

# BARN-STYLE *beauty*

A bright and very white sprawling home captures the feeling of an endless summer holiday

WORDS JACKIE BRYGEL

She's the co-founder and creative director of a successful boutique renovation company, Three Birds Renovations ([threebirdsrenovations.com](http://threebirdsrenovations.com)). But when it came to transforming a dark and somewhat dilapidated 1970s house into her own family's bright modern coastal barn home, Bonnie Hindmarsh knew one thing for certain – she only had herself to please.

'This renovation was a little bit different because it was my place. My husband Nathan pretty much gave me free rein and trusted my design choices,' says Bonnie with a smile. ►

PICTURE THREE BIRDS RENOVATIONS

Coast meets country style at this rambling homestead in the Hills District of Sydney.



★  
‘We’re all in that honeymoon stage at the moment. We’re just in love with everything’

‘With Three Birds, we’re up to our ninth renovation in four years. But this is the home we’re planning to stay in and enjoy as a family for a long, long time. As a result, the choices needed to be timeless and have longevity, which is actually the way I design most houses.’

Over 14 months, Bonnie oversaw the extensive transformation of the Sydney Hills District home, nestled within lush greenery on a sprawling two-hectare allotment. And despite at least one rather significant hiccup along the renovation way, the result is exactly as Bonnie envisaged.

Most importantly, the house perfectly suits Bonnie, Nathan and their four young sons. Even the clan’s pair of British bulldogs have wasted no time making the stylish abode their home. ►



Green is seen from virtually every aspect of the home’s interior.

### Time for change

Living in the dated brown brick home just as it was for five years, Bonnie and Nathan always knew they would one day tackle a major renovation.

'It was a tough five years because the house was literally falling apart. We had a huge storm that damaged the property quite significantly, so it was looking a little bit the worse for wear,' says Bonnie.

'We held out, though, and I'm glad we did. It was good living there first and seeing exactly where the sun comes in – where it gets hot in summer and stays cool in winter.'

With DJ Building & Construction taking charge of the works, the renovation commenced, while the family lived in a small granny flat on the property.

They resided there a little longer than planned, as the project turned into a far greater undertaking than was originally anticipated.

'Once we started getting stuck into it and knocking out walls, the builder let us know that the walls were practically

paper thin from termite damage. We ended up knocking down 90% of the home, but we kept a beautiful fireplace and another wall in the dining area with some big old doors. I'm so glad we were able to keep a few features of the home that I really loved,' says Bonnie. ►



**'It was good living there first and seeing exactly where the sun comes in – where it gets hot in summer and stays cool in winter'**

The kitchen and dining area were central to the home's new layout.

### Bright idea

Drawing inspiration from what she has dubbed a 'modern coastal barn look', Bonnie also knew from the outset that white in all its pure glory would play a starring role.

'As for where I got the concept of 'modern coastal barn' from - who knows?' she laughs. 'But I think it was a mix of my absolutely loving the coast yet being so far away from it, while still wanting to achieve that real holiday feel for my family permanently.'



'I wanted to create a home that I love with a lightness and a certain feel to it, but also something that would be really durable for the whole family'

'I've always loved white coastal cottages, as well as that style of big American barns and New Zealand farmhouses - they're just beautiful.'

Interestingly, Bonnie wasn't fazed by the thought of living in a pristine white house with four young boys and two dogs.

'Walls can be wiped down if need be - pretty much everything is washable. The engineered timber floor has a grain through it, so you don't see every scratch, the white sofa in the main living area has machine-washable covers, and the kitchen benchtops are Caesarstone, so it's all very low-maintenance.' ►

