

# DIVIDE & CONQUER

A LONG-TERM PLAN REAPS REWARDS FOR AN AUCKLAND COUPLE WHO BUILT THEIR DREAM HOME BY THE OCEAN





WORDS // JOHN WILLIAMS PHOTOGRAPHY // JAMIE COBEL

As the old adage goes, good things come to those who wait. However, it continues to say that even better things happen to those who work for it. And the latter is certainly true for Aucklanders Martin and Mez Hopkins when it came to achieving their goal of owning an architect-designed home on a prime piece of Coromandel coastline.

Thirteen years ago, while holidaying in Pauanui, the couple came across a section of land for sale three doors down from where they were staying. “We loved the location and thought “wouldn’t it be nice” — as you do,” says Martin. “Long story short, we ended up doing a deal on it, although we couldn’t really afford it.”

Their first thought was to develop it, with the ultimate goal of subdividing the site into four and selling back three sections to finance their home on the beachfront. A council moratorium on subdividing — due to insufficient services in the area — meant they had to wait four years until the local council built a new sewerage system.

“Then came the GFC and beachfront land took a hit, so it wasn’t a great time to sell,” says Martin. “We decided to build on the second site in from the road and we sold that. Soon after, someone bought the section closest to the road.”

It was Martin and Mez’s first experience building a new home. They understood the limitations of building from a plan, but it gave them the confidence to take on an architect to design their dream home on the front section.

“Without a house on the front section, it was difficult to sell the section behind it, so we pulled the trigger on our house,” says Martin. “We wanted all four homes to have views, so we established view corridors on the plans and ensured the individual footprints stepped back.”

“We felt it was the right thing to do,” continues Mez. “It’s a beautiful place and we thought the view should be enjoyed by everyone. That’s why we limited our design to a single level — to make it fit into the overall plan.”

When it came to the design brief for their

#### DETAILS

HOUSE COROMANDEL COASTAL  
LOCATION PAUANUI, NEW ZEALAND

**ABOVE** The home meshes into the surrounding landscape with ease  
**OPPOSITE** Stunning views can be lazily enjoyed





THE CONCRETE ISN'T JUST FOR LOOKS — THE WALLS AND FLOOR ACT AS HEAT SINKS THAT HELP RADIATE WARMTH CAPTURED FROM THE SUN AND THE HYDRONIC UNDERFLOOR HEATING



