

use of wood



Built-in character

As an accent piece or used more abundantly, wood can lift a design beyond the expected



**Architect:** Nic Owen, RAIA,  
Nic Owen Architects, (Carlton, Vic)  
**Builder:** KleeV Homes  
**Kitchen manufacturer:** Cabinet  
Furniture Shop  
**Oven and cooktop:** Smeg  
**Ventilation:** Smeg  
**Refrigeration:** Fisher & Paykel fully  
integrated  
**Dishwasher:** Asko  
**Splashback:** Glass  
**Cabinetry:** Two-pak paint finish on hoop  
pine and blackbean plywood  
**Benchtops:** Persia Silken by  
SmartStone  
**Flooring:** Blackbutt  
**Wall coverings:** Resene; hoop pine  
**Blinds:** Shades Hawthorne  
**Lighting:** Richmond Lighting  
**Kitchen sink:** Abey  
**Taps:** OZ117/T2 CR by Teknobil  
from Reece

**Story by** Justin Foote  
**Photography by** Andrew Ashton

# Grain of truth

Strength, beauty and durability - it's no wonder wood has been a sought-after building material for thousands of years

**Preceding pages:** A variety of timbers was used in this renovation by architect Nic Owen to blend the modern extension with the historic Victorian structure.

**Above:** The mix of high gloss through to matt finishes creates a sleek, contemporary space. Rich wood grains add visual interest and warmth.

**Every year, new and improved materials find their way onto the market.** Designed to provide better insulation, speed up construction, or be kinder to the environment, these materials all offer a common aesthetic – their ability to resemble wood.

But when architect Nic Owen was asked to design a modern, yet sympathetic, extension to a Victorian cottage, he chose the traditional, natural material.

“Externally we used a lot of timber to tie in with the original structure, but also as a way of softening the modernist additions,” says Owen.

“Internally, timber was used to delineate areas within the large open-plan kitchen and family space, as well as to add visual warmth.”

The homeowners chose hoop pine, blackbutt and blackbean timbers for the kitchen and living area, as these feature throughout the house, and again it adds cohesion to the project.

“The meals area is contained within a space that projects from the rest of the house,” says Owen. “The hoop-pine ceiling has been used as a linking device between the external decked area and this meals area.”

Hoop pine was then used for the kitchen

where the ceiling height was further lowered to create an intimate working environment.

“We’ve offset the use of timber with a two-pak painted finish on the cabinetry, which was deliberately made without handles to continue the sleek, ageless feel of the space,” says Owen.

“This is the strength of this design – using timber to pay respect to the original Victorian structure, while providing a timeless backdrop that will have relevance for years to come.”

[View more images of this project online at Trendsideas.com/go/24011](https://www.trendsideas.com/go/24011)



**Above:** Owen chose handle-free joinery for the kitchen cabinetry to maintain the crisp aesthetic, but also as a means of giving the kitchen an ageless relevance.

**Left:** Blackbean on the peninsula front provides further visual texture, juxtaposing the painted finish on the cabinetry.