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From town house to family home

MAYA ANDERSON

Extensions to town houses are rare — and just as rare are people who manage to turn their first house into their family home.

Jane Chami bought her two-bedroom, one-bathroom South Perth town house when she was 19 and kept it as an investment until later when she moved into it.

Now, after a renovation and addition, it is now a comfortable family home for Ms Chami, her three boys and their pug-cross-Cavalier King Charles puppy, with four bedrooms, two bathrooms and two living areas.

When she first moved into the two-bedroom town house with her three young sons, Ms Chami needed more space and decided to extend.

She said she was lucky her neighbours in the other town houses in the complex were happy for her to make the changes.

Her plan was to transform the

existing two-by-one into a four-by-two family home and she needed a builder who could not only accommodate limited access but allow for the family to live in the home while it was being renovated.

“The home was a fairly standard South Perth town house that was functional, but with three young boys Ms Chami needed more space,” said Stuart Redwood from Australian Renovation Group, the building company Ms Chami hired for the job.

The renovation involved extending the upper storey, which consisted of a small rumpus room with low ceilings, and three bedrooms and a bathroom were added.

The rumpus area was extended and it and the bedrooms all now have raked ceilings with abundant natural light.

Louvred windows were installed to the main bedroom and one of the boys’ bedrooms, which has access to a private rear

balcony with an outlook through treetops.

“Eventually upstairs will be a total kids’ zone and I will move into what is now used as their playroom downstairs,” Ms Chami said.

The ground floor was also altered, with the wall of a former bedroom knocked out to make a dining area, turning the entire space into an open-plan kitchen and living area.

Aluminium bi-fold doors were installed to access the courtyard and provide light to the ground floor.

A partial height wall between the kitchen and living area was also removed to enhance the sense of space.

Having renovated several houses before, Ms Chami fitted out the interiors, including the laying of the wide spotted gum floorboards.

Mr Redwood said the project threw up a few challenges.

“Apart from the site access and client living on site, the multiple



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raking ceilings upstairs were a particular challenge, but are now very much a feature of the completed home,” he said.

“Now, when you walk through the front door you are greeted with a spacious family home that is filled with light.

“It feels like there is twice the amount of floor space as there was before.

“The clutter has gone as the boys have their own bedrooms and a playroom to house their toys.

“The finished product is contemporary and stylish yet practical to cater for the needs of a growing family.”

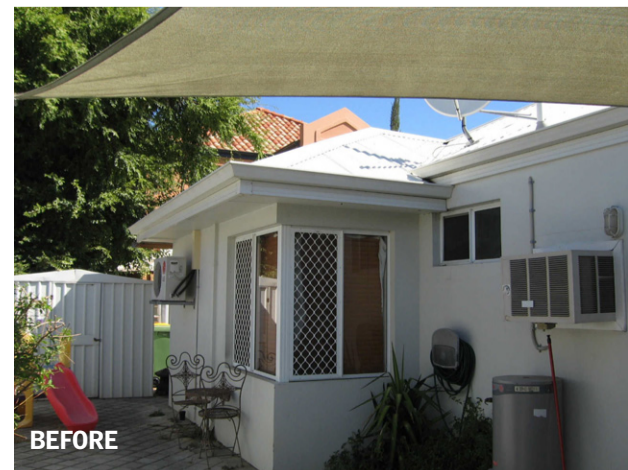
Ms Chami said she was extremely pleased with the result, and especially happy that the family had been able to remain in the home for the nine months it took to renovate the town house.

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The home was an entry in the 2010 HIA-NAB Perth Housing Awards.



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