



Case Study

Client Name: Gay and Tony Thompson

Suburb: Mosman, Sydney

Home: Unit

Background

Retired couple, Gay and Tony Thompson had recently downsized their living arrangements by selling their house in Mosman and purchasing a 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom unit.

The unit was in quite a state: 12 students had lived there previously and there was lots of wear and tear. The fixtures and fittings were 20 years old so the place was tired and dated. Gay and Tony wanted to totally renovate the unit and update it with the latest contemporary designs.

Client Needs

By the end of the renovation project, Gay and Tony wanted a comfortable home that suited their lifestyle with attention to heating, cooling and ease of use.

The couple were working within a budget. Having sold their house, and living temporarily with family, they also had a tight deadline to move into the renovated unit before Christmas 2009.



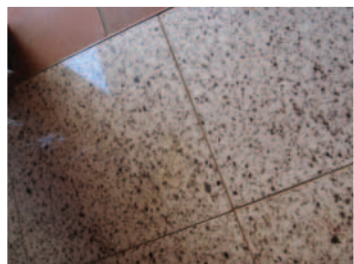
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The Solution

From the entrance to the unit, you could access the bedrooms and bathrooms to the left, the living area straight ahead and the kitchen to the right. Entrances are often over-looked in renovations but they are key to first impressions, opening up the entire home.

The original entrance had square granite tiles. The tiles had been affected by water in several patches. The water damage looked like rust on the tiles.



Entrance - Before

During the renovation, the entrance was re-tiled using polished cream marble in a 600mm by 400mm size to give a greater sense of space.

Tiling an entrance is a great idea since tiles are hard-wearing in an area of the home that experiences lots of traffic.



Entrance - After

The living area was revived with new carpet, down lights and painting the walls and ceilings.

The downlights replaced 3 main light fittings. This created a softer, more subtle lighting effect within the living area.



Living Area

A focus point in the living area was the new built-in entertainment unit, custom-made by Living Space Constructions. The unit made use of the full wall space to store the TV and so on plus, books, games and display ornaments, all in one central place. The unit was built based on a design provided by Gay.



Wall Before Entertainment Unit



New Built-in Entertainment Unit in the Living Area

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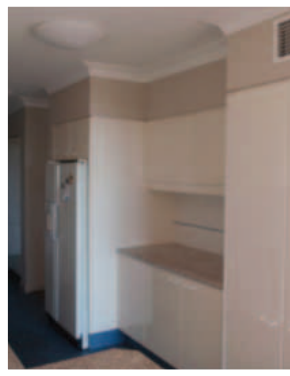


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The old kitchen was completely gutted and remodelled using a contemporary design.



Kitchen - Before



Kitchen - Before

The removal of the handles from all cupboards streamlined the appearance of the kitchen from afar. All appliances in the kitchen were renewed. The old blue laminated floor was replaced with ceramic tiles which made the kitchen much easier on the eye.



Renovated Kitchen

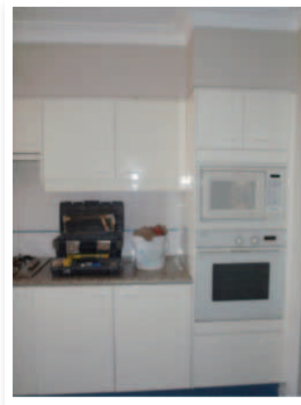
The cupboard space on the left hand side of the kitchen was extended over the bench area, creating more storage space. Down lights were installed underneath the new cupboards. The tiled splashback was upgraded to a glass splashback. The old laminate bench top was replaced with CaesarStone®. Soft closing fittings were installed on all the drawers.



Renovated Kitchen – Appliance Bar Close Up

An appliance bar was created with a roller shutter. This kept those small appliances you need conveniently at hand (like the toaster, kettle, coffee plunger and so on) with the ability to hide them behind the shutter when they are not in use.

The built-in microwave and oven in the kitchen were replaced with stainless steel-finished appliances and a separate grill was added.