PICTURE THREE BIRDS RENOVATIONS

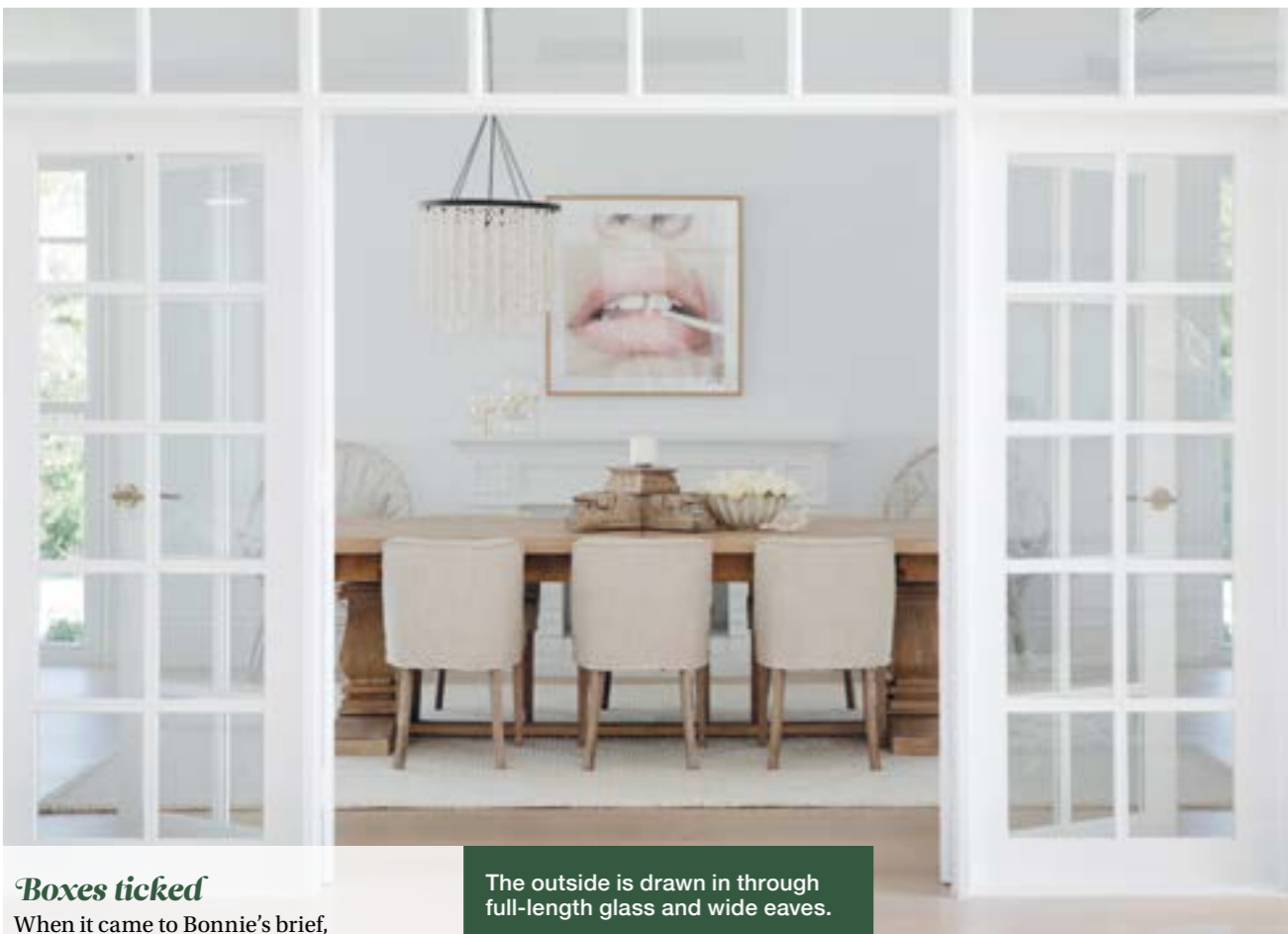
With four boys and two dogs, the all-white theme might be scary. But Bonnie insists everything is washable.



‘It was important to have height with the ceilings. In the main section of the house, the raked ceilings are about 7m high’



Green highlights indoors keep rooms feeling lush and clean.



### 'Boxes ticked'

When it came to Bonnie's brief, there were some key non-negotiables. With a growing family, it was important that the home be as open as possible, while still offering intimate spots to cosy up in.

'We had to have really functional entertaining spaces, as we've got a big family and we're always having friends over,' says Bonnie.

'I wanted an open kitchen right in the middle of the house, and it was important that the home be single level to give it that sprawling, rural property feel.'

Also on the wish list was an abundance of natural light and views of the verdant outlook outdoors from almost every room.

'It was important, too, to have height with the ceilings. In the main section of the house, the raked ceilings are about 7m high,' says Bonnie.

'My favourite elements of the house are the indoor and outdoor entertaining areas. We built it for people – for all of our friends and family. It really is the most perfect house for all of us.' ►

The outside is drawn in through full-length glass and wide eaves.



PICTURES THREE BIRDS RENOVATIONS



Natural hues and simple patterns complement the elemental palette of the home.



The pool area gives this large family home a resort feel.

### Get the look...

Bonnie shares her top three tips for achieving a 'modern coastal barn look':

1. Cladding is probably the most important thing. A clad home is both coastal and barn-like.
2. Incorporate beautiful high ceilings where possible.
3. Think white. For this home, I did everything from the ceilings to the walls and cabinetry in Dulux White on White.



### BACK TO SCHOOL

Have you always dreamed of renovating your house, but don't know where to begin? Three Birds Renovations has launched The Reno School – a six-week online course that shares the talented trio's savvy expert tips and money-saving advice on everything from defining your vision to finding the right tradies, and also provides access to industry discounts and deals. The course costs \$499.

'There's only so much you can teach over social media, so we created The Reno School to enable us to fully share all of our learnings and help everyone turn their renovating dreams into a reality,' says Three Birds Renovations co-founder and marketing director Lana Taylor. Visit [therenoschool.com](http://therenoschool.com) for more information. ❖

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