

CONTEMPORARY *country*

This rural property in Sydney's Glenhaven features everything a classic country home would have – acreage, farm animals, a fruit and vegetable patch and a rustic old barn. But what sets it apart from other country properties is the contemporary home constructed by Gremmo Homes and stunning, modern backyard sitting centre stage on the land. A new take on the classic Australian country home, Justin Dibble from Fluid Design talks about the award-winning outdoor area and creating the perfect pool.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREMMO HOMES





THE BRIEF

The homeowners wanted a modern outdoor living environment set within a rural landscape and a garden design that complemented the home's architecture whilst meeting the wishes and requirements of their busy family.

As the homeowners frequently entertain a large number of guests, the pool and outdoor areas needed to be large enough to cater for these occasions whilst also being in proportion with the home. Space needed to be maximised and seamless integration of the interior and exterior was key.

Although this is a contemporary home the homeowners still wanted to maintain the rural feel so their children could enjoy growing their own fruit and vegetables and look after their farm animals that are housed in the rustic old barn on the property.

Our goal for this project was to create a serene environment and outdoor living experience that maximises space and focuses on the functionality, flow and views between all indoor and outdoor living areas whilst being a fun, relaxing and enjoyable home for the family.



DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Because of the extensive use of glass throughout the home and views of the outside from most of the rooms in the house, the swimming pool area was the main focus.

The internal finishes of the home are a combination of natural Limestone and Hardwood so this look needed to flow into the outdoor living space. The planting theme had to be unique so bold, architectural-style species that complement the home and are not commonly seen in a typical rural setting were used.

THE PROJECT

Working closely with the architect and owners of the

FLUID DESIGN BACKYARD MAINTENANCE TIPS

- Make sure you have good soil depth when preparing gardens for optimal growth.
- Fertilise and water regularly or as required for optimal lawn and plant growth.
- Oil timber decks every quarter to keep the colour up.
- Use a sealer on natural stone flooring to prevent staining.
- Enjoy caring for your garden and it will reward you every day.



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property, a detailed brief and solid understanding of what was required from a landscaping and outdoor entertaining perspective was gathered, this provided a vision for the project as a whole.

As with most landscape projects the swimming pool is the most celebrated (and most expensive) item. Our design development generally starts with creating the pool area, forming the basis for the design, and from there, integrating and connecting each of the outdoor living spaces.

Travertine paving and water line tiles provide a minimalistic and modern feel to the pool making it the centre of attention. The pool is 16 metres long and 5.5 metres wide with a large shallow area for the kids at one end of the pool surrounding the mature Aloe Tree Island. And a swim up bar at the other end for adults which is also accessible from the spa.

The 2.4 metre by x 2.4 metre spa is located outside the parents retreat for sneaky late night relaxation, and the television in the alfresco area can be viewed from the spa – ideal for Friday night football or just watching a movie!

My favourite part of this project is the pool area. Creating amazing pools and integrated outdoor living spaces is why I got into design, so seeing the pool from





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The use of natural materials was a priority for both the internal and external finishes so the areas could cope with the extreme weather often experienced in the suburb at times. Also, natural materials bring in a strong connection with the surrounding rural environment. The finishes are a combination of natural Limestone and Hardwood flooring which flowed from inside the home to the outdoor living spaces along with the rugged stone walling featured on selected walls of the home and within the garden.

PLANTING

The hero plant is the mature Aloe Tree within the pool area showcasing its architectural form and creating a striking feature both day and night to the central courtyard. Other unique feature plants include Dragons Blood tree, Yuccas, Canary Island Date Palms, Squid agave, Bue agave, Blue nolina, Desert spoon, Sanseveria Uganda, Blue chalk sticks and Strelitzia juncea to name a few.

CHALLENGES

The greatest challenge on this project was creating the swim-up bar area in the pool during the construction stage. The request was made as an afterthought while we were digging the pool, but I told my client that I would make it work somehow! Thankfully it turned out well.

RESULT

This backyard epitomises the essence of Australian outdoor living and recently won the 2013 Australian Outdoor project of the year at the National HIA Awards in Brisbane.

Easily at its best during the summer months, the pool provides a cooling effect to the house and outdoor entertaining areas. The pool may get a bit chilly during winter but the spa and outdoor firepit area can be enjoyed year round.

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