

Hey, Donna

Donna Hay's favourite childhood game was playing shop. "I think it's because my two older sisters wouldn't play shop with me that I have such a shop yearning," laughs the food author and stylist about her venture into retailing. The Donna Hay shop opens next February in Sydney's glamorous Woollahra, in a restored stone building that first became a general store in 1886. It will be stocked with quirky, handmade treasures collected on overseas book tours or ordered from individual artisans.

"We've ordered ceramics from the UK and US, and I have a girl who knits so it's very much bespoke and quite small quantities. It's been really exciting learning pure retail to back up everything else."

Known for her devotion to baking, Hay recently launched a range of baking kits including chocolate-chunk brownies, triple chocolate and oat and cranberry cookies and three flavours of cupcakes, complete with papers and icing. "There's no nasties, no fake vanilla, and it's high-quality Belgian cocoa." They retail from around \$12.95.

Hay is also designing a line of contemporary homewares for Royal Doulton. In her signature white but with some accent pieces, it will include napery, bakeware, vases and vases and be released mid-2009. "I learnt so much through that design experience," she says. Not that she is abandoning her first love. Her latest cookbook, *No Time to Cook*, with a cleaner design but more "mess" in the photographs, goes on sale this month. And anyone needing a menu idea can call up Hay's recipe archive online (donnahay.com.au).



Setting ideas in concrete

Our fashion pages and cover this month were shot on location at a stunning concrete house designed by Sydney-based architect Louise Nettleton. The house sits at the end of a row of majestic Federation houses in a harbourside suburb of Sydney. There is barely a blade of grass out of place in this blue-chip suburb and the sight of Nettleton's concrete design is something of a shock when you see it, albeit a pleasant one. The house is built on the foundations of a previous home, built in 1917, part of which can be seen in the fashion photograph on page 68 of this issue. According to Nettleton, the owners were adamant the new building be made of concrete. "It's unusual to get clients who have such trust in you," she says. "I haven't had anyone who was prepared to be as adventurous."



The fun type used for our feature headlines this month comes from design store [davidmetnicole](http://davidmetnicole.com) in Surry Hills, Sydney. They're actually wooden printer's blocks dating from the 1890s to 1920s that the owners of the business, David and Nicole Page, have collected over the years (rrp \$6.50 to \$34 per letter). In fact, their store is a treasure chest of vintage curiosities such as toys, bottles, desk calendars, anatomical charts and models as well as globes and maps of the world. The store also stocks a range of contemporary items and if you can't find what you're looking for, the Pages can design and manufacture a one-off piece for you (davidmetnicole.com).

Best wishes... Designer Jenny Kee

Favourite destination Australia, from the desert to the mountains to the sea. I love sitting in the caves at Uluru, the spiritual heart of Oz.

Last holiday A tiny Tibetan refugee village in India full of monasteries at the foot of the Himalayas.

What inspires you Nature gives me my joy for creating art. I'm obsessed by the living rainbow colours trapped in our national gemstone, the opal.

Top restaurant Sydney's Billy Kwong for its organic ingredients - Kylie Kwong's crispy snapper is a favourite.

Memorable stay Hotel d'Inghilterra in Rome by the Spanish Steps, near the Trevi Fountain with Cafe Greco around the corner. It was summer 1970 and my first time in Italy and the first hotel I'd ever stayed in.

Jenny's new range of homewares is available at selected Target stores.

