



Renovation Trends In Australia

2001 –2002

A Special Report

www.archicentre.com.au



In the past six years the value of Australia's renovation of residential property has jumped from \$2.6 billion to \$3.6 billion, an increase of 36%.

On average 137,000 new homes are built every year

People on average move or renovate every seven years

Twenty per cent of homes have illegal building

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Renovation Trends 2002

Australians demand a good quality of life. And for many, a comfortable home is an essential lifestyle requirement. As the home advisory service of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, Archicentre estimates that over 50% of home owners will look to renovate at some stage in their life.

We have recently produced a report entitled '**Australia's Renovation Trends 2001/2002**' which details the most popular national trends and draws comparisons between the costs and needs for each state. The study is based on over 60 interviews with Archicentre architects Australia-wide and over 20,000 Renovation Reports.

For 21 years, the objective of Archicentre has been to promote the values of architecture to the wider community. The message is working. Last year Archicentre exceeded the 200,000 customer mark, making Archicentre, Australia's largest building adviser and designer of home renovations. More than half of our renovation reports turn into jobs.

The Renovation Report continues to be the most appropriate response for thousands of Australian home improvers every year. They like the renovation report because it explores every option, with care and sensitivity to their circumstances, lifestyle and budget. For many Australians, the renovation report is the perfect start to any building project.

Robert Caulfield, Managing Director
Archicentre Limited



About Archicentre

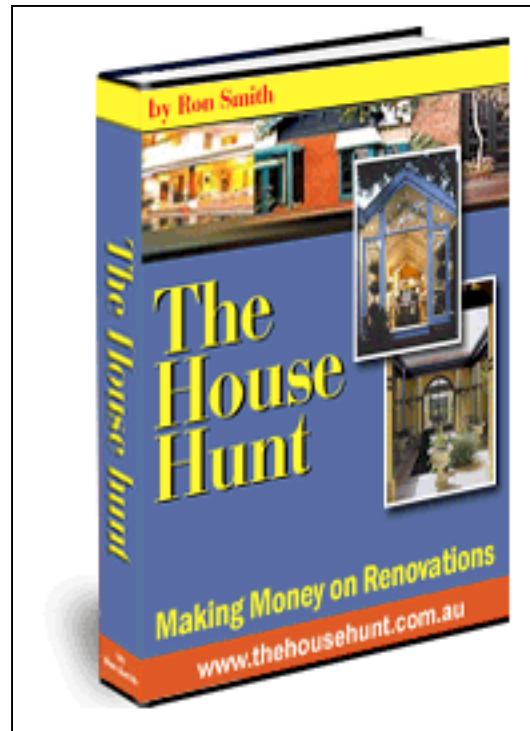
Archicentre, the home advisory service of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects is Australia's largest supplier of pre-purchase inspection and design reports in Australia with a network of 900 architects across Australia. Over the past twenty two years Archicentre has carried out hundreds of thousands of inspections and reports for home buyers and renovators.

Executive Summary

Overview

Top Ten Trends

Costs



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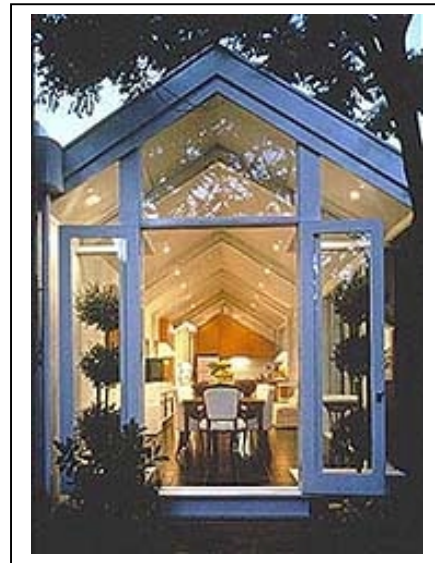
Renovation Trends 2002: Stepping into the light

Overview Comparing State Trends

After years of living in the dark, Australians are stepping into the light. In a recent study conducted by Archicentre, the Housing Division of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, the majority of home improvers are moving away from the dark bungalows of the past in exchange for sunny, indoor-outdoor lifestyles.