Red easy chairs brighten up the neutral space



“IT’S A BEAUTIFUL PLACE AND WE THOUGHT THE VIEW SHOULD BE ENJOYED BY EVERYONE”  
- MEZ HOPKINS

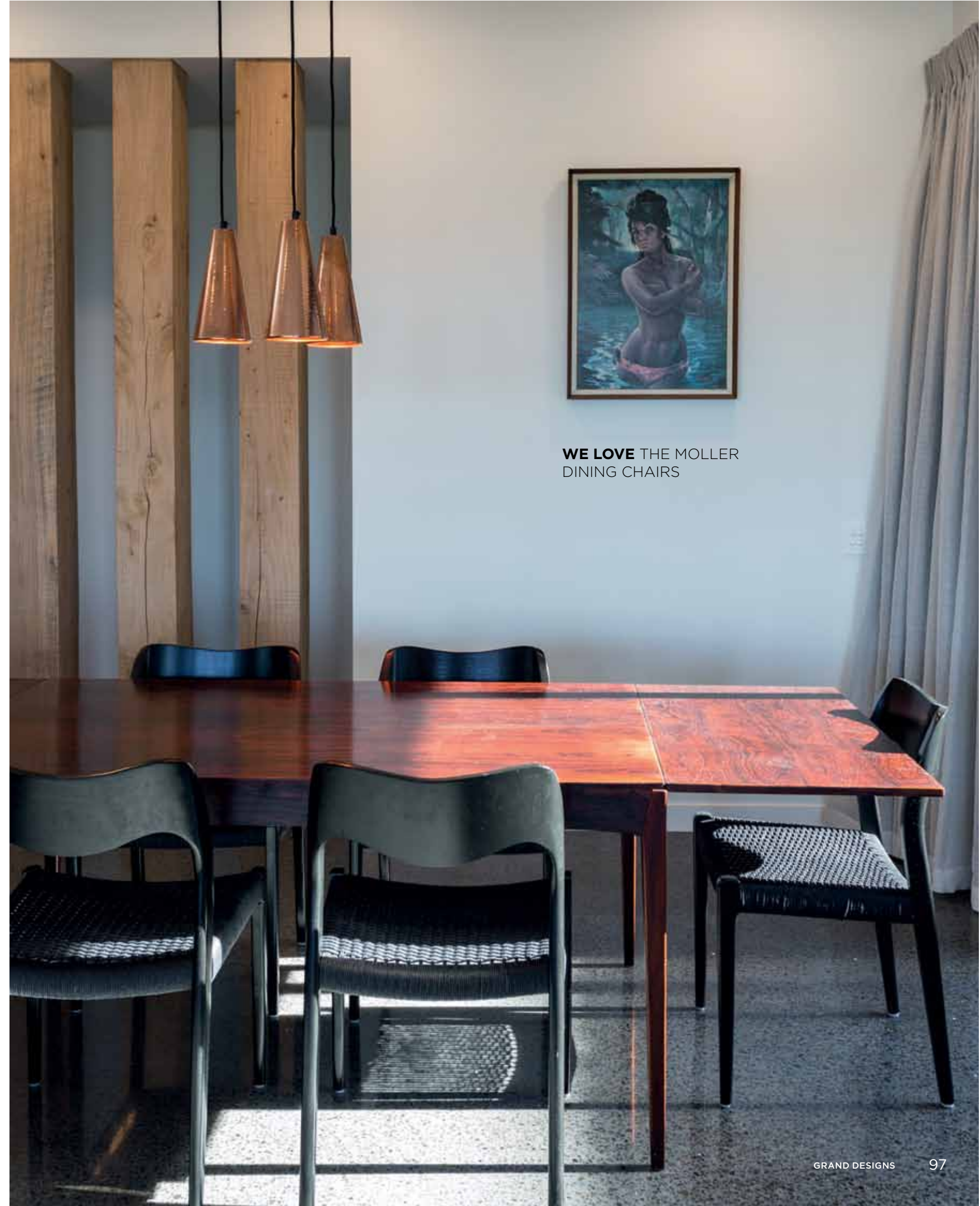


house, the Hopkins wanted something that looked solid and would blend into the background. “We really like concrete and wanted a slightly industrial look,” says Martin. “We also like mid-century, so wanted that look in the interiors,” adds Mez.

Their choice of architect was Auckland-based Darren Jessop, who has plenty of experience designing beachfront homes in the area. “I’d seen some of his work and I thought he would be able to visualise what we wanted,” says Mez. “We’d had some initial plans drawn up by a local architect and we wanted Darren to refine the basic floor plan,” adds Martin.

The house comprises garaging and a bedroom wing at the rear, leaving the master suite and living areas to take centre stage. A black-tiled lap pool with a built-in spa is located on the north-western boundary. Although Darren’s clients wanted a low, sleek house, they didn’t want a simple box. “We started with a box,” says Darren. “Then we raised parts of it and lowered others to break it up and give it some visual interest. We maximised the site and pushed the house right to the back of it. This allowed us to put a series of large decks on the front, taking advantage of those great ocean views.”

As per the Hopkins’ request, the heart of the house is concrete, poured in-situ as the floor and a series of fins. It’s topped



**WE LOVE** THE MOLLER DINING CHAIRS





**PROJECT TEAM**  
**Architect** Darren Jessop and Karl Newby, Jessop Architects  
([jessoparchitects.co.nz](http://jessoparchitects.co.nz))  
**Builder** Grant Leen, Pauanui Builders  
([pauanuibuilders@gmail.com](mailto:pauanuibuilders@gmail.com))

**LEFT** A patterned bedspread is in line with the home's mid-century design  
**LEFT BELOW** The bathroom is warmed with timber elements

**ED'S FAVE** THE BEDROOM WHICH IS BRIMMING WITH NATURAL LIGHT



with a thick, cedar-clad roof that appears to delicately float thanks to a layer of narrow clerestory windows. The master wing appears as a lower timber box attached to the side of the concrete structure.

The concrete isn't just for looks — the walls and floor act as heat sinks that help radiate warmth captured from the sun and the hydronic underfloor heating.

Inside the house, the architect's influence is kept to a minimum, apart from the row of hefty 200mm x 200mm macrocarpa columns that extend from the entrance across the width of the house, visually separating the guest bedroom wing from the open-plan living area.

The interior is heavily influenced by the mid-century aesthetic, to the point where almost all the furnishings and lighting were sourced directly from Northern Europe.

