

SMALL SPACE

# STRAIGHT AND NARROW

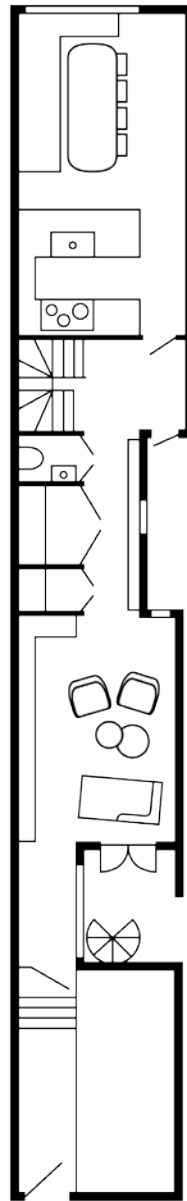
*Measuring fewer than  
four metres from one  
side to the other, there's  
not an inch wasted  
in this cosy home*

Words **HANNAH BOOTH**  
Photography **SHARYN CAIRNS**

**Hallway** A bank of cupboard doors, hiding utility rooms and closets, form a corridor connecting the front of the house with the rear ►



## THE PLAN



GROUND FLOOR

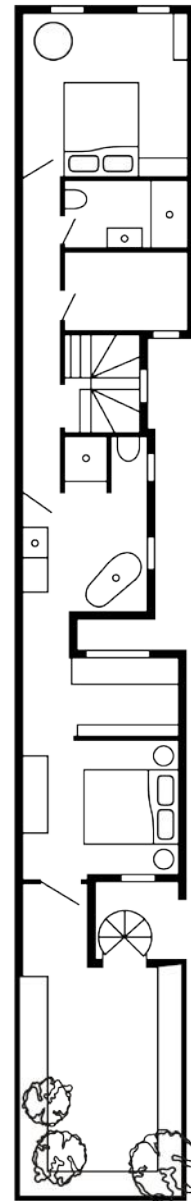
AT JUST 3.9 METRES AT ITS widest, Kate Challis's home in the heart of Melbourne is far from palatial, but she's used her knowledge as an interior designer to configure this awkward space, turning the 1892 building into an open-plan home.

Given its beginnings as a shop with living quarters attached, the house is a difficult shape for family living, with no hallway – you have to walk through one room to get to another. To combat this, Kate has created a new corridor at the centre of the house, designing a bank of dark wood doors – each with a hint of bronze – that conceal a series of utility rooms: a surprisingly spacious laundry, hot pink powder room and storage closet. 'With a narrow house like this, you have to be really mindful of where to position the rooms, and how people will flow through them,' explains Kate. 'It's harder to furnish a smaller space, too – ten centimetres here or there on a piece of furniture makes a real difference to whether a room works or not.'

She decided to flip the layout of the house she shares with her husband, nine-year-old son and two cats, so that now the kitchen/dining room faces the street. It's sheltered by double-glazed frosted glass, which adds some privacy, and mutes the rumble of trams and people outside. 'We love having people over, so it made sense to make this our largest space,' says Kate. A jewel box-like living room sits at the rear of the property, overlooking an internal courtyard with a spiral staircase leading to an evergreen roof terrace.

As befits someone with a PhD in art history, Kate has decorated the house with murals, noticeably Fornasetti's 'Nuvolette' cloud wallpaper, which rises from the ground floor up the stairwell to the upper level. The walls in the kitchen are covered in a landscape of jungle foliage and tropical birds – a version of Melbourne artist Valerie Sparks' 'Le Vol' wallpaper. The pattern was the starting point for the home's palette: green walls in the living room with a distemper finish, hot pink armchairs and a blush pink chaise.