“With this report, we have found that the average Australian home improver has three significant renovation demands, says John Barker, Archicentre State Manager of Victoria, “one, they want an open-plan; two, they want plenty of natural lighting; and three, a casual living area that integrates well with the garden”.

The study, entitled Archicentre Renovation Trends 2002, was conducted on 60 architects across the country. By asking architects a series of questions relating to client needs and taste, the study looked to identify current renovation trends in Australia. Some of the questions include, “Describe a typical renovation?” or “What is currently in fashion?” The popular responses covered everything from home offices to more climate-specific trends like the disproportionate amount of decking needed in Queensland. The data from the study was compiled from Archicentre Renovation Reports. Archicentre completes over 2,000 design reports annually in Australia.



A major motivation behind the contemporary renovation is the weather. Australian homeowners simply want more of it. In many ways this is a bold response to tradition. Heritage homes were once designed to suit the street facade, not the climate. "Many older homes tend to be old and dark, gloomy and cold," says Christine Teichert, Archicentre State Manager in South Australia. "People want to make them bright, light and open".

This modern outlook represents a significant departure from the past when the interiors were segregated and the windows served a minimal function. The idea was to keep the weather out. Families saw the home as a private, insular world. Since then, needs have radically changed, says Ms. Teichert. "We are moving away from the early part of last century, today's family units tend to be more social and interactive with the outdoors", says Ms. Teichert. The contemporary home renovation has become a way for people to bring sunny weather into the house.

"In Perth, the sun shines 265 days a year", says Gerard Siero, State Manager of Archicentre WA, "so renovators are prepared to fork out big dollars to capture even that last bit of afternoon sun.

Throughout Western Australia, north-facing windows turn up everywhere. With all this glazing, homes need sun protection, so architects have adopted smart landscaping techniques to soften the effect. Deciduous trees and solar verandahs are a prime example."



The weather pattern certainly drives design in Queensland and South Australia. Both states request outdoor decking with café-style doors that fold out and bring the indoors outside and the outdoors inside. David Lawrence, State Manager of Archicentre NSW, says people who live near Sydney Harbour will go to great lengths to secure a Harbour view, although he is reluctant to estimate what it's worth. "There's little doubt that a glimpse of water or coastline would add a significant premium on a residence", says Mr. Lawrence.

In Queensland, the hot weather dictates housing styles, and architects place a strong emphasis on the need to stay cool. With many residents spending the majority of their time outside, it is little surprise that outdoor decking and entertaining areas are a standard feature. Most clients want an indoor/ outdoor area with minimum thresholds. In the last half of the twentieth century, the lifestyles became more casual and people have longed for a greater connection to external areas. Extra-wide doors are the go and the bi-fold remains the most popular.

Resourceful design suggestions are also encouraged, as long as they help minimise the heat. A unique design trend in Queensland is raising the lightweight Queenslander in order to build a living or sleeping area below. “Although these areas may in some cases lack windows for daylight and cross ventilation,” says Ron Tanton, State Manager of Archicentre Queensland, “they don’t encroach on the garden, and are usually the coolest part of the house during summer”.

For Australians, a new kitchen continues to be the highest priority on the renovation wish-list. This indicates that project-built kitchens rarely meet personal needs. It also suggests that women are still the big decision-maker. According to Archicentre architects, the people’s choice is an open plan with a separate area for cooking and informal dining.



The open-plan outlook illustrates just how much the modern kitchen has changed. In the past, the kitchen was banished from the rest of the house, and in some social circles, the exclusive domain of servants. Today, with the stop-and-go lifestyles of many professionals, the kitchen is more accessible and often serves as the centre of activity, or the pivot for the newly-renovated areas and the old living areas. Many people use a long island bench to separate these two areas. Meanwhile, an extra bench can offer nice relief when people gather in the kitchen during dinner parties. The hosts have the option to use one island for preparing food and the other as a cocktail bar.

