

AUSTRALIAN 124 + PAGES OF KITCHENS & HOMES SHOP THE LOOKS

HOUSE & GARDEN

LITTLE BLACK BOOK **BEDHEADS**

SWEET THINGS TO SHARE
from
THE
CORDONY KITCHEN

Kitchen CLASSICS

STUNNING SPACES *from* SOFT AND TIMELESS *to* CONTEMPORARY CHIC

Highlands Home FASHION ICON COLLETTE DINNIGAN

H&G AT HOME WITH



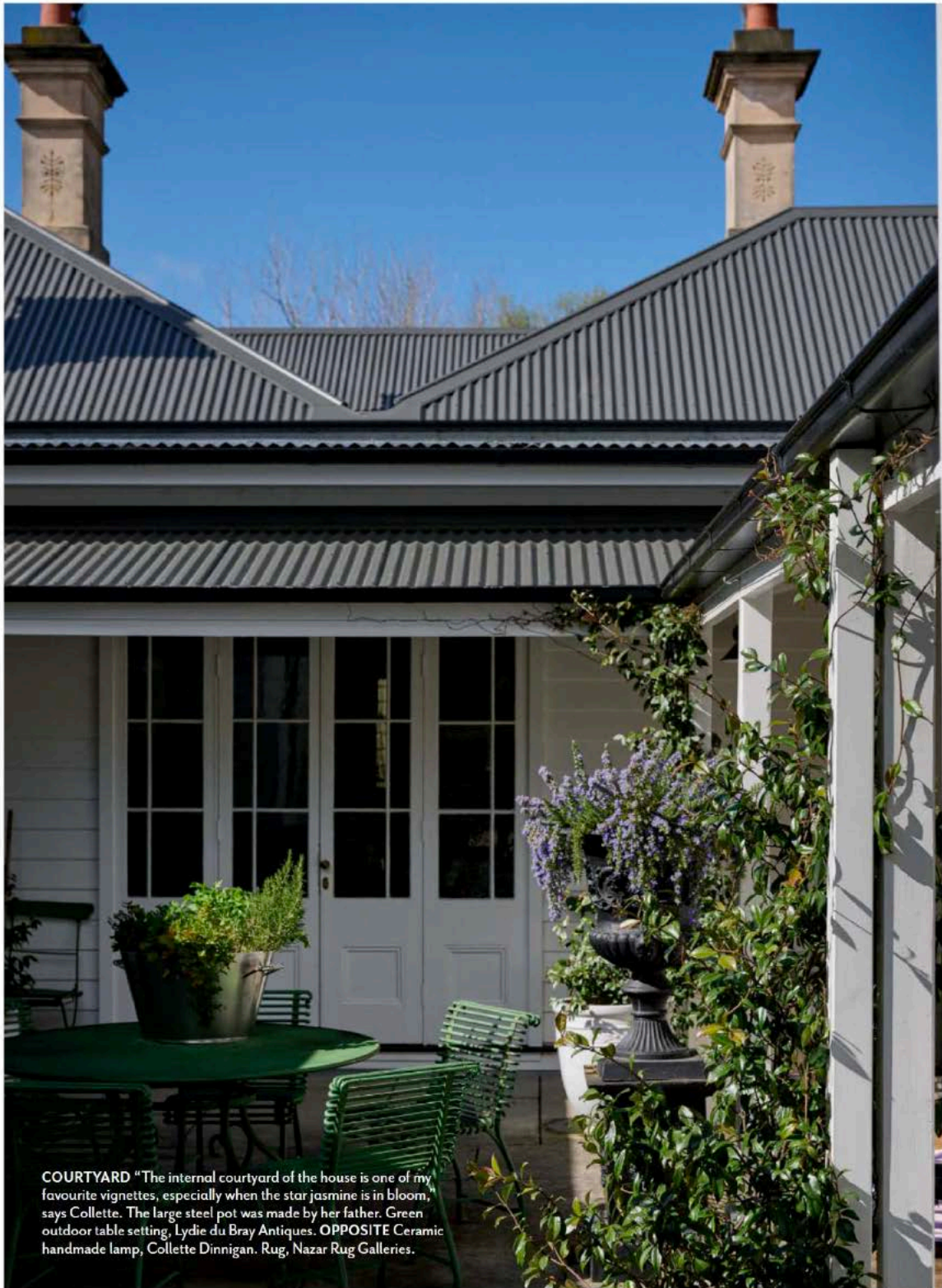
A TASTEMAKER AT HOME Collette Dinnigan, pictured with Beagle-Spaniel cross Sooty, regularly decorates her home with fresh flowers from her expansive garden and wares from her online shop. A portrait of a princess by Vietnamese artist Bui Huu Hung, bought years ago in Hanoi, hangs above a vintage 1930s mother-of-pearl inlay console in the dining room of her Bowral, NSW, home.