Kitchen Appliances - Before



Kitchen Appliances - After

Prior to the renovation, the unit had a separate toilet with a small hand basin; a main bathroom with a bath, shower, vanity and a small hand basin; and a second bathroom with shower, vanity unit, hand basin and a second toilet. Some structural changes were made to accommodate Gay and Tony's wishes.



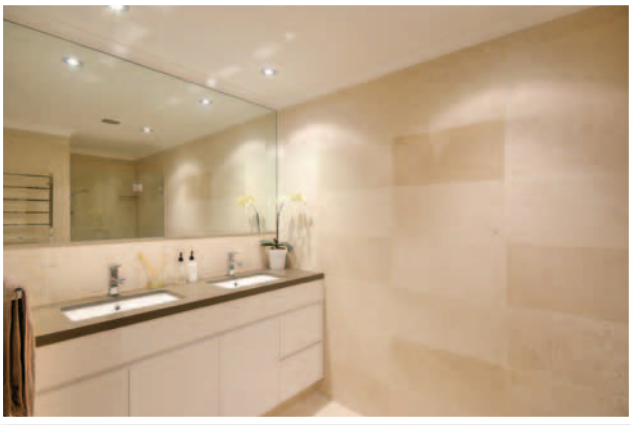
Main Bathroom - Before

As part of the renovation, the bath in the main bathroom (located in the left hand corner of the picture shown above) was replaced with a contemporary designed-vanity unit.

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Main Bathroom – After – View of Vanity Unit

The old shower in the main bathroom was upgraded to a stylish frameless shower with new fittings.

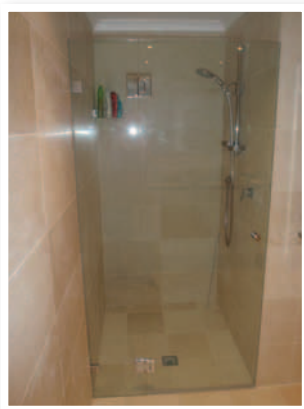
In addition, the door to the toilet, accessed via the hallway, was bricked up, plastered and painted.



Separate Toilet - During

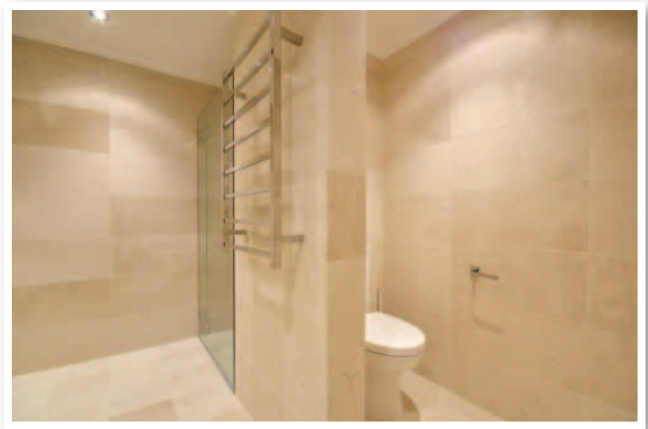


Main Shower - Before



Main Shower - After

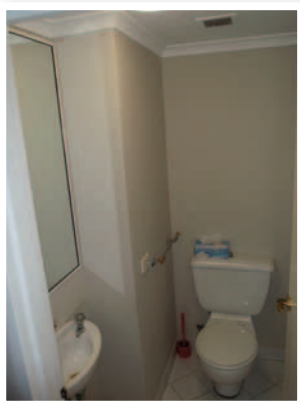
The separate toilet, coming off the hallway, was merged into the main bathroom by removing the wall that separated it.



Old Separate Toilet Merged into Main Bathroom

The new toilet now sat behind where the door used to be on the right hand side of the original main bathroom. After the renovation, the door to the main bathroom switched sides to open to the left instead to the right.