Another popular facet of the modern home renovation is the home office. In fact, the formal dining room is out and the home office is in. The home office no longer has to be that computer desk with three legs behind the couch in the lounge room. In Sydney, home offices have elevated to a certain standard, as a result of traffic problems and improved technology. As more people conduct business from home, they are looking to create big impressions. It’s not unusual for the former formal dining room to become the current home office. Mr. Lawrence says a harbour view from an office window could be that little extra that seals an important business transaction.

In the arena of style, Archicentre architects recommend a minimalist look for its simplicity and timelessness. If tastefully chosen, colours can add investment value. “I tell my clients that as a decorating philosophy, use simple finishes and colours that can be modified with little hassle, says Ms. Teichert. "A rooster-themed kitchen does not appeal to everyone".

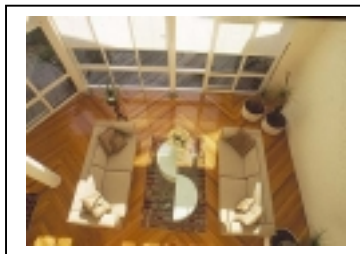
Capital gain primarily takes place in the established suburbs. “Many older properties are missing modern facilities and a sensible renovation can greatly improve the comfort and value of a home,” says Mr. Barker. “In the outer suburbs, most of the homes are part of a recent development and have a newer quality. It’s less common for buyers to pay extra for a renovated home, when they can buy something new”.



Although renovations are more of an inner city endeavour, many people still renovate in the country. But if you are looking to capitalise, says John Barker, be aware that property value increases a little slower in country areas. “As a rule of thumb, home owners should not spend more than 50 percent of their home’s value on a renovation,” says Mr. Barker. “In so doing, homeowners will have reasonable expectations on getting their money back in five or ten years, when they decide they want to live somewhere else”.

Despite remarkable jumps in house prices over the last couple years, most Australians continue to find the pulse of the city very alluring. And with property values showing little signs of abating, Mr. Lawrence sees regional centres like Newcastle becoming more of a growing force. “After awhile, the city can act like a pressure cooker, forcing people to escape the noise and pollution of a city in exchange for a more relaxing way of life”.





How much is the renovation going to cost?

Western Australia

Renovators can spend up to \$100,000 on a new family room extension, plus a master with an ensuite. For between \$150,000 - \$300,000, a new indoor and outdoor living arrangement can be achieved.

South Australia

For \$90,000 - \$120,000 South Australians will get a kitchen, bathroom, family room and laundry.

Queensland

An average renovation will cost \$120,000 – \$200,000. Anything beyond this figure will be an exceptional standard.

New South Wales

The cost of a renovation can vary from \$1000-\$3000 per square metre. Between \$150,000 - \$200,000, a renovation might include a family room, ensuite, bedroom, kitchen.

Victoria

For \$150,000, Victorians can have a new family room, extra study, plus an updated kitchen.

Tasmania

A renovation will cost between \$100,000 - \$150,000.

STATE BY STATE, THE COST OF A RENOVATION

Looking around the country, the average price of a renovation really depends on three factors: 1) where you live; 2) local market conditions; and 3) the individual builder's workload. Keep in mind, market conditions tend to change rapidly. Using Sydney as the gauge, this is how the rest of the country compares. The approximate cost of a renovation:

- Melbourne, 15% less.
- Darwin, 10% less.
- Brisbane, 20% less.
- Adelaide, 25% less.
- Canberra, 15% less.
- Hobart, 20% less.
- Perth, 20% less

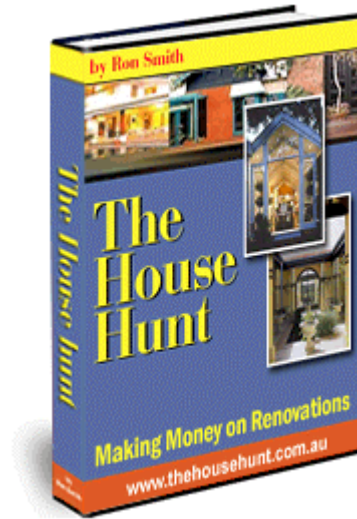


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Free eBook for Renovators

Available at <http://www.archicentre.com.au/>



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NATIONAL TOP 10 RENOVATION TRENDS