Highland SANCTUARY



A labour of love and dedication, designer Collette Dinnigan's NSW country retreat is a carefully curated showcase of her timeless style.

STORY *Kirstie Clements* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Earl Carter*



COURTYARD "The internal courtyard of the house is one of my favourite vignettes, especially when the star jasmine is in bloom, says Collette. The large steel pot was made by her father. Green outdoor table setting, Lydie du Bray Antiques. **OPPOSITE** Ceramic handmade lamp, Collette Dinnigan. Rug, Nazar Rug Galleries.

“**M**y home in the Southern Highlands is an enchanting and happy place,” says fashion and interior designer Collette Dinnigan in her latest book, *Bellissima: An Australian-Italian Affair* (Simon & Schuster). A visual cornucopia, the book chronicles her peripatetic lifestyle in Australia and Italy and shares her taste in interiors, gardens, travel and food. While it features the designer’s properties in Sydney, Puglia and Rome, it’s clear her charming farmhouse in Bowral, NSW, is very close to her heart. She shares the sprawling family home with husband Bradley Cocks and her children, Estella and Hunter.

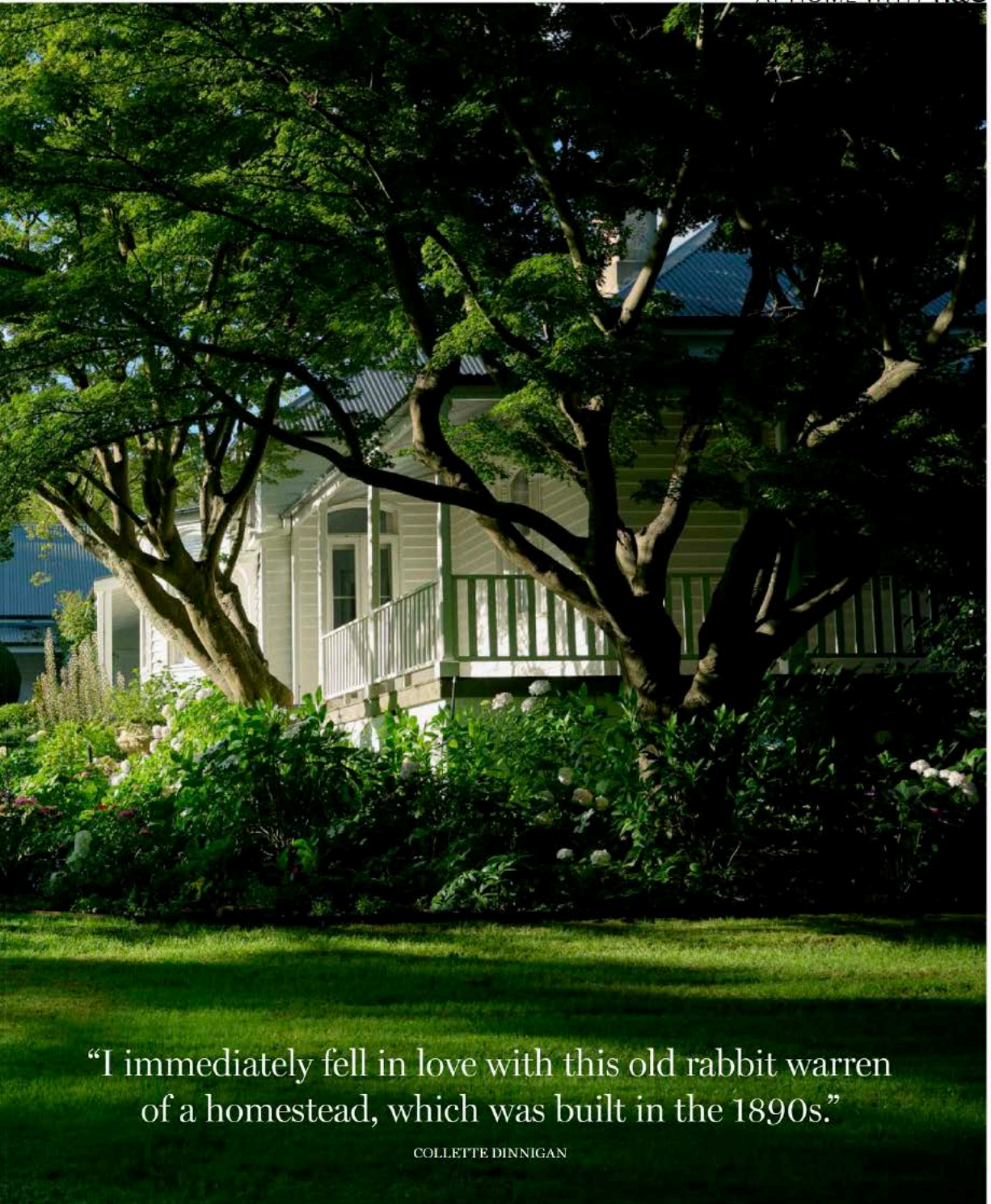
“I immediately fell in love with this old rabbit warren of a homestead, which was built in the 1890s,” she says. After almost four years of renovating, the two-hectare property hosts a six-bedroom, four-bathroom house, self-contained cottages, and a barn converted into guest accommodation, plus a studio, pool and a wisteria-laden pool house, all surrounded by fruit trees, vegetable gardens and fragrant jasmine, roses and lavender. ▶





