







assionate horse lovers, the owners of this 1880s homestead near Geelong in Victoria, sit high in the saddle after interior designer Greg Natale has given them chic living spaces with thoroughbred credentials. A guesthouse on the Rosemont Stud, the five-bedroom house was suffering a case of the beiges when the owners approached him in early 2013. "It was a creamy hospital yellow, all one colour and it had no love," says the owner. A 1980s extension had created a light-filled living area at the rear, but the whole homestead needed some serious grooming.

Drawing inspiration from the wonderfully eclectic boutique hotels of New York's SoHo, the owners thought Greg was the person to give them the decorative layering they sought sitting rooms within sitting rooms, pattern on pattern. "Whether combining geometrics with florals, or stripes with Navajo prints, Greg does patterns with a twist," she says. "He also uses lots of colour. We love colour, but are afraid to use it ourselves."

The couple gave him two distinct briefs which, says Greg, is not unusual when he has two owners to accommodate. The wife requested urban glamour, with an after-five air. "I also wanted warm colour, but a formal take on it, such as maroons, mustards and olives, and a pure white kitchen," she says. Meanwhile, the husband wanted something with more rural overtones, with a hint of the industrial. But they were unanimous in their desire for comfort and generous entertaining spaces.

Little structural work was needed, which was fortunate, says Greg, because the original sections of the homestead boasted internal walls half-a-metre thick. In the kitchen area, where there was once a laundry, Greg removed a wall to create a bar. And he installed a bluestone fireplace recycled from the floor of the gatehouse in the informal living area.





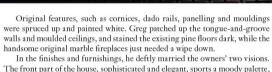












SPEED READ

covers of Rosemont horse stud near Geelong commissioned interior
Greg Natale to work his magic on this bluestone homestead. "The couple
rent ideas, the wife wanting glamour and elegance, the husband requiring
ing a little more earthy and industrial. Both wanted comfort and generous
aces for entertaining. "Greg relied on his forte — mixing patterns and
strong colours to successfully answer both briefs."

GEELONG

HOME

In the finishes and furnishings, he dettly married the owners' two visions. The front part of the house, sophisticated and elegant, sports a moody palette, with brass accents. "It's more dramatic, with formal patterns," he says. Both living and dining rooms combine boutique-hotel elegance with the aura of an exclusive club – perfect for entertaining. Meanwhile, the rear of the house lets its hair down. The relaxed living areas, with exposed beams, painted white and bathed in light, and rich red sofas are a sanctuary after a long day in the stables.

The horse motif features strongly in accessories, with photos of the couple's racing horses and equine statues throughout, and a saddle, which Greg discovered in a secondhand shop, in the hallway.

For both Greg and the owners, this project gave them the chance to extend their boundaries. The owner says Greg's clever mixing of pattern and strong colour "stretched the way we look at design". Meanwhile, for Greg, who mainly designs city homes, the project offered the opportunity to do new things. Appropriately, Greg's deadline was Melbourne Cup Day. The cup may not have found its way to the mantelpiece, but the house has won accolades of its own. "Greg really nailed it," says the owner, who likes this house so much, she has asked him to work on other projects. Watch this space. [5]

For more go to gregnatale.com. Greg's book, The Tailored Interior, will be published in November by Hardie Grant.

