adairs; coffee table from Mocka; jute rug from Freedom; wool rug from Floorsome.



< As for Alahni's request for a "pink sparkly bed" in her room? A shining success, thanks to a Gumtree find that Anna painted in a dusty pink and adorned with a canopy of gold sparkles.


Triumphs in the design department had to be balanced with the realities of family life, Anna points out. "Having a family meant everything we chose had to be able to take knocks from the kids."

She credits the Polytec's 'Venette' fingerprint- and scuff-resistant surface used behind her kitchen island for "hiding grubby marks from kids running their feet up and down the cupboards".

"Sea Tribe cushions and throws are also great quality," she adds. "When the kids get them dirty, I put them in the wash and they come out brand new."

Anna's bamboo flooring has also proven its durability for six years and counting – along with the addition of soundproofing underneath "so the rooms downstairs are protected from the sound of noisy kids running around".

Now *that's* a holiday.

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HALLIE'S ROOM "Hallie is a creative girl, so I wanted her room to have a bit more colour but still fit into the overall flow of the home. As a surprise, I framed one of the watercolour paintings she did and hung it above her bed." Bed from Fantastic Furniture; pillowcases, throw and round cushion from Adairs; sheets from more than ever; quilt cover from Bedtonic; string of lights from IKEA.



JAKE'S ROOM "I didn't want him to grow out of his bedroom too quickly by making it too young, so together we decided to paint the bottom half of the wall in Taubmans 'Stormy Shadow'."



ANNA'S
top 3 tips

- 1 Don't be afraid to source secondhand furnishings or building materials. Saving money where you can means you can splurge on other items.
- 2 Do your homework and gather inspiration from places like magazines, Pinterest and Instagram. Having a clear idea of how you want a space to look will make the selections for the renovation much easier.
- 3 Design for yourself if it's your forever home. I can count the amount of times I have used a laundry sink on one hand, so when I designed the laundry, I decided not to put one in. The bench space for folding washing was more important to me.



ALAHNI'S ROOM "The bed was a Gumtree find that I painted in a dusty pink – it was the first thing I bought for the room. I have always wanted to use wallpaper somewhere in the house and Alahni's room was the perfect spot to put it. We decided on the 'Green Raindrops' design by Luxe Walls," explains Anna.

MASTER BEDROOM Bed and round wall hangings above bed found on Gumtree; side table from Naturally Cane; green pillowcases from Adairs; cushions from Sea Tribe, Splosh and MyHouse; European pillows from Adairs; quilt cover from Little Things Interiors; striped throw from The Storekeeper & Co; pendant lights made with baskets from Freedom.





OUTDOOR DECK “We love to entertain out on our new deck, especially in summer – it’s like an extra room in the house,” says Anna. Dining chairs from Naturally Cane; dining table found on Gumtree; tablecloth from Peacocks and Paisleys; pendant light from Wanderlust 4 Lighting; outdoor sofa from Early Settler; stool from Provincial Home Living.



HOME TOUR

Style TO STEAL

Get Anna’s layered and textured coastal vibes with these finds.

COLOUR PALETTE

PENDANT LIGHT Wanderlust 4 Lighting ‘Ocea’ pendant in black \$299 wanderlustlighting.com / **WALL PLATE** ‘Ratu’ wall plate large \$150 barefootgypsy.com.au / **WALLPAPER** LuxeWalls ‘Green Raindrops’ wallpaper \$79 per square metre luxewalls.com.au / **QUILT COVER** Society of Wanderers natural duvet cover (queen) \$299 societyofwanderers.com / **BAR STOOL** ‘Barcelona’ stool \$249 provincialhomeliving.com.au / **CANDLE** Only Orb ‘Oar’ scented candle \$89.90 top3.com.au / **MIRROR** Kmart round mirror \$19 kmart.com.au / **BEDHEAD** Freedom ‘Raffles’ queen headboard \$499 freedom.com.au / **PILLOWCASE** Kip & Co velvet pillowcase in Alpine Green (two-piece set) \$99 kipandco.com.au / **POT** The Balcony Garden ‘Straight Up’ pot from \$99 thebalconygarden.com.au / **STOOL** Natural Elm ‘Milking’ stool \$199.95 provincialhomeliving.com.au / **CUSHION** Sea Tribe ‘Kai’ cushion in natural \$64.95 seatrIBE.com.au / **RUG** Rug Culture ‘Hudson 801’ rug in denim (2.3x3.2m) \$1,299 lifeinteriors.com.au