COUNTRY GARDEN "The property is deeply enchanting and I have spent years planting and reseeding the flower beds, so no matter the time of year, we nearly always have cut flowers in the home," says Collette.





“I immediately fell in love with this old rabbit warren of a homestead, which was built in the 1890s.”

COLLETTE DINNIGAN



H&G AT HOME WITH





FORMAL SITTING ROOM Map of Paris print, Schumacher. **CONSERVATORY** *Opposite* "These incredible, 1000-year-old marble tiles in the conservatory were salvaged from an old church in Belgium," says Collette. "Every bit of wall space is arranged with artwork from my friends and family." Landscape artwork by Michaye Boulter.



"With the large trees, it's like a European garden," says Collette. "It has a grounding feel, one that is very welcoming."

One of our most renowned fashion designers, Collette made an indelible impression on the Australian fashion scene in the 1990s. Her delicate, feminine design signature demonstrated an appreciation of vintage fabrics and lingerie, silk, satin and handmade lace, antique buttons and intricate beadwork. Her collections were soon on the official *Chambre Syndicale* calendar at Paris Fashion Week, and this prettily romantic Australian-European sensibility is evident in her approach to interiors.

Collette's serene spaces possess all the hallmarks of interiors curated by a fashion designer who has an innate understanding of textiles and colour, as well as the keen eye of a continuously curious collector - someone who has delighted in trawling through markets all over the world, unearthing and breathing new life into vintage finds. During the renovation she was often in Europe "sourcing materials and special pieces that would feel at home within the walls of this historic house".

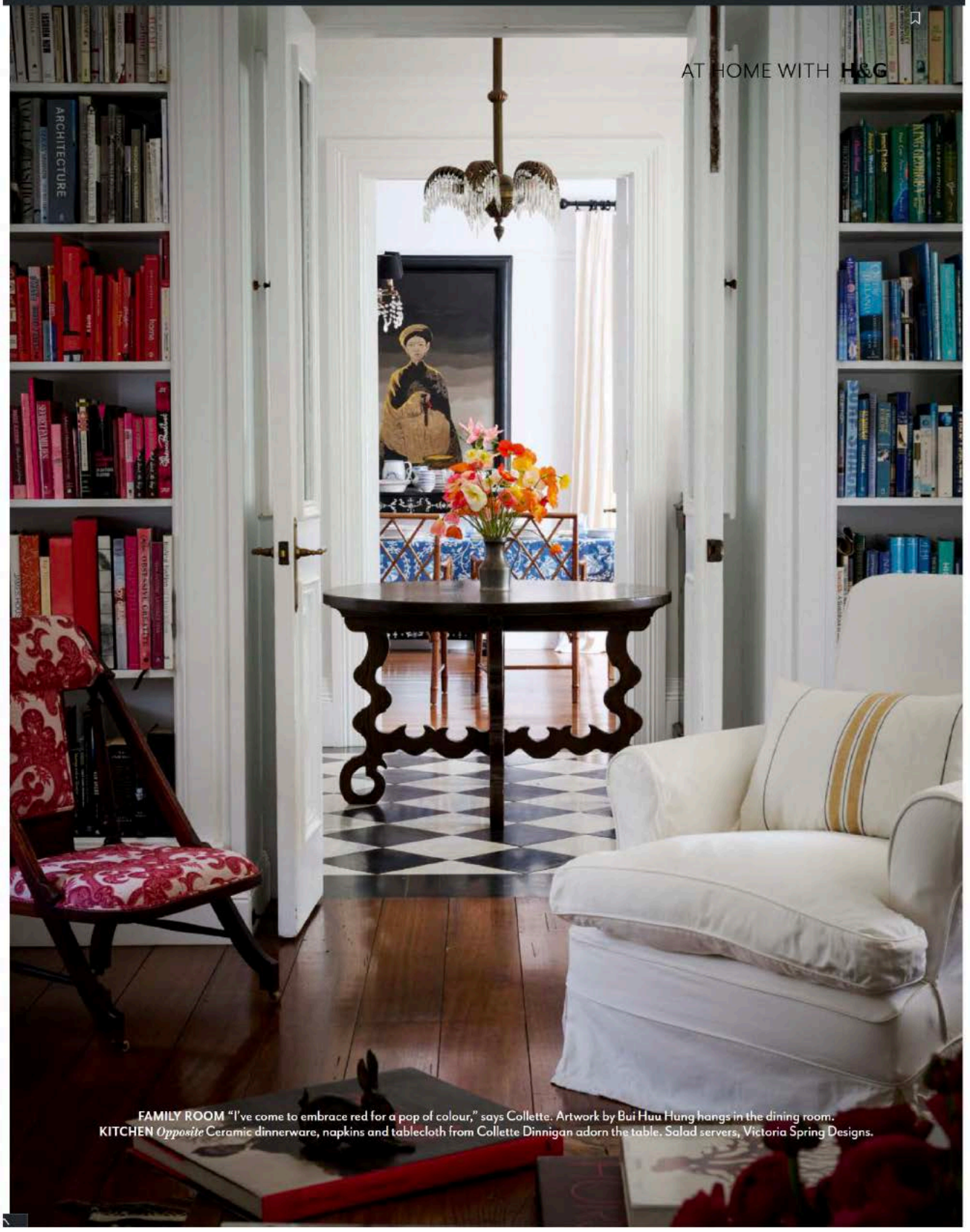
Her extensive art collection personalises every space. "Every bit of wall space is arranged with artwork from my friends and family." Flowers collected from the garden

