

THE DESIGN JOURNAL

INTERIOR DESIGN INSIGHT + INSPIRATION



ISSUE 02 • AUGUST 2021 • FEATURING VILMA PISANO FROM LIFESTILES

Welcome to The Design Journal

YOUR MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR NEWS AND INSPIRATION

Welcome to the second edition of The Design Journal, a publication that aims to provide insight and inspiration into interior design on both an industry and individual level. We are elated and grateful at how well received our launch edition was, and we are so excited to bring you this edition as we prepare to welcome Spring!

With the weather warming and continuing lockdowns across Australia, this is the perfect opportunity to think about the home design you want and need to take you into a new season of the calendar and of life in general.

For us, it's all about engaging nature and being bold! We increasingly want and need to embrace plants and the great outdoors into our homes, and we love the wellness benefits that come along with the undeniable footprint and styling perks.

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Beyond this, it's clearly a time to be bold in design. If you can't use bright coloured licks of paint and furniture overhauls in lockdown, then when can you?! We love when a home's personality shines, and there is no better time to make a statement in your home.

This month we look at future trends to inspire, including the beauty of arch shapes. The arch is stunning architecturally, but even furniture and decor pieces can really level up a home to bring it into the now of design.

We also loved talking to the beautiful Vilma Pisano from Lifestiles. This is a must-read for all things tiles in 2022 and beyond! We are so grateful to Vilma for her considered knowledge and advice, which we know you will gain enormous insight from.

Thank you for reading and see you in Spring!

Melissa Lunardon.



Melissa Lunardon

INTERIOR DESIGN



Engage Nature in Biophilic Design

BRINGING
NATURE INDOORS

After a long time in lockdown, and that lockdown having sent many people to work from home, there has suddenly formed an onus on architects and designers to make workspaces more focussed and aware of wellness.

If you haven't already heard of the term, 'biophilic design' you soon will as it continues to garner a substantial following. Although it has been around since the 1980's, this design principle is only now gaining momentum in the wake of COVID-19, which made many feel disengaged from the environment.

In brief, biophilic design is how you engage nature in your own environment. It is about incorporating the outside world into the inside world, harnessing plants and design elements from the natural world.

Research indicates there are many wellness benefits that come from incorporating natural elements into your living, work and educational environments.

After all, in terms of evolution, living as one with nature is ingrained in our blood.



**IF I SEE IT IN
NATURE, I KNOW IT
WILL WORK IN A
HOME**

DESIGNER MILES REDD

Biophilic Design for Wellness

DESIGNING BIOPHILIC HOMES FOR IMPROVED HEALTH AND WELLBEING

In the scale of time, humans are relatively new to the concept of living life indoors. People are in fact meant to be in union with nature, so it is a great idea to embrace nature in homes and work spaces to improve general wellbeing.

It is relatively easy to bring nature inside the home with plants. Taking care of them will not only help them thrive but you will find it also helps your mind thrive!

Beyond simple styling, actually bringing nature into the world of architecture and design is increasingly important. Coming home should be something that feels good and you are proud of – that's the first step of wellness.

While plants and natural elements are great for styling, they are even more powerful for overall wellness.



Key features of biophilic designs

- Natural light such as skylights, large windows, glass doors and clerestory openings
- Indoor and outdoor gardens that seamlessly complement the environment of the home
- Outdoor living spaces created in conjunction with a designer
- Natural materials like concrete, timber, rock and biomimetic facades
- Calming earth tones and varying blues, greens and greys
- Organic shapes via architectural elements, incorporated throughout furniture and décor
- Non visual environmental connections such as air flow, sounds of water and the smell of plants (including trees, flowers and herbs)



Want help creating your own natural sanctuary? Melissa Lunardon Interior Design is offering readers a complimentary 15 minute Design Call to discuss your biophilic design ideas and needs. Book in your free call today!

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK A CALL](#)

Styling With Plants

HOUSEPLANTS HAVE THEIR DAY IN THE SUN THIS SPRING

No longer a relic of the 1970's, houseplants are once again having their day in the sun. They are the perfect styling solution in almost every room. If you don't know how to fill a space, popping a plant in a tricky spot usually solves the problem perfectly.

Styling with plants has many benefits. They are naturally beautiful and can help soften architectural features in modern homes. Greenery also provides a contrast to timber floors, painted walls and other hard finishes like tiles, glass and appliances.

