

The lounge blends furniture pieces from Criteria Collection with the family's mementos. The original Baltic pine floorboards were tinted to create the feel of aged oak.



## the house that grew

Initial remodelling plans turned into a full-blown extension for this lovely inner-city family home.

Words by Heather Nette King Photography by Armelle Habib

### The home

A two-storey Victorian brick house in North Melbourne, built about 1880. It has four bedrooms, a formal lounge, an open-plan kitchen and dining space and a courtyard.

### Who lives here

Soma Giovannini and partner Tom Carson, directors and owners of Abode Restoration, with their daughter Aisha Salich, 16.

### What we did

“Working with interior designer Carole Whiting, our initial plans grew as we decided to remodel most of the downstairs area and do a small extension to create a larger kitchen, a laundry and powder room,” says Giovannini.

“It was absolutely worth all the extra effort and expense.”

### Our favourite room

“In the dining room and open-plan kitchen, the light is beautiful due to the large windows and French doors we installed.”

### The 'hood

“Though we're only a kilometre from the CBD, the quiet, quaint, almost village feel has the charm of a bygone era,” says Giovannini. “It feels like stepping back in time.”

### Future plans

“Not for this home.”

### Best advice

“We strongly advocate for the benefits of engaging professional interior designers or architects who understand space, light and proportion, as well as the importance of quality storage, joinery and furnishings.”



Carson and Giovannini in their dining space, with a Pietro Russo table from Criteria. “It’s a stunning daytime room, and soft and intimate by night,” she says.



“The upstairs verandah is a fabulous spot to watch fireworks on New Year’s Eve,” says Giovannini. The antique chandelier was sourced from a *brocante* in France.



“The kitchen faces north so the windows and French doors capture beautiful light which did not exist at all in the original floorplan,” says Giovannini.



“Time had colluded with nature to create a patina that couldn’t be replaced, so we restored where needed but kept its beautiful colour and character.”