spill from every vase and urn, and white calico sofas are strewn with cushions. Spacious, sunlit, all-white rooms are punctuated with kilims and hits of bright, deep red seen in a fresh flower or the spine of a book (colour-coded bookshelves are a feature of the airy family room).

The home is a bewitching curation of old complemented by new. The original chimney stacks of the house were lovingly restored, the floor of the conservatory is made up of 1000-year-old black-and-white marble tiles, salvaged from a Belgian church, and the exterior of the pool house is embellished vintage Egyptian shutters. Market finds such as a Murano glass lamp, an unusual side table or chair or a collection of antique vessels, create painterly vignettes in every room. New crisp white bed linen, Italian ceramics and indigo blue tablecloths (from Collette's store), continue the vintage-chic aesthetic.

While Collette's property presents as a picture-perfect country home, it is very obviously much-loved and lived in. "It's usually full of people and life," she shares. "It's inviting, friendly and private, and feels secure and cloistered from the world beyond... It's a true sanctuary where I can escape and create." ▶

Select quotes from *Bellissima: An Australian-Italian Affair* by Collette Dinnigan, \$100, collettedinnigan.com.



FAMILY ROOM "I've come to embrace red for a pop of colour," says Collette. Artwork by Bui Hua Hung hangs in the dining room.
KITCHEN *Opposite* Ceramic dinnerware, napkins and tablecloth from Collette Dinnigan adorn the table. Salad servers, Victoria Spring Designs.





GALLERY WALL The historic house is “usually full of people and life and is absolutely brimming with art I’ve collected over the years. It’s inviting, friendly and private, and feels secure and cloistered from the world beyond,” says Collette.

Artworks by friends of Collette, including a small oil paint in the centre by Zoe Young. Ceramic handmade lamp, Collette Dinnigan. *SITTING ROOM* *Opposite* Illustrations by Nina Fuga. Oil painting by Guy Maestri to the right.