If you want to step up your styling game with plants, pay attention to light, scale and layers.

Light

The first rule when creating your own thriving green metropolis is to understand the light. Selecting the right plants and placing them in the right zones will allow them to thrive.

Areas with low to moderate indirect light are typically hallways and low spots in the living room where there isn't as much light filtering through. These areas will want low light loving plants like Mother in Law's Tongue. A room with bright, indirect light or full sun you will want to look for light lovers like succulents and cactus. Remaining areas will typically experience medium bright, indirect light. Most house plants enjoy this kind of light.

Scale

Just like with furniture and accessories, scale is an important consideration for plants. If you have a spot on the floor calling out for a plant, you'll want something with height so it feels like part of the room. Want a plant on your bedside table? It needs to be small enough to allow for other essentials like a lamp and books. Consider your plants and pots as living decor items and size them accordingly.

Layers

Plants look amazing when layered together. Sometimes one isn't enough, especially if you are after that lush tropical vibe. When grouping plants together use a theme to unify your look. Consider the height and shape of plants, too. Look for a taller, straight plant to pair with a bushier one, then maybe a short and squat one. This ensures that each plant gets its own moment. You can also layer plants alongside other decor items, such as using an artwork as a backdrop.



Spring Trends To Embrace

NEW SEASON INTERIOR DESIGN TRENDS TO CONSIDER
AS SPRING WEATHER WARMS

Spring is the perfect time to embrace new design themes and update your interior for the months ahead.

If you love the sound of one of these interior design trends but you're not sure how to incorporate it into your home, chat to Melissa Lunardon Interior Design about how the team can help you! Spring is a great time to have fun with interior trends without being a slave to them.

Mustard hues

Mustard yellow is a fashionable colour for interiors this season. You will be surprised at its uncanny ability to work with most palettes.

Mustard gives depth to pale pink, helps a smokey grey sofa pop, and is the perfect foil to a largely white room, providing an often needed focal point.

It can be as simple as a throw on the sofa or an artwork featuring some mustard tones.



Curves and circles

Curves are back in a big way this spring. They are a great way to break up all the rectangles in a space and we are seeing them in everything throughout interior architecture.

You can easily embrace this trend in your own home with items like arched mirrors, rounded bed heads and accessories with semi-circle elements.



Statement tiles

Inspired by traditional Italian and Spanish design, statement tiles will make a big comeback this Spring.

This trend is all about embracing a tile with colour and pattern.

Look for tiles in shades of sage, terracotta and smokey blue to create a spa-like experience at home.



Dark marble

Marble is an enduring favourite for interiors and it is a material that translates well across many rooms in the home, including tiles, benchtops, coffee tables and accessories.

For a fresh take on an old favourite, make a statement with much darker tones like black, deep red and bottle green.

Arch Trends



If you're an interior lover you have probably noticed that arches are currently a top interior trend. From arched walkthroughs and built in shelving to bedheads and mirrors, there are a whole host of stunning arch inspirations.

This popular shape creates softness through its rounded edges and adds a feminine touch in areas of the home otherwise filled with hard surfaces. The repetition of arches is also very popular, creating continuity and highlighting a more cohesive and eye-catching style.

Melissa Lunardon Interior Design loves to incorporate arches into home designs both within the structure and styling. Examples of ways arches can be used include:

Arched walk throughs: use arches to create internal walk throughs from the main living areas through to bedrooms and bathroom areas.

Arched built in shelving: built in shelves can be made in the shape of an arch, an eye-catching solution to your average shelf and perfect to use as a bookshelf or to showcase your special trinkets, photo frames and prized objects.



Arched mirrors: an easy way to introduce and to repeat arch shapes in the home. Arched mirrors are a great alternative if you love this trend but don't have any arches in the actual architectural structure of the home.

Arched furniture: curved furniture including arched cabinets arched headboards are very popular, bringing a well-rounded elegance to any room.





Lifestiles

AN AUSTRALIAN TILE BUSINESS WITH HEART

Lifestiles is a family-run business founded in 1978 by Joe Brunato in Melbourne,. Over time, Joe and his family became one of the leading tile distributors in Australia, expanding into wholesale and supplying over 200 businesses Australia wide. Incredibly, the business has remained family-owned and operated for more than four decades. Through time, and with the sad loss of their patriarch in 2008, this unique Aussie business chose to focus on their biggest passion; working directly with clients in a retail showroom to bring a newfound level of creativity to the artform of custom tiling.