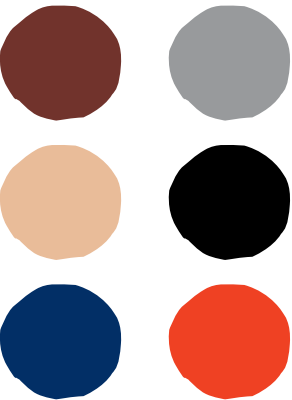
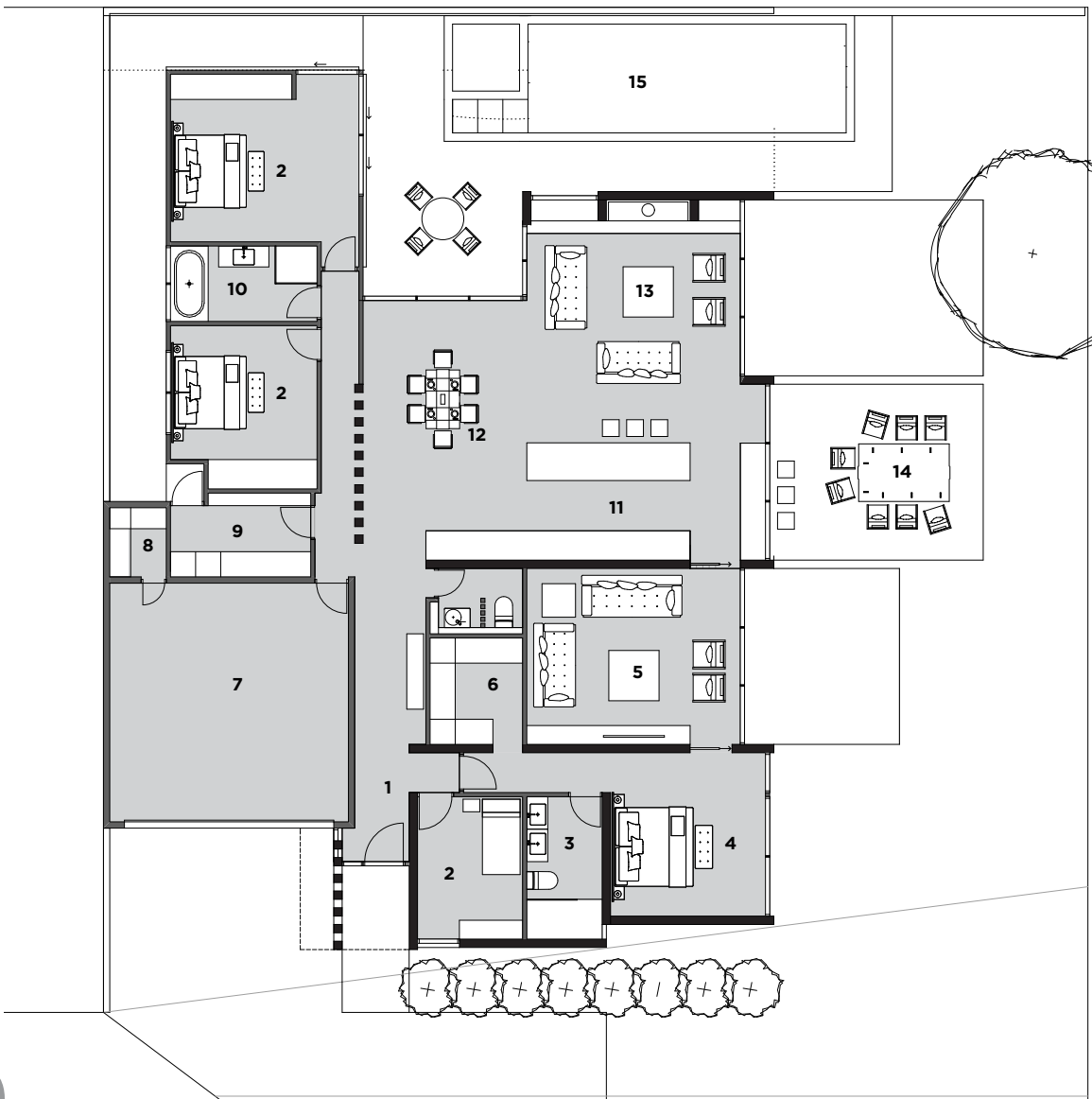
"We went looking for furniture locally, but it was incredibly expensive," says Martin. "We ended up buying most of our furniture and light fittings through online auction houses in Denmark, shipping from a dealer we struck a deal with. When we had enough to fill a container, we shipped it over. Our business is importing and wholesaling, so we had all the contacts and understood the processes needed to make it happen."

