

# The home FRONT

THE CLIMATE CRISIS IS ON EVERYONE'S MINDS SO WE ASKED SOME OF AUSTRALIA'S TOP DESIGNERS HOW TO PUT UP A FIGHT CLOSE TO HOME BY USING AND SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Words HANNA MARTON

**W**e know that when it comes to eco-conscious living, it's the small changes that can make the biggest difference. But how do you know what to switch or substitute, and what habits to stop altogether? We sat down with five Australian designers, architects and builders who are passionate about sustainability, to chat about fighting the good fight. From their favourite second-hand stores to the conscious design practices they use, we've got the lowdown on the future of interiors. We even asked a few fun questions because even the best eco-warriors need some downtime!

PHOTOGRAPHY (MAIN IMAGE) TOM ROSS

*Situated on the banks of Edgars Creek in Melbourne, this home maintains a strong connection to its natural environment, thanks to Breathe Architecture's use of natural materials, especially raw ironbark, as seen here.*



## MADELINE SEWALL

*Architect Madeline Sewall is the director of houses at Melbourne sustainable architecture and design firm Breathe, and has appeared on Channel Nine's 'Renovate or Rebuild'.*

**What does sustainability mean to you?**  
"Putting the planet and humanity first."

**What's one thing we can do to be more sustainable at home?**  
"Whether you rent or own your home, one of the easiest, most affordable and most impactful decisions you can make is to purchase 100 per cent certified green power."

**Go-to sustainable suppliers?**  
"Urban Salvage for recycled timber, Brickworks for carbon neutral bricks and Dekton for benchtops."

**Do you have any daily eco-friendly habits?**  
"I live and work within a few blocks, so I walk regularly; I'm a pescatarian; I invest my superannuation in ethical funds; and I always carbon offset when I fly."

**Which designers or architects inspire you?**  
"Geoffrey Bawa, Kevin Mark Low and Richard Leplastrier."

**Most-loved design or coffee table book?**  
"A collection of Georgia O'Keeffe's watercolours. I'm also loving *Design for Fragility* by Esther Charlesworth and John Fien."

**Dream travel destination?**  
"Patagonia. But, right now, I'm on long-service leave exploring corners of Australia I haven't yet been to!"

**What's exciting you right now?**  
"Leading architects and designers delivering 100 per cent electric homes. Induction cooking and solar panels have also become more efficient, elegant and affordable." >





## MEGAN NORGATE

*Interior designer and permaculture designer Megan Norgate is the founding director of Melbourne-based studio Brave New Eco.*

**What does sustainability mean to you?**

“Working with the existing footprint as much as possible.”

**What’s one eco-friendly feature you try to include in every project?**

“It’s very unsexy, but ensuring a home is well-insulated and sealed to make heating and cooling more efficient is paramount.”

**How do you boost a home’s connection to nature?**

“We reorientate a home, if possible, to capture light and warmth from the north. Windows should frame views of the outdoors and garden.”

**Favourite place to shop for second-hand items?**

“Facebook Marketplace.”

**What furniture piece is on your wish-list?**

“I love everything by Tide Design. Their pieces are made of beautiful materials and are timeless, striking this wonderful balance of solidity and lightness.”

**Most cherished things in your home?**

“I have a beautiful handstitched quilt that my grandmother, Judith, made when she was 83, and we have a stunning hand-me-down coffee table by the modernist Hungarian designer Dario Zoureff.”

**What’s your dream travel destination?**

“Glenorchy, New Zealand. It’s one of the most magical, extraordinary places on Earth – *The Lord of The Rings* country – and we’re lucky to be working on an off-grid cabin project there now with local architects.”

**What’s exciting you right now?**

“My husband and I are restoring an 1890s cottage on a small permaculture farm in South Gippsland, Vic, using predominantly recycled materials. It’s a fascinating (and slow) project.”

## Beautiful DESIGN

*Brave New Eco worked with Pledge Builders on this home in Melbourne to ensure the inclusion of as many passive house principles as is possible with a heritage-listed reno. >*



PHOTOGRAPHY (MAIN IMAGE) MARNIE HAWSON (PORTRAIT) PHOEBE POWELL STYLING (MAIN IMAGE) BELLE HEMMING BUILDER PLEDGE CUSTOM BUILDER BUILDING DESIGNER GREEN SOLAR DESIGNS





For the renovation of this 1882 worker's cottage in Sydney's inner west, Joey and Porebski Architects made use of recycled timber. This material was not only sustainable but was also sympathetic to the heritage of the original build.

PHOTOGRAPHY (MINI IMAGE) TOM FERGUSON (PORTRAIT) CTRL MEDIA STYLIST (MINI IMAGE) ERZANBA GORDON ARCHITECT & INTERIOR DESIGNER POREBSKI ARCHITECTS



## JOEY PAMMENT

*Builder Joey Pamment is the co-founder of Pamment Projects, an award-winning multi-disciplinary construction firm based in Sydney.*

### **What does sustainability mean to you?**

"Promoting long-term environmental stewardship, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, conserving resources and creating healthier and more resilient communities. And hitting up restoration and antiques shops."