If you visit the Lifestiles showroom you will see homage paid to Joe with a wall of history, showcasing images of the Lifestiles family past to present. The showroom even features a plaque with an original tile from when Joe first started in the tile business. This is a business with heart, and a heart that is solely secured by small but meaningful materials of construction. Here more than ever, the humble tile takes on a meaning and an artform beyond its mere function. At Lifestiles, tiles are literally life.

You can find Lifestiles showrooms in Werribee and Glen Iris, Victoria, as well as a selection of the range online. It was an absolute honour talk to Vilma Pisano, one of Joe's daughters, about all things tiles in one of the most fascinating discussions we've had about the incredible artform that is tiling.

Words With Vilma Pisano

Q & A WITH ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S LEADING TILE EXPERTS

What made you fall in love with tiles?

We love fashion and tiles are a part of the fashion industry, plus tiles are constantly changing! We have new products and designs arrive every week. It is ever-evolving so every day we are creating new ideas and concepts for clients.

What is the biggest change that Lifestiles as a business has made in the last 5 years?

We have concentrated more on our retail presence, enhancing our showrooms to give our clients the creative inspiration and service needed when viewing tiles.

What direction do you see Lifestiles heading in over the next 5 years?

Our intention is to have a wider brand awareness online, while maintaining our unique innovative products and service.

What makes the tiling industry in Australia unique compared to other countries?

Australia has developed its own individual style that reflects our unique way of life. This is especially evident when it comes to colour and texture, which draws inspiration from the rich Australian environment. From beaches to the desert, you see Australia reflected in an array of styles, colour and everchanging landscapes of tiles.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received in relation to business?

Stay ahead of competitors by offering innovative products and great service.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received in relation to tiles?

Tiles make a long term design statement!

What is the best piece of advice you have been given as a woman in business?

Our father always told me there is nothing you cannot do. He was adamant you should treat everyone, the way you would want to be treated. He taught me that in life you need to be resilient, always try and never stop learning.

What is the hardest thing you encounter as a woman in business?

When I started working for the family business it was a male dominated industry. Women needed to prove their knowledge and gain respect. This is why Lifestiles makes sure that all staff members, including our female staff, know how to tile, grout and have hands-on knowledge about the products we are selling.

How have you seen the COVID-19 pandemic influence the tile industry?

It has caused issues to our supply chain in delaying shipments of products. It has also put pressure on us from customers wanting to access our products online. The challenge for us is the fact that it is only during the lockdown period that demand is high for a digital tile library. When able to do so, customers prefer to come into our showrooms to touch and feel the products. The uncertainty and extra demands this places on us as a business is very real; it's impossible to know when demand will swing and how to best prioritise resources.

What changes have you seen designers adopt due to to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Designers have become more reliant on online selections. Social media has also increased in necessity and impact in communicating with clients and conducting business with suppliers. We love that the pandemic has also seen higher demand for eco-friendly and Australian products.

What is the best innovation that you have seen positively influence tiles as a product?

Social Media has probably been our biggest and best influencer that has generated positive interest in not only our product range but also our brand awareness.

Tile trends you're glad to see the end of?

None. I love all tiles, past, present and future. Each one has enjoyed it's time in the limelight. I love how it gets refreshed in a new way each time it makes a comeback.



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We have enjoyed seeing a shift away from the safe contemporary beige and grey colour ways towards more colour and style diversity. Australian designers and home-makers excel at embracing new trends and creativity, with a unique Australian touch to it.

Vilma Pisano, Lifestyles

Words With Vilma Pisano (continued)

What is the biggest and best trend in tiles you have historically seen positively impact interior design and homes in Australia?

We have enjoyed seeing a shift away from the safe contemporary beige and grey colour ways towards more colour and style diversity. We see styles from Hamptons to Scandinavian and many others. Australian designers excel at embracing new trends with a unique Australian touch to it.

What is the one thing you wish everyone knew about tiles?

There are so many things I wish people knew about tiles, but it all comes down to versatility. Tiles can be used internal and external, there is a massive and increasing variety of styles, shapes and finishes available, and there are ever-evolving ranges and improvements.

Top tile trends you predict for 2022?