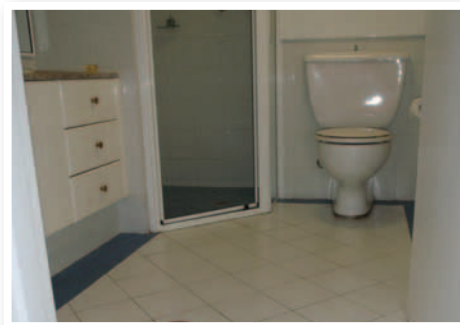
You can see from the photos that all fixtures and fittings were all replaced in the main bathroom and a heated towel rail added. The main bathroom was tiled from floor to ceiling using travertine, imported from Italy, to create a stunning and luxurious bathroom.



Separate Toilet - Prior



Separate Toilet - During



Second Bathroom - Before

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As with the main bathroom, all fixtures and fittings in the second bathroom were replaced to create a modern contemporary bathroom – a great contrast to the Before photo. The large rectangular travertine tiles and down lights recessed into the ceiling created a softer space with a touch of grandeur.



Second Bathroom – After

In the main bedroom, the carpets were replaced and the walls and ceilings repainted. In addition, a new oyster light was installed and the handle to the bedroom door was renewed.



Main Bedroom - Before

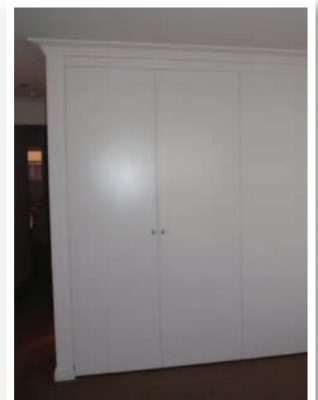


Main Bedroom - After

A new wardrobe with a more contemporary style was installed in the main bedroom.

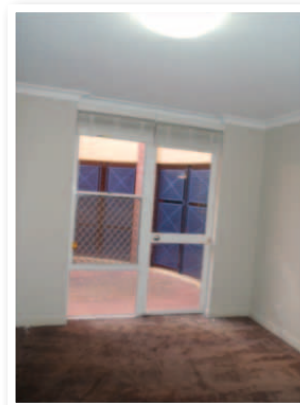


Wardrobe in Main Bedroom - Before



Wardrobe in Main Bedroom - After

The second bedroom received the same treatment as the main bedroom and took on a new lease of life.



Second Bedroom - Before



Second Bedroom - After

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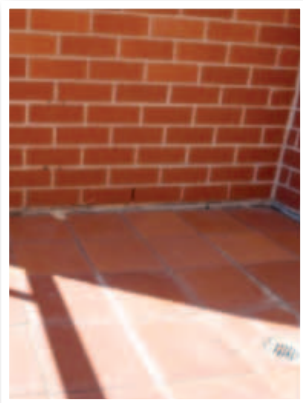
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The third bedroom was converted into a spare bedroom and study with some custom-built cabinetry installed. Gay provided the design she wanted in a drawing.



Third Bedroom – Built-In Study Unit

The front balcony was also renovated. From the photo below, you can see that lime had bled through the grout between the old red terracotta tiles. This can happen over time, especially when the tiles are located in an area with a lot of moisture. The surface of this balcony had been exposed to rain and excessive watering of pot plants.



Balcony - Before



Balcony Close-Up - Before

Flashing is a thin continuous piece of sheet metal installed to prevent the passage of water into a structure from an angle or joint. Characteristic of unit blocks built 20 years ago, the flashing between the brickwork and balcony was exposed and not attractive as you can see by the Balcony Close-Up - Before photo.

The old terracotta tiles were ripped up and the entire area was covered by a waterproof membrane.



Balcony - During Renovation

The new tiles were built up the wall to hide the previously exposed and ugly flashing. The result was a more pleasant outdoor entertaining area.



Balcony - After Renovation



Balcony - After Renovation

As a final touch, Gay and Tony installed under floor heating in the bathrooms and kitchen to heighten their comfort in the colder and warmer months.

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The Living Space Experience

What qualities were Gay and Tony looking for in a builder?

“Reliability, good communication skills, helpful with designs and interior finishes. We wanted someone who we could trust to keep within our budget and showed examples of good workmanship.”

Gay

Why did Gay and Tony select Living Space Constructions as their builder of choice?

