

RIGHT Black beauty: the black granite hearth adds some extra pizzazz to the glazed fireplace. White Rorstrand vase, \$182, bowl, \$149, both funkis Swedish Forms. Red handblown

vase, \$445, EmpireLoft. Decanter, \$290, Basic Essentials. Perfume bottle, \$29.95, Ruby Star Traders. **OPPOSITE** Shane chose an elegant chandelier to complement the original ceiling rose.



royal treatment

Forget serious reconstruction – a good makeover can turn even the most drab Victorian into a regal beauty

WORDS CHRIS PEARSON PHOTOGRAPHY GEORGIA MOXHAM STYLING MIA ASKER

Faced with a promising period room that's begging for a makeover? Here's how to use its original features as the starting point for some inspired decorating, with no structural changes required.

When Shane McLucas bought this Victorian Sydney terrace, the lounge was a woeful sight. Years of neglect had taken their toll – damp had seeped up through the walls, the ceiling was cracked and the floor was covered in drab Berber carpet. A black grill covered the fireplace, which was painted a sludgy mission brown.

But the room was far from a lost cause. "We really loved the openness of the room and the big windows," says Shane. "We wanted to make it look grand, but

liveable, at the same time." So up came the carpets, the paint was scraped off the walls and fans were used to dry out the plaster. The damp sections were cut out of the walls and the ceiling cracks filled up.

Shane laid new blackbutt flooring on top of the existing floorboards, and squeezed insulation batts in between for sound-proofing (a clever solution for those who want timber floors in apartments – this room is on the first floor). He stained the boards in Watty! Dark Wenge, which were then sealed to bring out the grain. The rich, deep colour visually anchors the furniture.

Instead of highlighting the fireplace, Shane did as the French do in their

châteaux and painted it black, then glazed it for a slick look using Porter's two-process French Glaze – which, along with the new granite hearth from Granite and Marble Works, makes it a cinch to team with the furniture and accessories featured here. Rather than contrasting with the contemporary pieces, the period details, such as the ceiling rose and the fireplace, blend in seamlessly.

But the real pièce de resistance is the Marilyn chandelier, \$1195 from Special Lights on Crown. It casts a whole new light on those chic chairs, stylish end tables and the gorgeous wool rug.

Our final verdict on this elegant room? *C'est magnifique!* **hb**

THIS PAGE In with the new, out with the mould: Carlotta leather armchairs, \$2440 each, Lhasa armchairs, \$2290 each, both Fanuli Furniture. Nelson end tables, small \$710, large \$910, both Spence & Lyda. Rya rug, \$1699, Designer Rugs. Shelf cube tower, \$2500, Orson & Blake. Margaret Grafton copper grid (above fireplace), \$825, Julie Ryder degeneration artwork, from \$2200, both Planet Furniture. Cushions, from \$39.95, Ruby Star Traders. For stockists see page 150