More colour and texture with shape, size and variety of finishes. We are already seeing the rich reds from terracotta flourish in popularity. In addition, natural earth greens and beautiful rich blues are making a comeback. It is so great to see people embrace COLOUR!

What colour ways work best in home interiors?

At present, I am loving the fact that Australians love using colours. Gone are the days where we only used peaches and cream - our choices are so wide and varied now. At the moment, we are still seeing warm tones used effectively in homes and retail spaces, often alongside timber. Another fabulous colour way is a neutral palette with splashes of black, white or soft greys. Another style we see work really well is the injection of colour into a white/grey palette. Then of course are those fabulous interiors that generate intensity with dramatic colours and intricate details. Moody styles with colour in tones of charcoal, blacks and hues of greys are also very successful. And of course, classic colour ways are always a win, particularly washed whites on whites with hints of timber cabinetry and matt gold details to add warmth.

What is an unusual use of tiles you have seen?

In Australia it would have to be the Sydney Opera House, which used porcelain tiles. Internationally, I love the use of tiles when museums and designers/artists create one off spaces for an event, especially in Venice when they used these huge rectangle structures in 24 carat leaf- gold mosaics from Trend Mosaics. These tiles were used in high columns just over the water from St. Mark's Square, called "The Sky Over Nine Columns", and they were absolutely stunning.

What differences, if any, do you see in the design and use of tiles within commercial settings compared to homes?

In commercial space, particularly the hospitality sector, we find designers creating individual spaces and being much bolder with colour and texture. With Residential homes the focus is more on clean lines with highlights in shower areas or vanity areas for texture change. Although I must say that we are becoming more creative with our tile choices in our homes and where we place them.

What is the most common mistake you see people make when tiling their homes?

Not utilising the space of the room in an effective way.

What would you love to see more people do with tiles in their homes?

I'd love to see people be more creative with their internal walls. For example, tiles can be great for entry walls, family room walls and bedroom walls. I also love to see tiles used to create shower ledges in bathrooms, instead of niches. Tiles can also be extraordinary used externally, such as timber tiles on facades of homes. Outside can be a highly visual space, so it's a great opportunity to be bold with tiles and design tiled alfresco and BBQ walls. Just step outside of your comfort zone and be creative, incredible designs with really functional and artistic expression awaits those who dare to tile where others don't.

Top Tile Tips and Picks

VILMA PISANO'S TOP TILE PICKS ACROSS POPULAR TILE CATEGORIES

VILMA'S TOP TIPS

Tiling small spaces: Use larger tile format to create the illusion of volume of space.

Tiling dark rooms with little or no natural light: Use a gloss tile on at least one wall to create reflection of light.

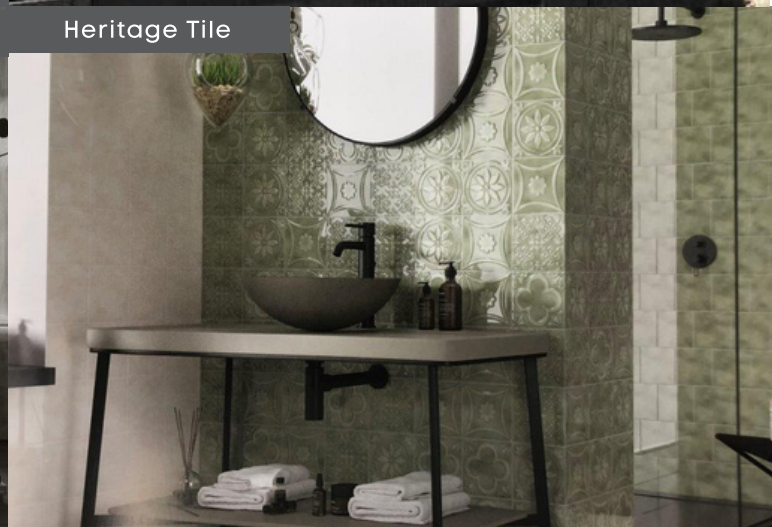
Tiling large spaces: Consider using large format tiles with subtle design details for visual impact in a large area.

Choosing grout: This is very personal! Just make sure you choose wisely, as it can make a huge difference to the look of the tiles you are choosing.