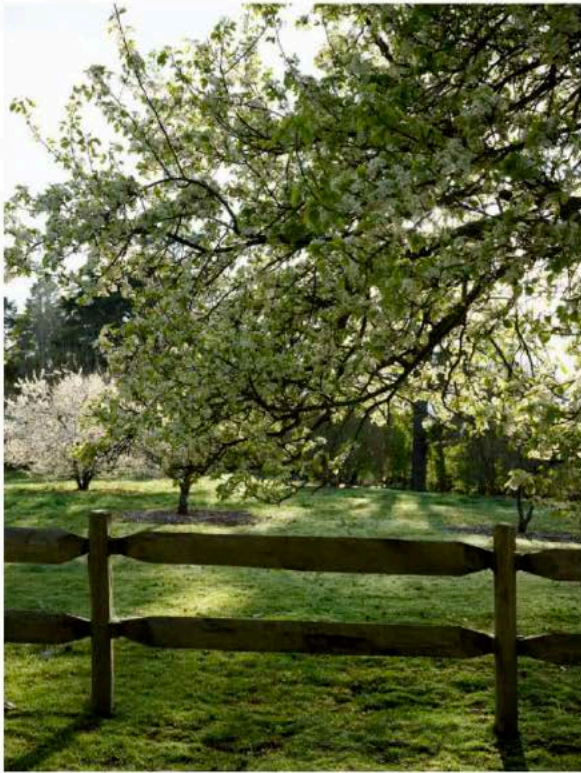


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“There’s a magical cottage garden where
I spend much of my time.”

COLLETTE DINNIGAN


OUTDOOR ENTERTAINING Outdoor table and chairs, Lydie du Bray Antiques. **OPPOSITE** The rambling gardens provide peaceful solitude and plenty of creative inspiration. *Bottom right* Photograph of a Margaret Olley painting by Hugh Stewart. *Bottom left* “We restored four of these lovely original chimney stacks marked with the homestead’s insignia, but we had to replace the roof and window sashes,” explains Collette.





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“I was often in Europe sourcing materials and special pieces that would feel at home within the walls of this historic house.”

COLLETTE DINNIGAN

THE POOL HOUSE “When I found these old Egyptian shutters, I knew they were destined for the pool house. The trellis is festooned in purple wisteria come spring,” writes Collette in *Bellissima*.



“My studio is also on site.
It’s a true sanctuary, where
I can escape and create.”

COLLETTE DINNIGAN

BEDROOM *Above left* The dog portrait was drawn by Collette’s daughter Estella when she was little. *Top right* Framed paper horses by Jamic Gordon. *Opposite* “I love Australian artist Guy Macstri’s work, particularly this oil painting called *No Man’s Land*.” Vintage Murano glass lamp. **BATHROOM** Each space in the home encapsulates Collette’s sophisticated style, merging vintage finds with polished finishes and modern convenience.



AT HOME WITH **H&G**



H&G AT HOME WITH

LIFE & STYLE

Collette Dinnigan shares some of her favourite things.



“I LOVE TO COOK WITH SEASONAL, FLAVOURSOME FOOD, PICKED FRESH FROM THE GARDEN.” *Collette Dinnigan*

MY FIRST HOME It was an old, one bedroom sandstone cottage in [Sydney’s] Surry Hills. It had a lovely tropical garden with eucalyptus trees, and I would do lots of cooking, play music and entertain in my young and wild days! I remember supermodel Helena Christensen being there one night, and she opened the door at 2am to a neighbour, who was complaining about the noise we were all making!

ON MY BEDSIDE TABLE *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey, the 2024 Booker Prize winner. *Salt: A World History* by Mark Kurlansky. I also read a lot of non-fiction and reference books about things close to my interests, like gardening, kitchens, art and permaculture. And, of course, my new book, *Bellissima: An Australian-Italian Affair* (Simon & Schuster) (6).

I’M INSPIRED BY THE WORK OF... I find international artist Cy Twombly (2) interesting. In terms of Australian artists, I love the landscape work of Guy Maestri (4), Luke Sciberras’ watercolours and inks, and Louise Olsen.

FAVOURITE FRAGRANCE Eau de Rhubarbe Ecarlate eau de cologne by Hermès (1).

I LOVE TO COOK... I want to say I’m a cook, not a chef! I love to cook with seasonal, flavoursome food, picked fresh from the garden, rustic in feel, with everything (such as stock) cooked from scratch.

I LOVE A VASE FULL OF... Wild roses, colourful hydrangeas, yellow poppies (3), English lavender and rosemary – anything picked from my garden.

NEXT TRAVEL DESTINATION Hong Kong. My husband, Bradley, and I are going with friends and we intend to eat and cook our way around the place!

FAVOURITE MOVIE *Whale Rider* (2002), directed by Niki Caro.

IN MY WARDROBE I wear a lot of Bassike (7). It has a smart-casual style that is effortless, and it’s very good quality.

DREAM CAR A vintage two-seater Mercedes with red leather seats (5). I’d turn the radio up loud and just go cruising with Bradley, without children and dogs!

PERFECT WEEKEND An autumn day with the sun on your back and lunch in the country, a house full of friends and family, and everyone is happy, pets included, without a care in the world.

ON MY WISH LIST I’d like to rediscover the country where I was born, South Africa. I haven’t been back there since I was seven years old. And I’d love to visit Kruger National Park. H&G