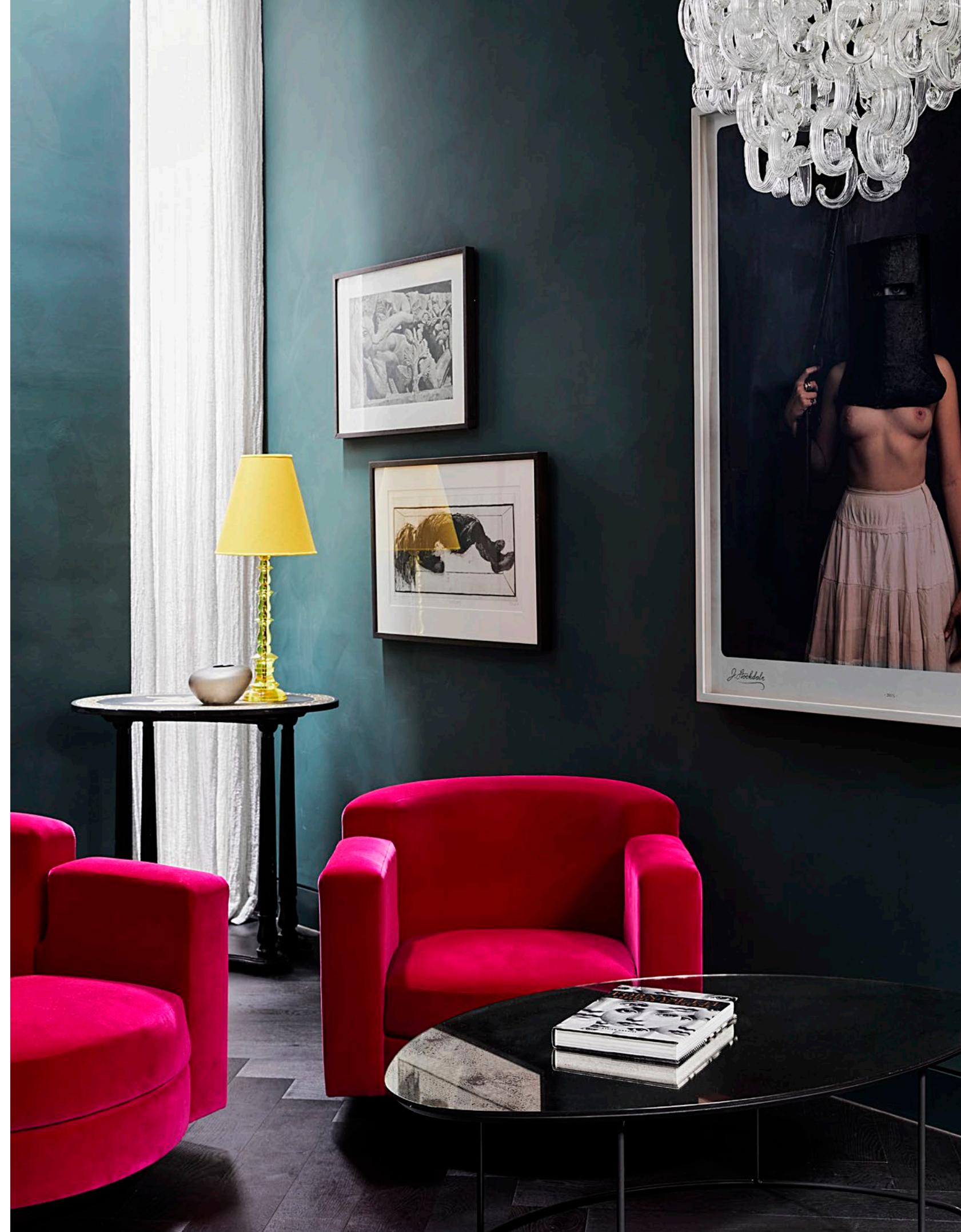
In the early 1970s, this building was home to Melbourne's first feminist bookshop. It's a history to be proud of, but this property's latest incarnation, as a luxurious family home, is just as laudable. [katechallis.com](http://katechallis.com)



