WHILE THEY HAVE CLEAR-CUT ROLES
WHEN IT COMES TO STYLING AND
LABOUR, THE COUPLE'S COMBINED
VISION FOR A **LUXURIOUS, SEXY FINISH**CONTINUED TO IMPRESS THE JUDGES

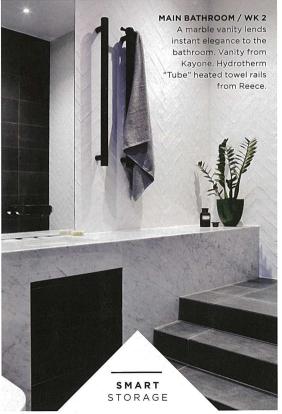
054 THE BLOCK 2014 GLASSHOUSE CARLENE & MICHAEL / APT ONE





NICE START
The couple's first
bedroom gave clues
on what to expect
stylewise for the rest
of the apartment.

CARLENE AND MICHAEL CHOSE NUMBER 1 in The Block apartment ballot, but was it wishful thinking? Would they end up in first place as well? On day one they find their apartment faces the street - that could be a bonus for the couple - Michael seems to think so, too. Yes, these experienced renovators do have runs on the board back home in Queensland, but in the glare of the Glasshouse that could count for little. SIGNATURE STYLE And just how will they fare in the style stakes - is their look going to get them over the line? Well, a little tweaking might be in order. "My style at home is very eclectic and a bit vintagey," says Carlene. "If I want to paint a wall black, I just do it. I can play with things and see what works." She doesn't have that luxury on The Block, where she has refined her style, labelling it "more pared back, still clean, still fresh, but warm, rich, glam, plush, moody, sophisticated and a little bit unexpected". Michael's thoughts? "I clearly have no input into the styling of the rooms, so I have no idea." In this apartment, there was a traditional division of labour - styling and shopping was Carlene's domain, while chippy Michael picked up the hammer. >



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## BEDROOM / WK 3

Nailhead upholstered bed from West Elm. Aura cushions and Sheridan bedlinen from Myer. Rona bedside stools from Hermon & Hermon. VI pendant lights from Lightly. Valley End II artwork by Belynda Henry through Anthea Polson Art.



## STUDY / WK 3

The replica Eames/ Saarinen "Organic" office chair from Matt Blatt looked great, but it was too low for Neale. Replica Jason Miller "Modo 10" chandelier from Clickon Furniture. Rug from Leffler Leather.





PHOTOGRAPHY DEREK SWALWELL (LAUNDRY & MASTER BEDROOM); MARTIN PHILBEY ("EDROOM & STUDY)

UP WE GO

Floating stairs introduce a light, lofty feel to the apartment's entry. The stairway is an open-string design in Pacific Oak with imposing vertical ballustrades, by Eric Jones

Stairbuilding. Mini square step

lights from Beacon Lighting.

CUPBOARD LOVE They got off to a fine start in the first week with the guest bedroom coming in second place. The judges, who thought the room would hit the spot with younger buyers, gave them ticks for the wardrobe space – the couple must have second-guessed the judges, who asked where's the ladder for such a generous space. Shaynna opened the door and there it was. And the dark, moody palette left the trio smiling.

