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T R E E H O U S E

A Sydney home's grounded and unpretentious interior makes a strong design statement through a nuanced approach.

LOCATION Sydney, Australia **INTERIORS** Alwill Interiors

ARCHITECTURE Luigi Rosselli Architects **PROJECT ARCHITECT** Buck and Simple

LANDSCAPE Dangar Barin Smith **PHOTOGRAPHY** Prue Ruscoe **WORDS** Elana Castle

The open-plan kitchen features a combination of robust materials including a pressed concrete ceiling. The dining table is from Matthew Hilton, featured with Gubi Violin chairs and Space Copenhagen Mater High stools.



Blessed with gun barrel views of Sydney Harbour and dynamic architecture by Luigi Rosselli Architects, Casa Figueira was the subject of another layer of design intelligence when Alwill Interiors joined the team. Known for their astute attention to detail through texture, scale and the interplay of colour and light, the firm's contribution to the home's interiors elevates it beyond striking, to tactile and sophisticated.

The contemporary family home is situated at the end of a cul-de-sac and nestled into a ridge overlooking the water. At the centre of its design is a spectacular, heritage-protected fig tree.

The Alwill team devised an interior strategy that would dovetail seamlessly into the architecture – referencing mid-century Brazilian, pavilion-style architecture, while also responding to the home's location. "The primary design concept was earth and air," Alwill Interiors principal Romy Alwill says. "The intention was for the house to feel grounded but open and for the architecture and interiors to blend and flow into one another. We weren't afraid of using brown but embraced all the nuances of this hue. Other secondary colours of olive and teal came into play primarily as they related back to our concept."

The team formally set the tone in the entrance where a large, customised bronze door, a polished concrete floor and rammed earth walls define the tonal palette for the home. The stairwell then winds up an open void, its form both sinuous and delicate. This entry, which forms the knuckle of the house, then splits out into an L-shape, with one wing housing the parents' living room and study, which is enveloped in a palette of caramel and rust tones, defined by timber and rammed earth. Here, the hallway opens to the garden which leads into a private pavilion. "The vaulted roof frames up the arches of the Sydney Harbour bridge, and the uniquely-shaped fireplace create a tone and hierarchy to this space," Romy explains. "All of this is elevated further by the Brazilian-inspired furnishings like in the beautiful Presidential armchair by Etel from Mama Casa."



The connection between the living space and the garden exemplifies Alwill Interiors' intentional blurring of the line between architecture and interiors. The custom sunken lounge is crafted from Verona Leather.







The L-shaped configuration provides protection from the elements and a focus on a heritage-protected fig tree in the centre of the garden.





Despite a long build, Casa Figueira has emerged as a robust and meaningful residence for a Sydney family. Designed to age gracefully, this home values the integrity of materials and client intention above trend. "I'm proud of that when I go to visit the house and I know the clients enjoy living there," Romy says. "I love that it is grounded and unpretentious but still makes a strong design statement. That is a paradox that is not easy to achieve. I think that comes through a nuanced approach."

The second half of the L-shaped plan occupied by the living room and kitchen block is wrapped in walnut panels and conceals a timber-lined powder room that continues into the kitchen joinery, with the earthy palette grounding the zone. The notion of seamless living through to the outdoors is further underscored by the large sliding doors which are recessed into the wall cavities to create a sense of living within the landscape. "The home is layered with earthy, organic materiality, but carefully balanced with moments of lightness and refinement such as the stainless steel kitchen bench, delicate dining chairs and feature light over the sunken lounge," adds Romy. "This contrast brings the space to life in a delicate balance." The main kitchen and living area have also been furnished so as not to obstruct the view but to add interest to the interiors. "All the pieces of furniture have some texture to build upon the layering," Romy says, "I like rattan in the Jeanneret chair, aging leather in the sunken lounge and olive textured fabrics for dining chairs."



“We worked alongside the architects to develop a nuanced approach to the interior layering.”

– Romaine Alwill



The primary bedroom features a pared-back scheme of blues, browns and neutrals. The custom bedhead is flanked by grazia&co. Sonny bedside tables.



Casa Figueira enjoys spectacular gun barrel views of Sydney Harbour, a view that has been maximized through floor-to-ceiling glazing and broad views.

