



# CLUB TROPICANA

A sophisticated fusion of tropical and colonial décor allows this family to entertain with ease.

Words and styling: Andrea Jones | Photography: Jennifer Soo

"On Christmas Eve, we make upwards of 30 pizzas in the outdoor oven," says Alanna. "Michael made the oven from recycled materials from the original house. The crooked chimney is his take on The Cat In The Hat, which was the kids' favourite book."

## INSIDE STORY

**The house**  
Once a fibro miner's cottage in Newport on Sydney's northern beaches, it is now an airy, five-bedroom family home with a lush, tropical vibe.

**Who lives here**  
Interior designer Alanna Smit (she's behind some of the transformations on Foxtel's *Love It or List It Australia*), her husband Mike, a builder, and their children Maisie, 9, Penelope, 7, and Sam, 5.

**What we did**  
"We took two years to settle on a plan – planning is crucial," says Alanna. "We added two bedrooms, and at the front a large entry, which makes the house seem bigger than it is. In the kitchen we positioned the windows higher, so you don't see the neighbours and you look onto the tops of palm trees. I love that view – we could be anywhere tropical."

**Favourite room**  
"Probably the entryway. There is a sense of grandeur when you walk in."

**The hood**  
"Love it!" says Alanna. "Everyone knows everyone. You can't go on a date night without running into people you know and ending up having a great dinner with five other couples."

**Future plans**  
"We might add a parents' retreat when the kids get older."

**Best advice**  
"Spatial planning is crucial," Alanna says. "There is hidden storage everywhere." •



"I call this living space 'Paris'," says Alanna. "The kids aren't normally allowed here. This is my beautiful, grown-up, romantic place where I like to come and wind down."



"The island bench is really long; we avoided having a seam in the benchtop by building in a chopping board," says Alanna. "It's so useful. There's usually a loaf of bread on it."



"The light is from California – it was one of my splurges," says Alanna of the fitting for her favourite room in the house – the new, enlarged entry area.



"We love falling into bed – it's a beautiful sanctuary space with a tropical feel," says Alanna. The ceiling fan is from myfan.com.au.