FIRST FLOOR

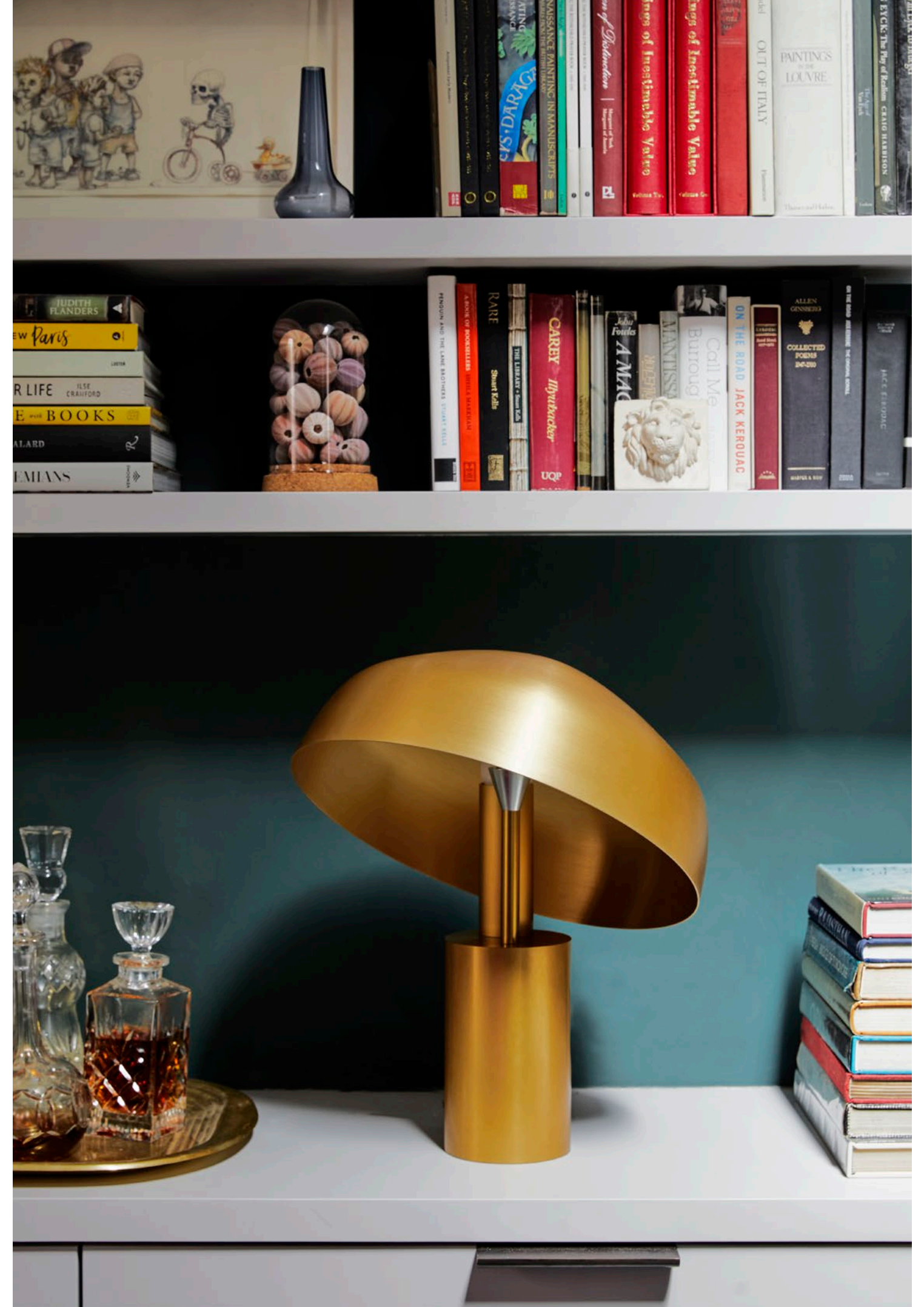
**Living room** Two lounge chairs by Luciano Frigerio, upholstered in a hot pink fabric from Designers Guild, are vintage pieces, as is the chandelier by Murano glass brand Fratelli Toso. The 'Moon' coffee table is from Ochre and the 'Spring' table lamp is by London-based designer Marianna Kennedy. The large photographic artwork is *Historia* by Jacqui Stockdale

Stockist details on p194 ►





**Living room** A custom-made shade of turquoise with a distemper finish from Porter's Paints makes white shelving stand out in this corner. The 'Ora Gold' desk lamp is by Melbourne-based designer Ross Gardam **Stockist details on p194** ▶



'WITH A NARROW HOUSE LIKE THIS, YOU HAVE TO BE REALLY MINDFUL OF WHERE TO POSITION THE ROOMS, AND HOW PEOPLE WILL FLOW THROUGH THEM'