Exotic Moroccan Tile



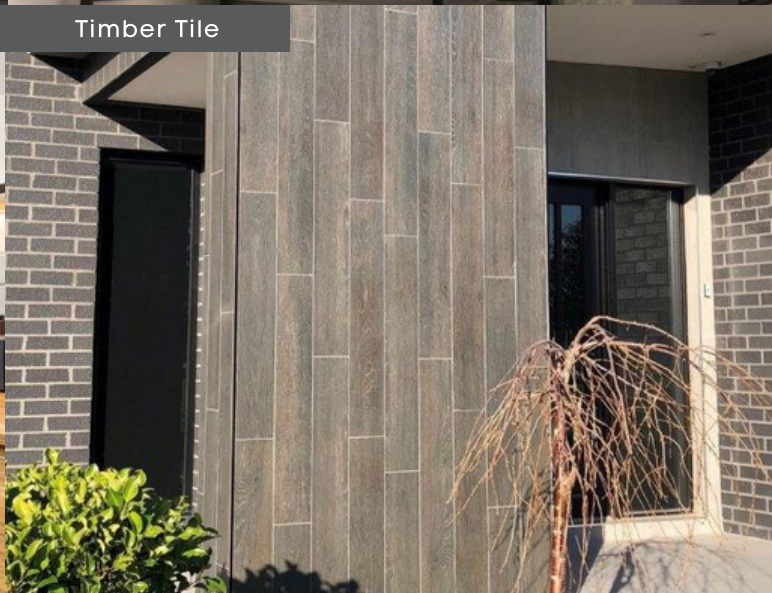
Living Room Tile



Heritage Tile



Decorative Bath Tile



Timber Tile

Top Tile Tips and Picks

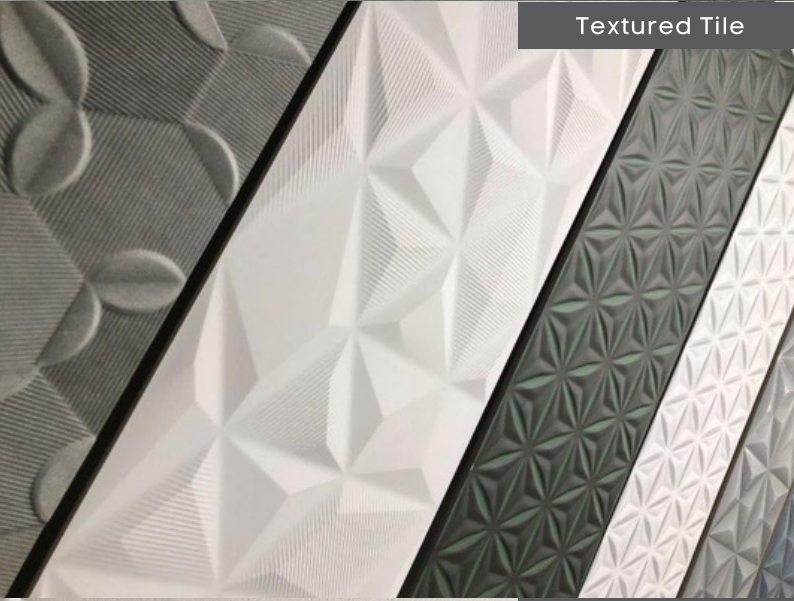
VILMA PISANO'S TOP TILE PICKS (CONTINUED)



