



# Little shop catches you out of the Blu

Tucked away, it's easy to miss but hard to forget, writes JANE EVANS

**BLINK** and you will miss Blu Peter. Set back a little from Stirling Highway in North Fremantle, the new furniture and homewares concept store is easy to drive past, but hard to forget once you have found it.

South African native Adri-Ann Brown set up shop in the charming renovated stone cottage just last month, with five rooms to house her diverse collection of furniture and homewares from Africa, the Philippines, Mexico, and Western Australia.

"I had had my eye on it for a while," she admits of the building, which with its high ceilings, large sash windows and timber floors is a perfect fit for the mix of textural, contemporary, earthy and organic pieces she stocks.

Adri-Ann and husband Rob, a builder, moved to Perth from Johannesburg in 2005 with their daughter Camdyn.

Before coming to Australia, Adri-Ann worked in the chemical industry and dabbled with design on the side, having grown up with an architect father and interior design mother.

Several years ago, Adri-Ann and Rob bought a beach house, which they rent out in Gnarabup (just outside Margaret River) – also called Blu Peter – and filled it with eclectic furnishings reflective of the concept's store style.

"The key is mixing modern with a few old, earthy pieces," she said.

"An interior that's too matching tires easily," she said.

As for the name, Blu Peter was derived from a beachside tavern in Cape Town where one afternoon early on in their relationship, Rob assertively told Adri-Ann "I'm going to marry you."

More than 15 years later, the name still has resonance for the couple.



Blu Peter owner Adri-Ann Brown in her renovated stone cottage.

Adri-Ann also operates her interiors consultancy business, Red Brown Design, out of the North Fremantle store.

From African headdress wall hangings to sculptured coffee tables, Blu Peter's range of decorator pieces is diverse.

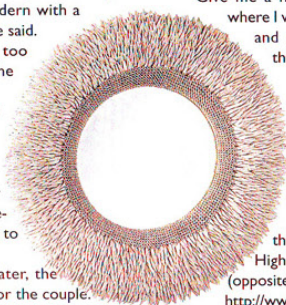
So diverse in fact, Adri-Ann says merchandising the store can be problematic.

"Give me a house and I know exactly where I want things but in here, I um and ah for ages about where things look best," she laughs.

It is a vast shop to fill but despite her doubts, Adri-Ann has created a stunning, effortless showroom in an Empire Homewares-meets-Africa kind of way.

Blu Peter officially opens this Thursday. Visit 100 Stirling Highway, North Fremantle

(opposite the train station) or <http://www.blupeter.com.au/> ■



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