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BUMPER HOUSES ISSUE

STUNNING NEW HOMES AND RENOVATIONS

PLUS 16-page
Building Special

the **BIG**
REVEAL
INSIDE

GREER ROBSON-KIRK'S
RENOVATION!

TIPS
ON HOW
TO FIND
A GOOD
BUILDER

easy kitchen updates &...

HOW TO CREATE AN OUTDOOR KITCHEN + COOKING WITH KIDS

home comforts

A rambling clifftop villa has been lovingly restored
with a modern touch for an Auckland family


Text by LeeAnn Yare. Photography by Larnie Nicolson.

Additional styling by LeeAnn Yare.



RESEARCH

♦ **Look at websites** and magazine articles about interior designers and analyse the variety of work they have done. 'The Sarins' interior designer Helen Wilcock listened and asked questions throughout the process. A professional interior designer will interpret your brief and ensure the design is being driven by your personality and needs.



"Helen took our ideas for a nice open-plan, modern home and turned them into a beautiful home with simplicity and a wow factor"

Opposite The kitchen is twice the size of the original. Wooden cabinets, which add warmth to the stainless steel appliances and Corian surfaces, are finished in a gloss lacquer. **This photo** White leather sofas won't fade in the plentiful sunlight that streams into the formal living room.



The Sarin family's journey to settling in this large, elegant house looking over Auckland's Westhaven Marina has included a few detours and different addresses in three countries. Originally from India, the family migrated to Australia in 1990 before moving to Wellington eight years later.

After 12 years in the capital, Raman and Anu moved to Auckland when their eldest son Udai headed north for work. "Wellington is a lovely city, and it's easy to get around, but Auckland has better weather," laughs Raman.

In their search for a new address, Anu spent a week in Auckland exploring homes that fitted the couple's criteria, until she had a shortlist ready to show the rest of the family. A real estate agent

mentioned this large villa in St Marys Bay, describing it as "oozing potential" as it needed some serious work.

"We had looked at so many houses without finding the perfect one," says Raman, "so, with nothing to lose, we headed off to see it."

'Huge' was hardly a big enough word to describe the house – all 558 square metres of it with two layers of wrap-around verandas. Trees on the section blocked any chance of a glimpse of Westhaven Marina below but there was potential for a harbour view.

Also, the house had an unusual layout, with tiny bedrooms and a small kitchen, yet four living areas and an enormous dining room. But Udai and Anu loved the feel of the old place. They just had to

convince Raman and youngest son Sachin who weren't so certain.

Gradually, Udai and Anu talked the others into buying, pointing out that St Marys Bay is a lovely area, and that the property's adjoining section was a bonus.

They admit they did hesitate when their architect Philip Jones told them the cost of renovating the house. "It was a lot more than we expected," says Raman. "But there was no going back, we decided to go for it, but we had to be sensible with spending."

Renovations included the creation of three large bedrooms with walk-in wardrobes and an independent, yet connected, studio apartment downstairs for Udai. The living areas were opened up to create easy flow from room to room.

Top left The Sarins have adopted an understated colour palette in the glamorous lounge, but branched out with dazzling chandeliers and patterns in the furnishing textiles. **Top right** Raman and Anu loved the new leadlight window so much that they used it as inspiration for the rest of the home's decor.



Raman, Udai and Anu

WHO LIVES HERE?

Raman Sarin and his wife **Anu Sarin** (company directors), their sons **Udai**, 24, (hotel manager) and **Sachin**, 12.

Where is it? St Marys Bay, Auckland.

We love living here because...

Raman: St Marys Bay is a great central suburb, with easy proximity to the city, Ponsonby restaurants and shopping. Anu and I love our walks around Westhaven Marina, good wine and trying new and varied cuisines.

One piece of advice we would give to people embarking on a huge renovation... is to budget well, including both finance and time. Our budget almost doubled from start to finish, but today we can say confidently it has been money well spent. And what was expected to take three to four months took nine months with finishing touches still ongoing.

Almost everything from our previous home... had to go as it did not complement the style of this home. We shopped at Smith & Caughey's, Design Italia, Kirkcaldie & Stains, Mercatini, and have brought some items such as bed linen back from overseas. **In the future we would like to...** work on the landscaping and possibly include a barbecue area and a swimming pool.



A transparent coffee table further lightens the look of the lounge. Relaxing whites and beiges, combined with interesting throws and rugs, can create a warmly inviting space.

INFORM

✦ If you are using an interior designer, give as much information as you can about what you like and the lifestyle you want. Ensure you are clear about your budget and what is important to you and your family. "Helen delivered a result that surpassed our expectations of what could be achieved," Anu says.



"One thing Philip disliked was the original ornate leadlight window by the main stairwell," Raman says. "He told us it had to go. At the time I wasn't sure but the new leadlight window designed by Ben Hanly and Suzanne Johnson from Glassworks is the showpiece of the house."

Using the window as inspiration for the home's decor, the couple chose warm pale gold tones and metallic silver to contrast with the dark timber flooring.

As renovations progressed, Raman and Anu enlisted interior designer Helen Wilcock from Design Spec to create their dream interior. "Helen devised a masterplan and took our ideas for a nice open-plan modern home, turning them into a beautiful simple home with a wow factor," says Anu.

The couple employed a lighting designer to draw up a comprehensive plan for their remodelled home. Task-specific lighting was fitted in areas such as the kitchen, above the benchtops, and five striking chandeliers in different styles were installed, satisfying Raman and Anu's love of crystal and glass.

The elegant kitchen features the warmth of wood contrasted with Corian surfaces and stainless steel appliances. Helen worked with a kitchen specialist to ensure that, as well as looking good, the space functions well.

"The ventilation system that has been installed is as powerful as that of a restaurant kitchen, so no matter what food is cooking the house won't smell of food," Raman says.

The formal living room's gloomy burgundy colour was replaced with silver and pale gold wallpaper, a look that is repeated upstairs in the master bedroom, although in a slightly different pattern.

With council permission, trees on the section were trimmed to reveal the view. Now the family can enjoy expansive views of the marina and Auckland Harbour Bridge. "It is breathtaking at night, we certainly made the right decision," Raman says.

"This house gives a holiday feel all year round. The only negative aspect to living in a big house is that there is a lot of cleaning to do," he laughs. "Apart from that, we love our new home in Auckland."

➔ Find out how they got the look on **PAGE 168**.

Top left A stunning set of elegant drawers can be the focal point in a room, as seen here in the master bedroom on the upper level. **Top right** Matching the silver hues of the drawers, Florence Broadhurst wallpaper gives the master bedroom a touch of high-end hotel suite styling.