

HOME TATURA VIC

Soft, romantic old English tea roses cascade over the wall of the shed.  
FACING PAGE Emily McEachern does the rounds of the property with her loyal blue heelers, Max and Mimi, in tow.



*deep roots*

A PASSION FOR FARMING AND HORTICULTURE TRACES BACK ALMOST A CENTURY AT THE FARMSTEAD TATURA IN VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY.

WORDS JESSICA BELLEF PHOTOGRAPHY MARNIE HAWSON  
STYLING BELLE HEMMING BRIGHT







**CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT** Emily opts for second-hand furnishings; the shed houses all the essentials; Max and Mimi; white peaches; petals flank the path; fragrant favourites; Emily prunes the roses; David Austin Abraham Darby roses. **FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT** Emily and Jim with their fur babies; the dining area in the guest quarters – painted in Dulux Design Concrete Effect – has a setting from Provincial Home Living, and prints by Kara Rosenlund; “Prune roses hard and give them lots of nourishment,” advises Emily.



THE FARMSTEAD TATURA sits at the end of a long, dusty road hugged by waving sheets of golden wheat. On approach, the property is awash with cushiony lawn, tumbling roses and the unmistakable character of a well-cared-for Californian bungalow. The home sits on 28 hectares of farmland located two hours’ drive north of Melbourne in the Goulburn Valley – the traditional lands of the Yorta Yorta and Taungurung peoples.

It’s the home of Jim Ferguson, 39, and Emily McEachern, 38, Jim’s seven-year-old daughter, Hayley, their blue heelers, Max and Mimi, and a sly cat named Gary – but Jim’s connection to the property echoes back through his family history.

Jim’s grandfather built the bungalow in 1928. Over the decades, the Fergusons have run grazing stock, lucerne crops and orchards on the surrounding land. “Jim is the third ‘James Ferguson’ to live here,” Emily says. “His father passed away suddenly from a heart attack in 1998, so he grew up here with his mum and four older sisters.”

Save for a short stint living elsewhere in his 20s, Jim has always called the farmstead home. Emily moved in during 2015, a few years after meeting Jim. “I grew up in western Victoria, as the sixth generation on our family’s cattle farm,” she says. “We also had a beautiful old homestead, surrounded by trees and lawn. Jim’s house instantly felt like home.” >





**ABOUT THE HOUSE:**

- The exterior is painted in Dulux Beige Royal Half, with Dulux Dune on the front door, window trims and spouting. The kitchen joinery was refreshed with coats of Blue Pewter by Porter's Paints.
- The furniture and decor add to the meaningful narrative. "I love shopping second-hand, and a lot of the pieces in our home are family treasures that Jim or I have inherited," Emily says.
- "A favourite rose? How can I possibly choose!" says Emily. "I do adore David Austin Roses – my favourites being Pat Austin, Olivia and Jude the Obscure."
- Jim's father built the beautiful stone fireplace in the courtyard. "Di went through a stage of loving Tuscany, so they re-created that look using rocks from the farm," Emily explains.
- The wallpaper and plasterwork in the front half of the home are original. "It's all horsehair plaster and needs to be treated with care. When we updated the wiring, the electrician's knee went through the roof because it's just so soft," Emily says.

"There's something quite amazing about the bare bones of winter, and knowing what those bones will turn into come spring," says Emily of her plantings. "Then comes the excitement of spring, and I just can't handle those moments!"







CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT A pencil pine and an old Chinese elm; climbing Pierre de Ronsard roses; Emily updated the blinds in the bathroom with a scalloped style from Wyndham Decor; cut flowers adorn every room; Jim at work; "Di replaced the window shades in the early '70s to keep in with the original feel of the farmhouse," says Emily; Gary naps happily on the soft linen. **FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT** The hall table came from Emily's family home, while the Hereford hide rug was gifted to her parents on their wedding day. **A print by Kara Rosenlund hangs above McEachern farm signage; the kitchen has light fittings by Schots Home Emporium and a floating shelf from The Society Inc.; the stone, Tuscan-style fireplace in the courtyard.**



The farmstead represents a timeline of Jim's family. "Each generation has added something," Emily explains. She and Jim have made only light interventions on the interiors, with fresh paint and a few key changes in the kitchen, including new pendant lights, the addition of open shelves and a splash of pewter-blue paint.

They've also updated the guest quarters in the 1980s extension by refreshing the bathroom and layout. However, the rooms at the front of the home remain as Jim's grandfather built them almost a century ago, right down to the horsehair plaster and fragile wallpaper. "It feels like the more intimate part of the house, the quieter end," Emily muses. "Jim grew up in these rooms."

The home's meaningful narrative flows through the garden, where the couple have made their most significant contribution to the story. "Jim's mother is a brilliant gardener, and so was his grandmother," says Emily. "When Jim took over the home, he stripped the garden back to just the lawn and trees because he didn't have time for the maintenance. I was introduced into the fold and immediately said, 'Oh wow, we should just make a massive garden.'" His reply was, 'Oh God!'" With a bit of gentle arm-twisting, Jim came around to the idea.

The couple reinstated the original beds and carved new ones among the sheds and established trees. Jim has built arbours and installed irrigation, while Emily's carefully selected plantings complement the freshly painted home. >





“What I wanted to create was something pretty out of each window,” she says. “Mum and Dad hadn’t been here for six months, and they visited recently and said, ‘Em, every which way you look now, it’s just beautiful.’”

As a heartwarming aside, working on the garden has strengthened Emily’s bond with Jim’s mother, Di, who lives nearby and is a wellspring of botanical knowledge.

The farmstead’s paddocks are leased out to a cattle farmer while the couple works on their new water haulage business. Emily also runs a B&B in the guest quarters, and the manicured grounds provide the setting for weddings and events. When people visit The Farmstead Tatura, they are often surprised by the oasis that greets them after they’ve driven through stretches of monotonous farmland.

“Our home is beautiful and hugely meaningful,” says Emily. “Jim is very attached to this land, especially because he lost his dad at such a tender age. We’re so happy that we are making the people before us proud.”

*To book your stay, visit [thefarmsteadtatura.com.au](http://thefarmsteadtatura.com.au)*



Emily loves the delicate, old-fashioned wallpaper in the master bedroom, which features a bed frame from Provincial Home Living. The white bedside drawers were part of a set that was gifted to Jim’s sister. **FACING PAGE** Emily has created plenty of cosy spaces for relaxation and downtime.

“Our home is beautiful and hugely meaningful... We’re so happy that we are making the people before us proud.”

