



Inner city sanctuary

A lifestyle enhancement for a modern family



WORDS: Justine Carlile | **PHOTOS:** Patrick Redmond

The desire for a Melbourne family to maximise the amount of time spent in their own outdoor oasis was the inspiration for the creation of this functional outdoor living space. A landscape design that incorporated an outdoor living area suitable for all members of the household

— including teenage children with an ever-growing need to entertain their friends — was also a key element in the project, undertaken by Justine Carlile LANDSCAPE Design. Previously the garden was mainly lawn with low hedges lining the fences and, while attractive, it was lacking functionality.

The positioning of the pool at the rear of the garden, with expansive views from the living and dining areas of the house, provides a delightful integration of the indoor and outdoor areas. The lush standard Ficus hillii around the pool, with an underplanting of New Zealand rock lilies, provides a lush backdrop with a tropical feel. The raised retaining walls paved with flamed granite rising above the rear of the pool blend superbly with the same flamed granite around the pool. This effect is further enhanced

“Natural and recycled materials feature prominently in the pavilion with recycled wharf timbers used for the triple layered columns.”



by the elevated agaves in grey planters above the pool. All of the stunning foliage is set against a backdrop of a slatted jarrah fence, which further enhances the privacy of the garden. The large round mirror in a rusted steel frame above the pool provides a central focal point, drawing the eye to the cascading water fountain below.

The location of the pavilion adjacent to the pool ensures that this outdoor dining and living area is surrounded by either the pool or the lush garden. The orientation of the pavilion to face north and west, with extended eaves on the roof, ensures maximum shading in summer, yet allows the dining area to be bathed in the midday sun in winter.

The outdoor cooking and dining areas overlook the whole garden with the immediate area around the pavilion containing a tasteful mix of cycads, mondo grass, clivias and English box, while opposite the pavilion across the central lawn area is a row of well-formed Robinia 'Mop Tops' providing welcome summer shade.

The garden is characterised by extensive foliage, which can be readily viewed from all locations within the garden. Considerable use of feature lighting throughout the garden enhances the night-time ambiance and ensures that the garden integrates with the pavilion at all times. Additional feature lighting in the pavilion provides an added dimension to the garden when viewed from the house.



The pavilion contains all the essential ingredients of an indoor dining room such as a stainless-steel cooking/bbq area with matching stainless-steel rangehood; preparation and sink areas; a refrigerator and a large central food presentation bench. The eight-person square dining table with a colourful upholstered bench sets the scene for elegant yet relaxed dining. Natural and recycled materials feature prominently in the construction of the pavilion with recycled wharf timbers used for the triple layered columns and wide spotted gum planks being used for the decking. A single bluestone slab mounted on recycled wharf timber forms the central food and beverage serving bench.

The zone between the house and the pavilion is paved with flamed granite, with a canopy of non-fruiting Japanese grapevine above providing welcome shade in the summer and a magnificent blaze of red and burgundy in the autumn.

All the design objectives have been met in this delightful garden. The softscape and hardscape elements have been tastefully blended with the outdoor pavilion, ensuring that the inside of the house has been successfully integrated with the garden to achieve the ultimate outdoor living space for this Melbourne family. ■

Justine Carlile is a Melbourne-based designer and the founder of Justine Carlile LANDSCAPE Design.

TOP The fully tiled in-ground pool and spa were constructed by Brighton Pools and incorporates numerous features such as lighting, a sheer descent waterfall in the raised plant bed, and a raised wall clad in flamed granite.

BOTTOM The original backyard provided little privacy from the neighbours.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM The eight-person square dining table with a colourful upholstered bench sets the scene for elegant yet relaxed dining.