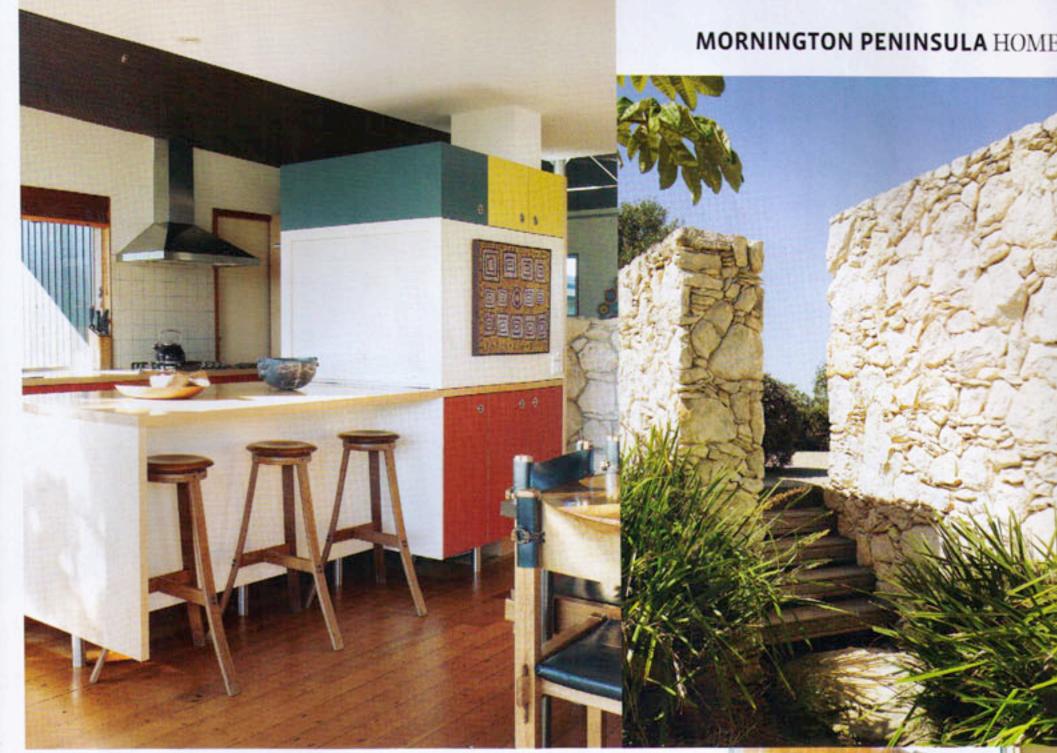


## MORNINGTON PENINSULA HOME







his simple yet striking beach house in Sorrento, on Victoria's Mornington
Peninsula, echoes the topography, as if shaped by the elements – just like
the wind-shorn vegetation behind it. From its rooftop deck there are views
across the seaside township to the glistening waters of Port Phillip Bay.
In the far distance, Melbourne's skyscrapers appear as small blips on the
horizon. In the other direction, the choppy navy blue waters of Bass Strait can be
seen above a tangle of vegetation that is Mornington Peninsula National Park. "The
view towards the city is lovely," admits the house's owner, landscape designer Fiona
Brockhoff, "but the other way is special. I prefer it because it's a wilder view. However,
living on top of a dune is windy and noisy, which is why the exposure in this southwesterly direction is quite minimal and the house opens to the north."

The extensive use of locally sourced and recycled materials reinforces the sense that the house and garden have grown out of their surroundings. Craggy white limestone walls buttress the front and rear terraces, folding back into the split-level house to separate the living area from the entry corridor below it with a shoulder-height wall. Old pier timbers form a solid palisade retaining wall edging the driveway, and the shell and pebble aggregate in the entry paving was collected from the beach.

Inside, the house is warm and inviting, with 50s vintage furniture sitting beside custom-made items. A collection of older pieces of Aboriginal art share the same natural aesthetic as the hand-printed fabrics by Cloth that cover armchairs and cushions. It's a textured, earthy interior with a strong sense of design. "I chose a lot of the colours to relate to the hues in the garden, and to bring in some warmth," explains Fiona.

She designed the house almost 15 years ago with her friend Tom Isaksson, a NSW-based architect. "Tom and I have similar tastes in architecture, but what really appealed to me was that he was both an architect and a builder. He moved down to Sorrento for 10 months and we designed the house together very quickly and got it through council. Then off we went."



