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INTERVIEW | Natalie Walton

We had the opportunity to chat with the lovely Natalie Walton, stylist, writer and founder of [Imprint House](#) about her new book *This Is Home*, about simple living – how to focus on our values to create authentic homes full of meaning and joy. Natalie travelled across the world, stepping inside more than fifteen homes to meet the people who made them, and discover whether there is some universality to what makes us happy in the spaces we inhabit. We asked Natalie about the importance of everyday rituals in her own life and what simple living means to her.



Photo: Chris Warnes

Can you tell us a bit about *This Is Home*?

In this hyper real technology age, where images rule supreme, our homes have never been more important. They are where we can be ourselves - real and authentic, and create a nurturing environment. So when we design or build the layers that make a home, before we look “out there” for products or solutions, we should always look inside first and consider how we want to feel. When we focus on our values, we can create from a place of authenticity.

Can you talk about the process of writing and creating the book?

I started to write the book before heading overseas to shoot it with photographer Chris Warnes. However, the core ideas took firm shape after speaking with the homeowners. It was important for me to step inside every home, and see if there was some universality to our understanding of what makes a home. I didn't want this to be a “pic search” book so we travelled across four continents and seven countries to find some answers.

How did the idea for *This Is Home* come about?

For the past ten years I've been immersed in the interiors industry. I started out working on an interiors magazine, and was the deputy editor for five years. During this time I also began a career as a stylist. Through my work, I've stepped inside all sorts of spaces, and noticed that some felt more like a home than others. On the surface, there was no obvious link, but when I dug a little deeper, I started to see a pattern of characteristics that unified them. The results are in *This is Home*.



Photo: Chris Warnes

"As a family, we always eat breakfast and dinner together. It is important that we start and finish together, and engage with each other. These meals are the bookmarks around our days".

What does simple living mean to you?

Simple living is about being authentic. When we focus on what is true to our journey and story, all that is superfluous falls away. It is not a look. It's not minimalism. Instead, it's about using our values to form the framework for decision-making in all aspects of our lives.

What makes you happy in your own home?

The simple moments with my family such as when we sit down together for breakfast or lunch on the weekend and are not in a rush to go anywhere afterwards.

Can you talk about what creativity means to you and where you find inspiration?

For me, creativity is about the process. It's often something that's meditative, slightly exhilarating and almost sublime. It happens to me when I am styling an interior, writing a book or crafting with my children. Almost anything can trigger the process, but it is when I take a leap and release expectation and the chatter in my mind, and just be in the moment, that the creativity begins.

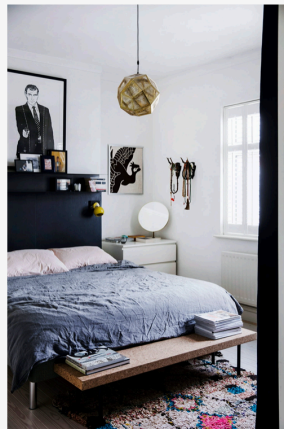


Photo: Chris Warnes

Do you have any rituals that you implement in your everyday life?

Most of my rituals ebb and flow with the seasons, and my needs at different points of my life. During the writing of the book I was meditating daily and doing yoga to help me focus throughout the day. Other rituals I hardly notice because they are something that are just part of my life. As a family, we always eat breakfast and dinner together. It is important that we start and finish together, and engage with each other. These meals are the bookmarks around our days.

Do you have any practical tips or advice on how to add quality/luxury to everyday moments?

There are times when I want to pay respect to the moment or the occasion. At the dinner table, we always decant sauces and condiments into serving bowls. In part, it's practical - so you can properly see what foods are on offer. But it is also about paying respect to family meal time. It is a subtle way of saying, this time is important. We need to slow down and enjoy this moment together. Similarly, I cannot go to sleep in an unmade bed. Almost every morning it is made, although on weekends, it is sometimes a little later in the day. But at some point it is made, because climbing into a made bed is about honouring the importance of sleep.



Photo: Chris Warnes

If you have a moment to yourself, what do you like to do?

If I'm home alone, I enjoy meditating or doing yoga. Other times, I enjoy a long walk. Stretching my body and mind always feels good.

How do you wind down/switch off at the end of the day?

I have night-time showers as it helps make for a smoother morning with the children, and afterwards I try to stop using any technology and finish the evening with a book, or writing in my journal.

This Is Home is available for purchase in our [Melbourne store](#) or online from [Imprint House](#).