

On Victoria's Mornington Peninsula, where wind-bent Moonah trees give way to sweeping views across Bass Strait and the distant Melbourne skyline, Norfolk Residence engages the landscape with an alluring confidence.

# Immersive

# Retreat

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DESIGNED BY AUSTRALIAN-BASED practice Travis Walton, a firm that is expanding into New Zealand, the home resists the expected language of coastal architecture — no sprawling glass pavilion, no overt gestures towards beachside informality. Instead, it offers something heavier and more immersive: a home embedded within the landscape rather than simply positioned before it.

Named after the site's century-old Norfolk pines, the house is anchored by a substantial off-form concrete podium partially buried into the grassy knoll, while the primary living spaces hover above within the tree canopy. This reverse-living arrangement allows the upper level to open carefully towards multiple outlooks — a nearby golf course, the coastline, the shifting horizon, and Melbourne's skyline — while maintaining a sense of enclosure and privacy. The result is both expansive and deeply sheltered.

There is a muscularity to the architecture. Board-marked concrete echoes the weathered textures of the Mornington Peninsula coastline, while deep-set openings temper sunlight and shadow with precision. Inside, subtle shifts in floor level create a measured progression through the home, heightening awareness of the landscape beyond.

At the centre, an extraordinary sculptural staircase rises through the house like a folded ribbon of concrete — a feat of engineering and craft realised through close collaboration between architect, builder and engineer.

"It is both sculptural and highly functional, drawing reflected light into the lower-level entry and guest accommodation while marking the house with a strong sense of craft," Australian architect Travis Walton explains.







The interiors were developed in response to the clients' brief, which, as Travis explains it, was for "a home with the mood and intimacy of a private hotel." Travertine, oxidised metals, stained timber, and patinaed brass introduce richness, creating spaces that feel tactile, robust, and enduring. The decor, by Simone Haag, at once responds to and contrasts with the architecture's raw, elemental qualities. Layers of softness and depth across furniture and art coalesce into deeply atmospheric compositions.

Outside, the landscape by Nathan Burkett extends the architecture into the site itself, weaving native planting through pathways and terraces, while the infinity pool and terrace extend the upper level living into the canopy, creating the sense of floating within the landscape rather than sitting above it.

This home's success lies in this tension between solidity and suspension, protection and openness. It is a coastal house that avoids romanticising its setting, choosing instead to engage directly with terrain — intoxicating in both its subtle gestures and robust sense of enclosure. 📍