Indoor & Outdoor

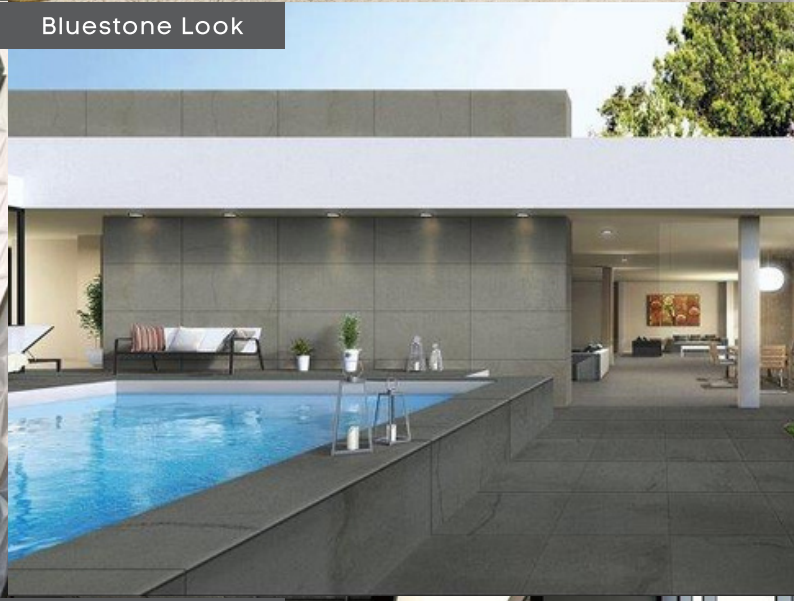


Terrazzo Tile



Textured Tile

Bluestone Look



Splashback Tile

Large Format Tile



Brave and Bold Front Doors

COLOURED DOORS TO WELCOME YOU HOME

WELCOME

Front doors are a great place to be bold with colour, as it's one of the strongest features of the home. You are only limited by how brave you want to be – the colour choices are endless!

We love how mid-century modern got a punch of colour with this bright yellow doorway in Altona. It really stands out against the white facade and adds huge curb appeal and personality.

Inspired? Here are some tips on choosing a colour:

- If you have bricks ensure the colour compliments the bricks. Don't be put off if your home has older style bricks as you can really make a difference to the look of an older brick home with a new modern door in a bold colour
- Think about how often you may have to repaint. Darker colours can fade quicker
- Create mood boards of your facade colours and selected door colour to see which combination you are drawn to most.
- Don't worry if you don't like the end result – you can try another colour!



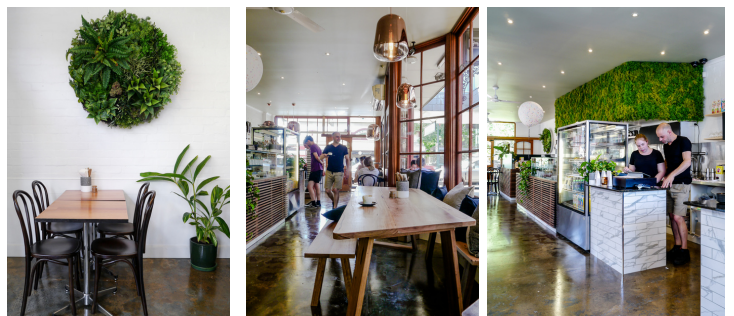
Project in the Limelight

FACE PLANT CAFE, MELBOURNE VICTORIA



This month we feature one of our favourite commercial projects, the fabulous Face Plant Cafe in Melbourne, Victoria.

The owners of this vegan cafe wanted the interior to reflect their plant-based menu and love for raw, natural materials. It was a biophilic dream come true! This amazing space was well-ahead of the trend and a privilege to design.



Melissa Lunardon and team introduced a plethora of greenery against incredible raw brick walls and concrete floors. Add timber furniture and accents, plus bold metallic fixtures, and this character-filled space speaks volumes! We especially love the custom timber communal dining table and benches that create a real homely nook. This is true expression of design merging fashion and function, and it is a credit to the design team.

*Planning a commercial build or renovations and need guidance on colour or finishes?
Book in a Design Call to discuss how Melissa Lunardon Design can help you.*

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The Face Plant Cafe brilliantly demonstrates the art of design and how insightful decor can speak volumes about a business and its values. From materials to colour, scale and layout, everything about this space speaks plants and a love for nature in food and in life.



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Inside the September issue:

SPRING CLEANING +
WARDROBE DESIGN

ORGANISATION +
STORAGE HACKS

PERFECT POWDER
ROOMS

ENTRYWAY TO WOW

PROJECT IN THE
LIMELIGHT

Thank you for reading

Melissa Lunardon Interior Design is an experienced and friendly team of professional designers working to help client dreams come to life. Driven by a deep passion for design and style, the team work closely with clients to articulate their unique vision and a stylish point of view where art, form and function co-exist in a true reflection of the client's needs, lifestyle and personality.

Founded in 2011, the Melbourne-based company has evolved into an interdisciplinary brand that is leading the contemporary design conversation with expert residential, hospitality, commercial and retail projects across an expansive portfolio of designs and brand collaborations. From conception to install, the team can assist every step of the way to make the design of your home a journey abounding with ease, joy and fulfilment.

For more information, or to contribute to The Design Journal, please visit: <https://www.melissalunardon.com> or email: studio@melissalunardon.com.