“Living Space Constructions were recommended to us by a person who had seen one of the units they had renovated. We contacted them and made the decision to have our renovation completed by them because they did the complete job. The bonus with Living Space Constructions was that we did not have worry about organising contractors and other trades. When renovating a unit, we thought it best to have one company do all the work and liaise with the Body Corporate.”

Gay

How did the project proceed?

“We were very happy with the workmanship of Living Space Constructions. All our requirements have been met: they achieved the finishes we wanted, within the budget we had and most of the work was completed within the short time-frame we needed.

Our on-site project manager, Mick, was pro-active. Every day Mick would check

that everything was going right, giving us updates on what's happening. He communicated well and often. We were very impressed with him.”

Gay

“We found from our very first meeting with Living Space Constructions, that they were professional. They always followed through with communication and made us feel totally confident with our decision to carry out our renovation with them. All the people we came into contact with were friendly, courteous and obliging. Nothing was too much trouble. I'd use them every day of the week.”

Tony

The Outcome

“We are thrilled with our unit. All our goals have been met and we're very happy with the renovation.”

Gay

And finally, what advice would you give to anyone embarking on a renovation?

“Before commencing negotiations make sure you know more or less what you want to achieve. Even have a concept of the final design you desire on paper. Also, do your homework on the items that require some personal choice like bathroom accessories, tiles, cupboard finishes and so on. This allows you to have a more productive dialogue with your builder of choice. And the last thing is to get everything in writing so that all parties know where they stand.”

Gay

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An effective approach to renovations

The unit renovation described in this Case Study was based on the RenoPack™ service provided by Living Space Constructions. The RenoPack™ service is a pre-packaged range of renovation packages to suit every budget and taste. RenoPack™ is available for units, flats, apartments and even smaller houses like semis, terraces and townhouses.

As unit renovation specialists we know how many products, styles, colours and tradesmen there are on the market. The choices are mind-boggling. And when it comes to that much-needed renovation, we find our clients are simply looking for a fast, cost effective solution for their property that will stand the test of time visually and financially.

Our RenoPack™ service has been created to do just that. Having teamed up with a number of leading suppliers and manufacturers, we have put together a pre-designed range of renovation packages that include everything from bathroom finishes to the kitchen sink. Our pre-selected combinations are embedded with that little extra designer savvy, without the designer price tag, leaving every property renovator breathing a sigh of relief.

A face-lift for every surface

When it comes to a RenoPack™ renovation, we cover everything. The following is a list of materials and finishes that are included within every renovation package we undertake*:

Bathroom

- Floor tiles
- Wall tiles
- Wall paint
- Ceiling paint
- Bathroom Fixtures & Fittings

Kitchen

- Floor tiles
- Tiled Splashback
- Ceiling paint
- Cabinets
- Benchtop
- Sink & Tapware
- Appliances**

General

- Flooring***
- Wall paint
- Ceiling paint
- Blinds
- Door Handles (internal doors)
- New electrical outlets
- Switches
- Light Fittings
- Paint internal doors, architraves and skirting

Each package allows for material combinations within 3 different price ranges.



The selection of products, materials and finishes within the Good, Better and Best packages is reviewed every 3 months. This ensures that your renovation reflects current design trends. Ask our consultant to show you the current seasonal catalogue.

Everything is laid out for you; appliances, floor and wall finishes, fittings and colour choices.

For more information or to talk to one of our representatives about how we can service your next renovation.

* All materials have an allocated price and quantity allowance and may be subject to change. All fittings, fixtures and materials will be removed and disposed of where their replacement is directly related to the renovation. We also include the waterproofing of any 'wet areas' related to the renovation.

** Includes oven cooktop and rangehood. Excludes microwave and dishwasher.

*** All packages allow for carpet. Please ask our consultant if you would prefer timber flooring, as it is not included in our packages.

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The logo for Living Space Constructions, featuring the words "living space" in a lowercase, sans-serif font, with "CONSTRUCTIONS" in a smaller, uppercase font below it. To the right of the text is a stylized icon of a house with a chimney.