

FACT FILE

THE BRIEF

To transform a simple 1950s brick home into a dwelling suited to the needs of a modern family

THE FAMILY

Vinko and Vera Andrijic and their children Adam, 29, Danielle, 26, and Melanie, 13

THE ARCHITECT

Adam Hobbs, Hobbs Jamieson Architects

A Vera and Adam Andrijic **B** The central timber and glass staircase **C** The front of the house was repositioned **D** Deep eaves provide shade **E** The bathroom **F** The main bedroom **G** Quality finishes are visible in the new kitchen



Success is a family affair

With various relatives offering their unique skills and input, this Roseville residence reaps the benefits of going that extra mile

Strange things happen during a financial crisis. The situation in the building industry was looking a little bleak this time last year with tradesmen touting for work for the first time in years. Anyone selling a house will also recall prices dropping all over Sydney as prospective buyers worried if they would still have a job in six months' time.

It was in this climate that Vinko and Vera Andrijic bought a 1953 red-brick house on a 713sq m block in Roseville Chase on Sydney's North Shore.

A well-regarded builder, Vinko says his plan was to renovate the house to sell. But the economic downturn changed that.

"The situation changed and the down market hit so we geared ourselves up to live here," he says.

"With the economic downturn, we thought maybe the return at that point was not going to be as good."

However, they began to realise that the

house had a lot to offer them as a family. Already residents in the suburb, Vera says they were well aware of the advantages of living in the area.

"We were looking in other areas, but these were really over priced," she says.

"Roseville is close to the city and I spend a lot of time in Chatswood. It is convenient for public transport and schools."

Great expectations

Before they decided to keep the house for themselves, Vinko had already contacted architect Adam Hobbs for some design advice. The pair have worked together on other projects before so they both approached the job with a mix of knowing the practicalities and high expectations.

"The original idea was something fit for the market with the downstairs area opening up to the backyard," Adam says.

"We did not want a big backyard and we had a few discussions with council about

the carport. [We were] advised to keep it reasonably open."

While the decision to make the house their home did not overtly affect the design, Vinko says it did alter the level of finishes they installed.

"You spend a lot more money when it is for yourselves," Vinko says.

"It was mainly about selection of PC [price cost] items and the hardware."

Positioned on a corner block, the first change was to face the entrance on to the quieter side of the street, which had a wider frontage.

"The way the house presented to the corner was weak," says Adam.

"Putting it here allowed us to do a nice big open entry with a single-storey rectangle at the front."

The new entry effectively brings visitors into the middle of the house with the original rooms, new kitchen and meals area to the right and the expansive new

open-plan living area to the left.

Part of the large original pool was reclaimed to make way for a carport that was stylish enough to double as an additional entertaining area while still leaving plenty of water for the family to cool off in.

The centrally positioned glass and timber staircase leads upstairs to four new bedrooms, including a main bedroom suite, as well as comfortable rooms for their son Adam, 29, and daughter Melanie, 13.

Other daughter Danielle, 26, recently married and moved to western Sydney.

An open-plan office with room for two overlooks the stairs and the living area below.

Sun protection

With street frontages to the east and south, Adam had to work out the best way to protect the west-facing living area from the harshest sun while bringing in as much light from the north without impacting on the privacy of the nearest neighbour.



Photos: John Fotiadis

"We had to be careful with privacy, but we worked around it by installing 'tree outlook' windows so you don't see the neighbours or the services to the side," Adam says.

The tree outlook is a high and long window with views of the treetops. This was in addition to floor-to-ceiling windows in front of the stairwell, which effectively floods the downstairs space with light.

To control the western light, Adam specified deep eaves into the backyard space. In addition to the carport and some adjustable blinds, it limits the impact of the worst of the western sun.

Although the new work is a significant change from the original house, the Development Application sailed through council, much to Vinko's delight.

"Adam's brief to council must have been good, because it was approved in five weeks," Vinko says.

Adam says the process was fast tracked by having a pre-DA meeting and a full understanding of the local development control plan.

"It is like dealing with any council – if you can establish a reasonable argument, they will listen," Adam says.

"I think it is about keeping it simple but backing it up the modern ideas."

Vinko asked his son Adam to be foreman for the 10-month building process, with

architect Adam consulted by phone every now and again. Being foreman on the house that you will be living in gave Adam the opportunity to customise the new work to suit his own ends. In particular, he extended the wiring to include outlets for an outdoor television, which can be viewed from the entertaining area and the pool.

The barbecue was also a family affair, with Vinko's brother lending a hand to install a unique gas and heat beads configuration.

Vinko says working with family is nothing new and each member brings their own expertise to the site.

"Structurally I am fairly confident, but Adam gets more involved in the wiring so he has more control in the fixtures part of the project," Vinko says.

Son Adam clearly enjoyed the chance to add his own little extras.

"Because you are on site, you can deal with the electrical stuff," he says.

"It is giving it that extra edge so if we want to sell the property it will stand out." ■

Robyn Willis

● **MORE INFORMATION**
Hobbs Jamieson Architects
 9948 3807, hobbsjamieson.com.au
Vanda Constructions 9460 4774,
 vandaconstructions.com

GET THE LOOK

OLD-FASHIONED STYLE

The owners have chosen a neutral colour scheme for their home, which makes it easy to mix and match accessories. Items such as their patterned cushions and the printed table lamp with mirrored base add interest to the room and are easy to change if you tire of them. For something similar try this Daria buffet lamp in chrome with a white floral shade from Beacon Lighting. It is priced at \$129 and is also available in black and as a table lamp.

● **MORE INFORMATION**
Beacon Lighting, 1300 232 266,
 beaconlighting.com.au

TAKE A SEAT

Adding bar stools to the kitchen bench, such as the owners have here, is a great way to create a casual entertaining space. The black and chrome stools provide a monochromatic look against the stark, white bench. Matt Blatt has a range of stools for a similar look. The Carreras bar stool is \$395.

● **MORE INFORMATION**
Matt Blatt, 1300 628 825,
 mattblatt.com.au

