

The planting scheme is clearly tropical in style and features Bangalow palms and colourful cordylines.

Call of nature

Inspired by a love of nature, this outdoor entertaining area is a design delight



WORDS: Kate McKee PHOTOS: TBC

The owners of this architecturally designed house in the Sydney suburb of Greenwich coveted a swimming pool and outdoor living area that would complement the style of their new home as well as indulge their passion for entertaining outdoors. To make their dream space a reality, homeowners, Peter and Julie called in Justin Dibble of Fluid Design.

Justin was faced with the challenge of a small, sloping block. To combat this, he designed the pool to sit above the natural ground level and introduced a multi-levelled timber deck.

The decking platforms provide Peter and Julie with spaces for outdoor dining and relaxing, while the

tropical planting and the sound of water flowing over the pool's wet edge add ambience. "The pool acts as a large water feature and brings a sense of tranquility to the space," says Justin.

"The outdoor area is now an integral part of the home. It can be viewed from most rooms in the house and accessed easily from all downstairs rooms so, essentially, it is another room," says Peter. "We leave the bi-fold doors fully open in both summer and winter when we are home," adds Julie. "We spend a lot of time on the deck, either entertaining or just relaxing."

Avid entertainers, Peter and Julie have found that the space lends itself to hosting both large and intimate groups. "We frequently entertain outdoors," says Julie. "We eat outside as a couple whenever the weather permits and we have entertained up to 40 people within the outside area."

As the backyard is surrounded by large trees it doesn't get a lot of direct sunlight. To brighten the top level of the entertaining area, travertine tiles were used for the flooring. Timber decking was used for the

ABOVE LEFT The timber deck that stretches along the lower side of the pool provides ample room for entertaining.

ABOVE Energy-efficient LED lighting placed around the pool and deck areas bathes the space in a warm glow.

OPPOSITE PAGE TOP Making the utmost of the sloping site, the timber deck is divided into a series of useable platforms.

OPPOSITE PAGE BOTTOM The property is surrounded by mature trees which offer privacy and serve as backdrop for the garden.

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lower levels, reinforcing the natural look of the space. To complete the look and make the space a pleasure to use at night, LED lighting was used for both the pool and garden areas.

Peter and Julie love the feeling of being in a natural environment, so a lush setting was a must. Justin achieved a tropical feel by using an evocative mix of plants such as Bangalow palms, cordylines, acorus, mondo grass, native ginger, *Philodendron* 'Xanadu' and 'Cascade' lilly pillies for screening. And by drawing on the borrowed landscape of the surrounding established trees, he has given the owners the natural haven they yearned for. ■