### **What's one eco-friendly feature you try to include in every project?**

"We always use recycled bricks and timber. I try to use materials that have already had one life. When building, we keep energy efficiency, waste reduction and water conservation in mind."

### **How do you manage demolition and waste disposal responsibly?**

"We recycle or reuse all the demo materials that we can. It's important to sort the waste onsite, setting up designated areas for different materials, such as concrete, wood, metals, plastics and other recyclables."

### **One building material or finish that never goes out of style?**

"Natural stone has been used in architecture and construction for thousands of years, and its timeless appeal continues to endure."

### **Most cherished things in your home?**

"A second-hand travertine coffee table, a recycled table and my barbecue."

### **Favourite thing to cook?**

"Pizza! It's so much fun making the base and chopping all the ingredients."

### **Next project?**

"A knock-down-rebuild house in Coogee and a large renovation in Mosman (both in Sydney)." >





## LAUREN LI

*Lauren Li is the founding director of interior design studio Sisällä in Melbourne and the author of 'The New French Look'.*

**What does sustainability mean to you?**  
“Sustainability isn't something that is ‘added’ to a project only if the client wants it. I try to incorporate sustainable elements into every project, even if only in small ways.”

**What's one eco-friendly feature you try to include in every project?**  
“We'll stretch an expensive material across many spaces; the same slab of natural stone can be used in the kitchen and powder room. We've had platters and side tables made from offcuts!”

**What's one thing we can do to be more sustainable at home?**  
“Buy furniture once and buy well. By investing in the perfect pieces, they can become future family heirlooms, not future landfill.”

**Go-to sustainable suppliers?**  
“Sussex - Australia's first carbon-neutral tapware company.”

**Favourite place to shop for second-hand gems?**  
“Leonard Joel, Radar, Angelucci 20th Century and Modern Times.”

**Best era for design and architecture?**  
“The 1960s: [we] went from hallways and small rooms to open-plan spaces [and] large windows to bring in light. A lot of these ideas are still used in homes today.”

**Most loved design or coffee table book?**  
“*Design Commune* by Roman Alonso and Steven Johanknecht, and *Live Beautiful* by Athena Calderone.”

**Most cherished things in your home?**  
“The house itself, a largely original Mid-century house. I love my ‘Bollo’ armchair by Fogia, and all the lighting: a sweet Santa & Cole ‘Cestita’ table lamp; ‘Hashira’ pendant lamps; and the ‘Mantis’ wall light over my desk.” >



*Insulation is the key to creating an energy-efficient home. Sisällä created a sun-drenched effect, which helps to naturally raise the temperature, while sheer curtains provide sun protection - the best of both worlds!*

PHOTOGRAPHY (MAIN IMAGE) KATE (PORTRAIT) KRYSIA AGIUS ARCHITECTURE INTERIOR DESIGN WORKROOM





Anna-Carin restored vintage 'J39' Børge Mogensen dining chairs instead of buying brand new designs. The engineered timber flooring by Made By Storey is responsibly sourced from European plantations.

PHOTOGRAPHY (MAIN IMAGE) JUSTIN ALEXANDER (OPPOSITE) HUGH STEWART



## ANNA-CARIN MCNAMARA

*Swedish-born interior designer Anna-Carin McNamara is the director of Sydney-based Anna.Carin Design Studio and the author of 'Make a Home To Love'.*

### **What does sustainability mean to you?**

"Longevity! Building things to last and staying away from strong trends and fashion. Appliances and some finishes and fixtures might need to be replaced eventually, but I always intend for our projects to last for at least a hundred years."

### **One building material or finish that never goes out of style?**

"Sustainably sourced timber. I don't think we've ever done a project without timber."

### **Go-to sustainable suppliers?**

"The Swiss appliance brand V-Zug is very much leading the industry, developing the first heat-pump dryer, for example. I love technology and investing in good tech can save a lot in the long term. It's a joy to use something that's so well thought out and designed."

### **What furniture piece is on your wish-list?**

"The 'Paimio' chair by Finnish designer Alvar Aalto. It's like a sculpture; I probably wouldn't even sit on it!"

### **Do you have any daily eco-friendly habits?**

"I've been having short, cold showers for decades. They say it adds about two hours to your day because it wakes you up immediately."

### **Favourite thing to cook?**

"Crispy potatoes and Maryland chicken in the steam oven."

### **Dream travel destination?**

"I'm going to Tuscany for the first time in September this year for my birthday, staying at L'Andana. It's been a dream for a long time."

### **What's on your career bucket list?**

"To design a boutique hotel where every room has a unique personality." 🍷