01. Kitchen and bathroom: No surprise here, since these areas often age the fastest. Versatility has its place in our fast-paced lives and many remodeled kitchens will incorporate laundry facilities. Today's kitchen also serves as the pivot between an open-plan living area and the next item on the wish list, the outdoor living area.
02. Indoor/outdoor living area: An essential feature of the Australian barbeque lifestyle. The living areas must connect with the garden and the indoors, the smoother the integration the better. Wall-size glass doors that fold out and open up, are effective in blurring the distinction between indoors and outdoors.
03. Improved site orientation: Just being outdoors is not enough, Australians want a great northerly aspect so they can bask in the sun all afternoon.
04. Sun protection: Verandas, pergolas and deciduous trees keep the house cool in summer and allow us to bask in the sun safely.
05. More windows and skylights: Australians, it seems, can never have enough natural light streaming indoors.
06. En suite: If the house is missing an en suite, the matter is swiftly resolved. Excellent for improving capital.
07. Home office: As technology allows us to be more self-sufficient, more people are choosing to work from home.
08. Energy-efficient design: Public announcements have helped spread an awareness.
09. Rumpus rooms: A private kids leisure area near the bedroom. Also used as study or TV area.
10. Parent's retreat: Private parent's leisure area near master bedroom. Also used as guest bedroom.

SNAPSHOTS: QUEENSLAND RENOVATION TRENDS

- Decking: A climactic essential.
- Raising up and building under: Lightweight building materials make Queenslanders easy to raise in order to build a living or sleeping area below. The new living area maintains the garden, and keeps cool during summer.
- A walkway that leads from the existing house to a new outdoor pavilion. The walkway gives the architect some latitude to design an interesting outdoor pavilion.

SNAPSHOT: WESTERN AUSTRALIA RENOVATION TRENDS

- Improved site orientation with north-facing windows
- Modern outdoor living areas that replace tacky lean-to additions from the 1960-70s
- Converting formal areas into bedrooms and home offices
- Master bedroom with walk-in-robe and en suite

SNAPSHOT: NEW SOUTH WALES RENOVATION TRENDS

- Modern outdoor living areas to replace lean-to additions from the 1960-70s
- Two or three extra bedrooms to support a growing family.
- The home office: An efficient solution to Sydney traffic.
- Master bedroom plus en suite, walk-in-robos.
- Granny flats are popular for elderly family members or twenty-something children.

SNAPSHOTS: MELBOURNE RENOVATION TRENDS

- New kitchen with an open-plan living area.
- Open living spaces with designated zones for study or games
- More storage
- Study area

SNAPSHOTS: TASMANIAN RENOVATION TRENDS

- Older homes need new kitchen, bathrooms and laundry facility.
- Using modern design, old, dark and gloomy houses become light, bright and open.
- Upgrade services: Every ten years home owners want a new kitchen, bathroom and laundry facilities
- Sun rooms growing in popularity
- Solar heating

SOUTH AUSTRALIA RENOVATION TRENDS

- Casual living spaces
- Abundance of natural lighting
- Modern outdoor living areas to replace lean-to additions from the 1960-70s
- Garages: Very few older homes have garages so home improvers want them.
- Improved site orientation with north-facing windows

WHAT'S IN FASHION

- The concept of warehouse living: Large open-plan and continuous spaces.
- Minimal furnishings and soft lighting produce a desirable ambience.
- Bi-fold doors help blur the distinctions between indoors and outdoors.
- Relaxed dining and living
- Low-maintenance finishes: timber floorboards and other organic, low-maintenance materials
- Natural lighting: more windows and skylights
- Multi-purpose rooms: kitchen/laundry, guest room/home office, etc.
- Bush gardens

WHAT'S NOT IN FASHION

- Wasted space
- Walls - dark closed-in rooms
- Carpets
- Flowery, high-maintenance gardens

WHAT'S OPTIONAL

- Formal dining and living

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