**Kitchen** Units by homeowner Kate Challis are painted in 'Dusted Blue' by Resene, with black 'Moon Edge' handles by Joseph Giles from The English Tapware Company. The Viking wood and brass handles on the fridge are by Ochre  
**Stockist details on p194** ▶



**Dining area** Kate Challis (opposite) stands in front of the customised 'Le Vol' wall mural by Valerie Sparks. The table is by Mark Tuckey and the shelving is bespoke. Kate commissioned the quartz light from Christopher Boots  
**Stockist details on p194** ▶

Stairway Fornasetti's 'Nuvolette' wallpaper, available at Cole & Son, and an antique chandelier produce a serene feeling of lightness and space  
Stockist details on p194 ▶



'IT'S MUCH HARDER  
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Above Christian Thompson's  
*Australian Graffiti* artwork from  
Gabrielle Pizzi gallery hangs above  
a table by Marianna Kennedy  
**Bathroom** A bath from Apaiser,  
with taps from Brodware, sits in front  
of 'Plumage' tiles by Botteganove  
Stockist details on p194 ►



ONCE MELBOURNE'S  
FIRST FEMINIST  
BOOKSHOP, THIS  
BUILDING IS STILL  
A GROUNDBREAKING,  
INSPIRING SPACE



**Bedroom** The bedhead is upholstered in linen from Antoine d'Albiousse. The mirrored bedside table was a vintage find and the 'Eucalyptus' light is from Ochre  
**Roof terrace** A spiral staircase leads from the internal courtyard to this outdoor space **Stockist details on p194** ▶





COMPILED BY KIERA BUCKLEY/ONES PICTURE LUCKY IF SHARP

## THE MOODBOARD

*Tropical colours and artistic murals bring a touch of paradise to this bijoux home*

1 'Nuvolette' **wallcovering** by Fornasetti, £300 for a two-roll set, Cole & Son ([cole-and-son.com](http://cole-and-son.com)) 2 'European Solid Oak Herringbone' **flooring**, £75.54 per square metre, Havwoods ([havwoods.co.uk](http://havwoods.co.uk)) 3 'Newby Green' **paint**, £43 for 2.5 litres, Sanderson at Style Library ([stylelibrary.com](http://stylelibrary.com)) 4 'Leaf Eddy' **wall sculpture**, from £1,723 for 25 pieces, FBC London ([fbc-london.com](http://fbc-london.com)) 5 'Boho' **velvet** in 'Raspberry', £53 per metre, Sanderson at Style Library ([stylelibrary.com](http://stylelibrary.com)) 6 'Manade' **velvet** in 'Bleu Topaze', £43.10 per metre, Casamance ([casamance.com](http://casamance.com)) 7 'Linara' **linen** in 'Goldfinch', £38.50 per metre, Romo ([romo.com](http://romo.com)) 8 'Animal Glade' **wallpaper**, £190 per roll, Osborne & Little ([osborneandlittle.com](http://osborneandlittle.com)) 9 'Light Grey' **washed linen**, £28 per metre, The Hackney Draper ([thehackneydraper.co.uk](http://thehackneydraper.co.uk)) 10 'Fuji' **paint**, £48.50 for 2.5 litres, Paint & Paper Library ([paintandpaperlibrary.com](http://paintandpaperlibrary.com)) 11 'Palace' double-width jacquard **sheer**, £180 per metre, Elitis ([elitis.fr](http://elitis.fr)) 12 'Shapes Hexagon Unglazed Biscuit Mosaic' **tiles**, £44.74 per square metre, Topps Tiles ([toppstiles.co.uk](http://toppstiles.co.uk)) 13 'Koi Scallop' **tiles**, £10.80 per sheet, Artisans of Devizes ([artisansofdevizes.com](http://artisansofdevizes.com)) 14 'East Hampton' **marble**, £114 per square metre, Fired Earth ([firedearth.com](http://firedearth.com)) 15 'Parquet' **vinyl flooring** in 'Lamp Wood', £38 per square metre, Harvey Maria ([harveymaria.com](http://harveymaria.com)) **ED**