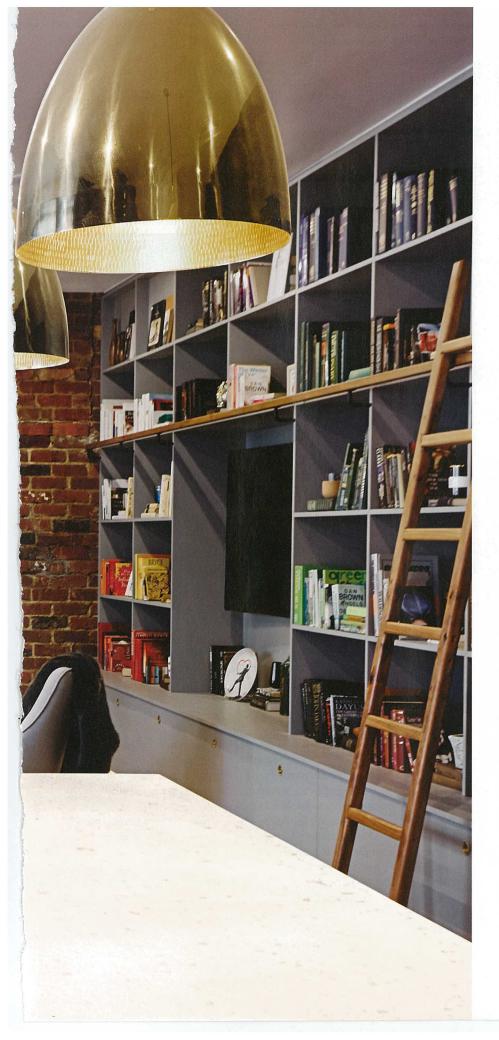
COASTING ALONG The next few weeks, the couple seemed to be in holding mode – with all their rooms performing competently, but not outshining their rivals. The bathroom in week two delivered a wow factor – Neale said it showed "confidence" in their own sense of style.

In the second bedroom-cum-study, attention to detail generally impressed the judges - but not always - the chair at the desk was way too low, as was instantly obvious when Neale bravely put it to the test. DARK DRAMA The main bedroom in week four was a smidge behind Max and Karstan's on the score sheet, with just half a point in it. "Elegant, sophisticated and glamorous", the judges summed it up, thanks to the dark, stormy hues and rich fabrics. But don't think comfort was napping in this seductive space - Darren chose this room and moment to quote Coco Chanel. "Luxury isn't luxury, unless it is comfortable." Amen to that. SENSUAL SPACES In the fifth week, Michael and Carlene really hit their stride by winning their first gong from the judges for their laundry, powder room and stairway. "Whoever thought you could make a powder room/ laundry look so sexy," said Shaynna. The metallic detail in the benchtop, a kick-arse pendant and textured tiles all got the judges oohing and aahing. Things were on a roll from there. They cooked up a storm with a kitchen that simmered with sensuality, thanks to the black laminate cupboards, the brass pendants hovering over the island and meticulous attention to detail. The couple shared the gong with Shannon and Simon, both couples scoring a sizzling 29 out of 30 for their efforts.





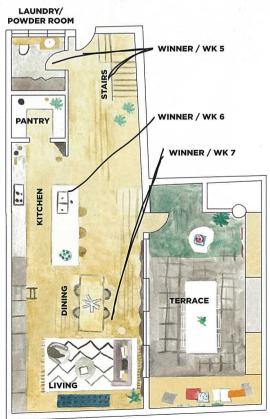




## FIRST FLOOR



## GROUND FLOOR







**ENSUITE / WK 8** 

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Tranquil space. Rifco "Acqua" vanity, Laufen "Living" square basin and Phoenix shower rose from Reece.

DOING IT BY THE BOOK In week seven, they proved one thing - it's amazing what bookshelves can do for a room. The couple's lounge and dining area received a huuuuge tick from Shaynna: "I think it's the first lounge on my judging of The Block that had that lived-in, homey feel. The bookcase was the start and their styling was incredible."

"Michael and Carlene's living and dining area was the most inviting of all and it was a winner," Neale says. "Despite their poor choice of pendant" - in silver and glass, it clashed with other features in the room, according to the judges, who called it "unnecessary" - "the wall of shelving made the space feel warm, intimate and homely. The shelves were generously filled with books and gave their living and dining space interest and personality. They even fitted a ladder, which to me is the ultimate luxury!" Neale also enthused about their choice of rug, which was "luxe and sophisticated". Little wonder it topped the scoreboard in that week.

**FEELING THE COLD** The ensuite the following week was a slight fizzer. The bathroom was too cold, according to Neale, not helped by lots of glass - swap the glass pendants for timber, perhaps. And Neale revealed one of his pet hates - dried flowers. Darren, though, didn't mind them at all. FAVOURITE SPACE Perhaps the couple had already had their golden moment. "I am most proud of the living/dining room," says Carlene. "It's a really inviting space that has a lot of wow. It includes the perfect mix of different textures and it's the sort of space you want to linger in." .

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