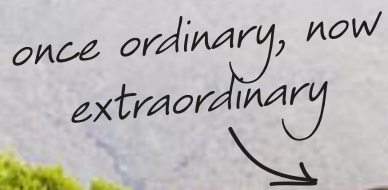


**From drab to fab**

When David bought the house, "the backyard was covered in gravel, there was a chain-link fence that was falling over and there were a lot of dead fruit trees on the ground". As he loves outdoor entertaining he created an extension of the house, replacing the gravel with grass and the fence with a ficus hedge; painting the pool deck white; creating an outdoor seating area; buying vintage outdoor furniture; and installing outdoor speakers and a hot tub.

*once ordinary, now  
extraordinary*



writer natalie walton  
photography rick szczechowski  
styling david jimenez



# LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

Serene on the outside. Bursting with life on the inside. David Jimenez has created an inspirational and memorable home

THE EXTERIOR OF THIS three-bedroom home could be anywhere in Australia. The single-storey stucco building is reminiscent of a great swath of homes across the country, from Broome to Ballarat. But it's actually in Palm Springs, California. Surprised? We were! It's the home of David Jimenez, who has a career in visual merchandising and writes an interior design column. But it's what he's done with this house – combining great second-hand furniture shop finds with bursts of colour – that has inspired us so much. And he offers up some great decorating advice, too. How could we resist?

David bought the house more than 10 years ago and when the search began he knew he wanted a “house that had a nod to the





**David the do-it-yourself decorator**

While David is not a professional interior decorator, it's a serious hobby. "Ever since I was old enough to rearrange the furniture in my parents' living room, I have been passionate about interiors," he says.

www

Check out David's website for more of his amazing work. Visit [djimenez.com](http://djimenez.com)

**Mirror magic**

"I enjoy adding mirrors to a room because they are like windows on a wall – they open up a space and create lightness," David says. "I love the size of the wood mirror. It creates drama next to the sofa and frames the Saarinen table, vintage lamp and blue painting." ↑

David mixes furniture from different eras

#### Comfort zone

These pod-like chairs sit casually at the end of the bed in the third bedroom (also pictured opposite). The stereo is a 1970s Weltron "Space Helmet" radio and 8-track player. "I have a collection of 8-tracks that I enjoy listening to and remind me of the music I heard growing up," David says.



Rat Pack era of the 1950s". Specifically, he was attracted to a mid-century modern aesthetic. "The moment I drove up the driveway and saw the house it was love at first sight," he says. "From the butterfly roofline to the kidney-shaped swimming pool and the quirky 1950s details throughout, I knew it was the one for me."

But David wanted to create a lived-in home, and not be a slave to the mid-century look. "I feel that houses have more soul, character and wit when the furnishings aren't all from the same era," he says. And so he set out to trawl through second-hand shops. With a little

patience and a great eye, David found the sofas, lamps, chandelier, artwork and accessories in these budget-friendly places. "Then I paired the vintage finds with new purchases to create a nice mix of old and new throughout the house," he adds.

While David decorates with a lot of thought, he has fun along the way. The project took about four months and while there were many late nights, "none were sleepless", he jokes. "I thrive on the energy and excitement of setting up a new space, constantly moving things around until they feel just right. I crank up the music, turn



“I LIKE THE WARMTH OF AN ECLECTIC WALL OF PHOTOS OR ACCESSORIES IN A ROOM”

tip

David added framed prints to the wall display to add scale and interest. By keeping the collection to the same colour palette, the space appears carefully edited, rather than cluttered.

**Natural touch** The shelving wall display is on a wall of the bedroom in which the rattan chairs (*pictured opposite*) live. The Danish teak sideboard was found at a second-hand store. “I had the legs removed from the sideboard and mounted it directly to the wall,” David says.



**Pattern medley**

David wanted to create a masculine bedroom that had a 1960s/'70s vibe. "I started by covering the wall behind the headboard in a David Hicks design wallpaper," he says. And he loves design books, stacking them to "create an easy, chic vibe that goes far in making a room look collected and casual".

*chocolate & white accents ground the colours & pattern*



"I LIKE INCORPORATING VINTAGE ACCESSORIES –THEY ADD INSTANT PANACHE AND STYLE"

#### Guest retreat

The guest bedroom keeps in tune with the rest of the house's decorating style. "I wanted all the rooms to have a unique personality and chose the rug for its bold colour and fresh design," David says. The wallpaper behind the bed is grasscloth. The mirror was found at a local second-hand shop and David layered it with a 1950s charcoal artwork.



the lights down low and have a great time going from room to room and moving furniture around."

Decorating this way meant some of the decisions were spontaneous, and David was open to surprises. "For example, when I set out to furnish the living room, I found the yellow velvet sofa at a thrift store, fell in love with its bold colour and knew that it would be a great focal point for the room," he says. "I chose the dove-grey wall colour behind because I thought it would be a nice

complement." Similarly, the blue Regency chairs were also bargain buys and while David had envisaged them against a chocolate dining room wall, when he placed one of them in the living room, he loved the effect against the round wicker chairs and 1970s sofa.

The key to creating a home is using layers, comfort pieces and bold colour accents. "I love the way that layers help make a room look casual and collected over time," David says. "It's also a terrific way to creating warmth and making a space feel more personal." **tl**





**"I WANTED THE COLOURS TO FLOW FROM THE INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE TO THE EXTERIOR"**

**Easy entertaining**

"My goal was to create an outdoor space that I could easily change from a seated lounge area with upholstered mid-century benches to chaise longue chairs for sunning, or a dining table and chairs for dinner with friends," David says. He transformed the area by having a 3.5 sq m pad of concrete poured in the middle of the backyard.

*hits of brown, yellow & blue  
flow from indoors to out*



*tip*

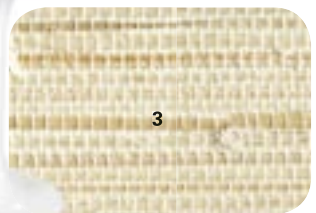
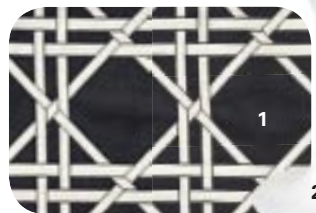
David removed part of the wall next to the front door and added two windows to create a more light-filled living room and give an airiness to the house.

**Keeping it real**

David took an “understated route” with the exterior, bringing less emphasis to the actual door and playing up the serenity of the desert landscaping in front of the house. The plants are a mix of ocotillos and agaves.

*spotted it.  
found it!*

David puts plenty of thought into fabrics and furniture. Check these out for size



(1) Garden Trellis **fabric** in Onyx, \$110 a metre, Westbury. (2) Replica Saarinen **side table**, \$295, Matt Blatt. (3) Grasscloth **wallpaper**, from \$225 a roll, Chee Soon & Fitzgerald. (4) Cole & Son “Hick’s Hexagon” **wallpaper**, from \$260 a roll, Radford Furnishings. (5) Replica Harry Bertoia **chair**, \$149, Replica Furniture. For stockists, see page 152.