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Artichoke — Australia's interiors and design magazine



Texture and tactility
Designing a brand experience
Spaces for silence



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Seen

Melbourne design studio Golden has taken Seen Skin's confident approach to skincare and translated it into a spatial experience rich in texture and tactility.

Skin

Opposite page — In the entry, clients are greeted by a space of contrasting textures and an earthy, calm palette.





Above — The high table used for blending is deliberately located in the front window, playing an integral role in the tenancy’s street presence.

Skin specialist and founder of Seen Skin, Jazmin Camilleri, approached Golden with a clear understanding of her brand’s values and philosophy and her client’s needs. She turned to Golden to use this vision to create a new flagship space, located within an existing Prahran retail tenancy.

Seen Skin is passionate about celebrating healthy but “real” skin. Staff generally don’t wear make-up and they avoid using airbrushed imagery in any of their promotional material. They honour the imperfections of real, human skin to promote realistic goals. While Camilleri wanted the space to similarly embrace imperfection, it also needed to feel slightly sterile. She wanted customers to feel confident that their experience at the clinic would be clean and hygienic.

In response to this, Golden’s approach to the space is restrained and minimal, avoiding anything unnecessarily cosmetic. Respecting the qualities of real skin, it blends raw, tactile surfaces and soft edges with the harder, colder, machine-made finishes needed to create the hygienic environment the brief demanded.

Stainless steel, glass bricks, bright lighting and glossy 2-pac joinery dominate the reception space, creating a visually sanitary environment. The joinery is rational and pragmatic, designed to accommodate the complex storage requirements of the clinic but otherwise presenting as a mute element within the clinic.

A backdrop of a combed render finish offsets the coldness of these materials. This render is the hero of the space. It brings warmth and character to an otherwise clinical environment. The combed texture is decidedly uneven and patchy, giving tribute to the human hand that applied it.

The high bench in the window, reserved for blending personalized skincare, also softens the space. Its curvaceous form and rich terracotta-coloured base are a contrast to the regularity of the 2-pac joinery beside it. The blending table is deliberately located in the front window, playing an integral role in the tenancy’s street presence and giving a sense of theatre.

While light and bright, the colours within the space take on subtly fleshy tones. The joinery is a creamy white, rather than bright white. The textured render is an earthy sand colour. Pinks and golds form the undertone of many of the materials and finishes.

The treatment rooms, bar one, are located upstairs, giving customers a sense of privacy and retreat during their appointments. Although similarly restrained and pragmatic, these spaces are peppered with small but impactful moments of texture, such as the knurled door lever and jute-panelled doors.

Golden has balanced the competing and contradictory goals of blending the imperfect with the clinical; of creating a considered space without tipping toward attention seeking, airbrushed perfection. In applying a reductive approach, inserted with sparing and controlled moments of raw and tactile elements, Golden has captured the spirit of Seen Skin’s brand values. [▲]

“Respecting the qualities of real skin, [the design] blends raw, tactile surfaces and soft edges with the harder, colder, machine-made finishes needed to create the hygienic environment the brief demanded.”



Opposite page — Minimalist open shelving provides a polished display for the clinic's products.

Left — The unique hand-trowelled texture of the rendered walls was a result of a close partnership with the plasterer.

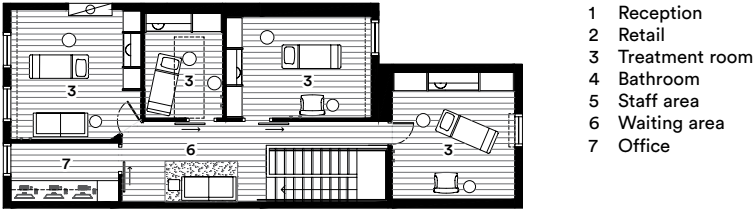
Below — In the treatment rooms, jute wallpaper has been applied to cupboard drawers.



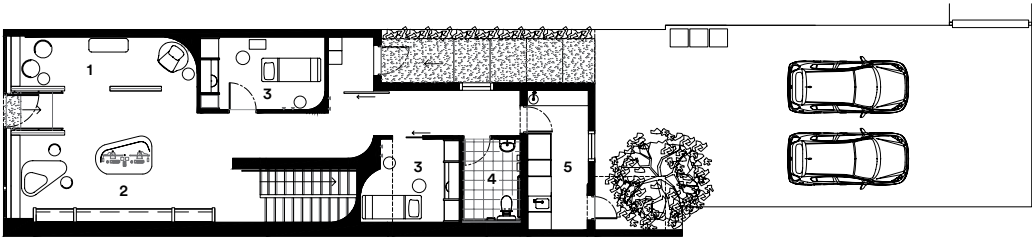
Wellness



Above — Golden’s reductionist approach to this skin clinic honours the client’s ethos of holistic healing.



Seen Skin first floor plan 1:250



Seen Skin ground floor plan 1:250

Project —
Seen Skin
239 High Street
Prahan Vic
seenskin.com.au

Built on the land
of the Boon Wurrung
and Wurundjeri people
of the Kulin nation.

Design practice —
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Project team —
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Mikaela York

Time schedule —
Design, documentation:
5 months
Construction: 3 months

Builder —
S&K Group

Products —
Walls and ceilings:
Rendered walls.
Jute wallpaper from
Kvadrat Maharam.
Glass bricks from
The Glass Block Shop.
Doors: Handles from
Buster & Punch.
Lighting: Pastille Vanity
by Rich Brilliant Willing
from Koda Lighting.
Furniture: Diiva swivel
stool and occasional
chair and Reeno bench
from Grazia & Co.
Joy armchair from
Jardan. Artek side
table from Surrounding.
Terracotta high table
custom-designed by
Golden. Basin from
Studio Bagno.