Mez and Martin's beach house will, over time, become their full-time home. It has been a long journey, but has the result been worth it? "If you'd asked me back then, would I spend this amount of money to get where we are now? Definitely not," says Martin. "If you ask me today, would I not have this house? Again, definitely not," he laughs. Hindsight is not always a wonderful thing. 🍷

**SERVICES**  
**Kitchen designer** Byrne Design  
([catherine@byrnedesign.co.nz](mailto:catherine@byrnedesign.co.nz))  
**Kitchen manufacturer** Marton Lee  
([martonlee.co.nz](http://martonlee.co.nz))  
**Roof** Peninsula Roofing  
([peninsularoofing.co.nz](http://peninsularoofing.co.nz))  
**Painter** James Malcolm  
**Pool** Mercury Bay Pools  
([mercurybaypools.co.nz](http://mercurybaypools.co.nz))

**FIXTURES & FITTINGS**  
**Cabinets** Melteca ([melteca.co.nz](http://melteca.co.nz))  
**Splashback & shower stall** Image Glass  
([imageglass.co.nz](http://imageglass.co.nz))  
**Window/door joinery** First Aluminium, Whangamata ([firstwindows.co.nz](http://firstwindows.co.nz))  
**Window/door hardware** First Doors, Whangamata and Placemakers  
([firstwindows.co.nz](http://firstwindows.co.nz))  
**Flooring** Ribraft ([firth.co.nz](http://firth.co.nz))  
**Lighting** Tairua Electrical  
([tairuaelectrical.co.nz](http://tairuaelectrical.co.nz))  
**Heating** Champion Heating  
([championheating.co.nz](http://championheating.co.nz))  
**Vanity cabinetry, shower fittings, basin & taps** Robertson Bathware  
([robertson.co.nz](http://robertson.co.nz))  
**Bath** I Bath NZ ([ibath.co.nz](http://ibath.co.nz))  
**HWS** Rheem ([rheem.co.nz](http://rheem.co.nz))  
**Tiles** Spazio Casa ([spaziocasa.co.nz](http://spaziocasa.co.nz))  
**Toilet** Caroma ([caroma.co.nz](http://caroma.co.nz))  
**Fireplace** Living Flame  
([livingflame.co.nz](http://livingflame.co.nz))  
**Blinds & drapes** James Dunlop  
([jamesdunloptextiles.com](http://jamesdunloptextiles.com))  
**Paint** Resene ([resene.co.nz](http://resene.co.nz))

- LEGEND**
- 1 ENTRY
  - 2 BEDROOM
  - 3 ENSUITE
  - 4 MASTER BEDROOM
  - 5 DEN
  - 6 WALK-IN ROBE
  - 7 GARAGE
  - 8 STORE
  - 9 LAUNDRY
  - 10 BATHROOM
  - 11 KITCHEN
  - 12 DINING ROOM
  - 13 LOUNGE ROOM
  - 14 ENTERTAINING
  - 15 POOL



*Colour Palette*

The colour choice for this project is quite masculine. Mahogany, concrete and blond timber are punctuated with red and navy prints in the splashback, wallpaper, bedding and furniture







01



02



03



08

# Get the Look

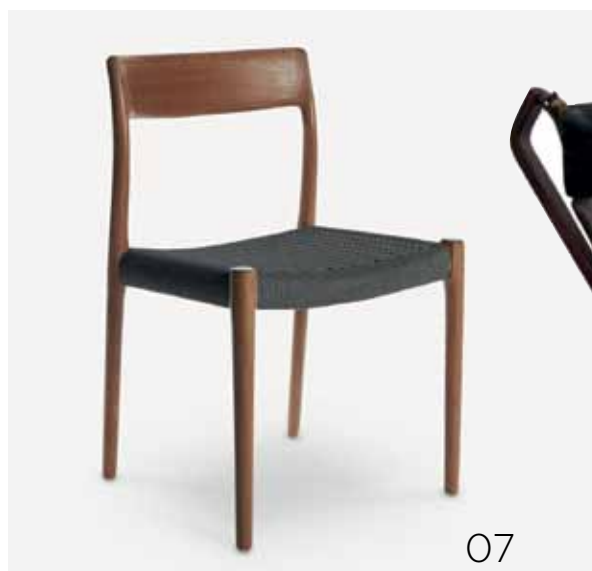
**01:** Copper pendant by Jo Hammerborg for Fog and Morup from [angelucci.net.au](http://angelucci.net.au) **02:** Scion Sula throw from [nz.amara.com](http://nz.amara.com) **03:** Sweet Pea Sea Blue duvet cover by Orla Kiely from [nz.amara.com](http://nz.amara.com) **04:** Serge Mouille Tripod desk lamp from [1stdibs.com](http://1stdibs.com) **05:** Multi Stem cushion, Linear Stem cushion in Duck Egg and Single Bigspot Shadow Flower cushion in Grass Green by Orla Kiely from [nz.amara.com](http://nz.amara.com) **06:** First Edition Sigurd Ressel Falcon chair (pair) from [1stdibs.com](http://1stdibs.com) **07:** Moller 77 chair in walnut timber and black paper cord from [greatdanefurniture.com](http://greatdanefurniture.com) **08:** Moller 26 table from [greatdanefurniture.com](http://greatdanefurniture.com)



04



05



07



06