

renovation before&after



get the look

- Design: Essence Interiors, Mt Hawthorn, phone: 0411 348 761, www.essenceinteriors.com.au
- Kitchen cabinetry: Symmetry Cabinets, Osborne Park, phone: 9244 4725
- Laminate for cabinet doors, drawers and kickboard in kitchen: Formica New Stainless Steel, www.formica.com.au, phone: 13 21 36
- Handles on kitchen cupboards: Ikea, Osborne Park, phone: 9242 6464
- Light fittings: Ikea, Osborne Park
- Laminate kitchen benchtop: Laminex Ash Dust 8mm radius square edge, www.laminex.com.au, phone: 13 21 36
- Bathroom vanity unit, drawer and tall cabinet: Ikea
- Taps, bath, kitchen mixer tap and Dorf showerhead: Plumbtec Parkwood, Canning Vale, phone: 9455 1444
- Kitchen sink: Ikea
- Tiles: Crosby Tiles, Osborne Park, phone: 9446 6000
- Paint: Colours, including Turkish Bread, Flokati and Reiki, from the Watty I.D. range, www.watty.com.au, phone: 132 101
- Glass-block window: Glass Block Constructions, Malaga, phone: 9248 8580
- Appliances: Rick Hart Seconds, Osborne Park, phone: 9244 2988
- Accessories, including towel rails, mirror, clock and wine rack: Ikea

before

Picture: Natalie Slade

Magical turn

WHEN you're big on ideas but short on space, it pays to call in an expert, as the owner of this two-bedroom ground-floor unit in Yokine discovered. With just 65sq m to play with, a sizeable wish list and a budget of a little over \$35,000, the owner turned to styling and colour consultant Simone Gillespie, of Essence Interiors.

Some creative thinking, cost-effective products and seven weeks of makeover magic later, Simone had transformed a dark, poky home into a contemporary showpiece that appears far bigger than it actually is.

Not surprisingly, the kitchen and the bathroom proved to be the biggest challenges.

"The bathroom was in an absolute state," Simone says. "It wasn't functional and it was ugly. The owner's dream was to have a really nice bathroom."

The bathroom was a decent size, but the owner wanted a luxurious, deep bath under the window, plenty of storage space and room for laundry appliances.

Simone completely gutted the bathroom and redrew the floor plan so that a bath and shower could be fitted under what was once a tatty old window but is now two neat rows of modern glass blocks.

Moving the bathroom fixtures did mean a plumbing bill of about \$6000, but the results were well worth it.

"Plumbing is one of the most expensive items," Simone says. "As soon as you start trying to move pipes and sources of water around, it's going to start costing you a lot."

An extractor unit, ventilation grills in the end glass blocks of the window and an anti-mould additive in

the paint were necessary expenses to help keep the room dry and mould-free.

Simone was able to keep costs down elsewhere in the bathroom by using inexpensive white tiles and economical sheets of modern mosaic tiles.

Used whole as a vertical stripe above the bath and on the hob, and cut down to create a border along the vanity splashback, the mosaic details have been used for maximum effect at minimum cost.

"The idea was to keep it very fresh. It's a sort of botanical look, using white, green and earthy colours," Simone says. "It creates a sense of space, cleanness and freshness."

A white Ikea vanity unit and tall matching cabinet completed the look and gave the homeowner the storage she was looking for.

"We used storage that was more vertical than horizontal to maximise the space available," Simone says.

Vertical storage also proved to be a good solution in the kitchen which Simone totally redesigned.

Less than half the size of the bathroom, it was cluttered and disjointed, with a vast sink and draining board but little storage or work space.

A tall, pull-out pantry, a wall-mounted upright wine rack, a pull-out range hood, a scaled-down sink and several overhead cupboards have turned the tiny space into a modern kitchen that is both sharp and functional. There is even space for a full-size dishwasher.

Laminate doors in a stainless-steel finish, a white speckled work top, stainless-steel appliances, white glossy tiles and a simple contrasting grey-tiled splashback make sure the look is up-to-the-minute without swamping the room.

The oven was relocated to the central wall for

balance and a new stainless-steel microwave was integrated at head height to free up bench space.

The original painted brick walls in the lounge/dining room and in the bedrooms have been recoated using a light, neutral colour scheme. This gives the illusion of space, with all the dark timber doors, frames and skirtings now a glossy white.

"You can't plaster over painted brick. It would have had to have been sandblasted and that would have been very expensive," Simone says.

New curtains and timber blinds, a new laminate floor and a smart red-painted front door have banished the old look for good.

With the bathroom makeover costing approximately \$10,000, the kitchen coming in at \$12,000, \$4000 for flooring, \$3000 for painting, \$3500 for electrical work and \$2500 for window treatments and accessories, the owner has a completely revamped home to show for her investment.

The owner used the equity she had in her home to finance the overhaul which has added significant value to her property.

Simone says there are significant benefits to using a design consultant to look after your project.

"For a start you don't have to lift a finger, plus you're working with someone who knows what they're doing, has trusty, reliable tradesmen, can get trade discounts on products and knows where to source a vanity under \$500," she says.

Simone Gillespie, pictured, and the two-bedroom Yokine unit she revamped.

before

PAULA AUBIN