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SYDNEY POOL + OUTDOOR DESIGN



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200+ PAGES SHOWCASING TRENDY POOLS AND LANDSCAPES

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INDUSTRY ACCOLADES: AWARD WINNING DESIGNS REVEALED
 HOLIDAY AT HOME WITH A RESORT-INSPIRED POOL AND LANDSCAPE
 YATES' GARDEN LEGACY: CELEBRATING 125 YEARS OF SUCCESS
 LEARN THE IMPORTANCE OF CHOOSING A QUALITY DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION TEAM
 SPARKLING CLEAN: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT POOL MAINTENANCE

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Editor's Letter



As I write this, it's a beautiful 30 degrees outside and the sun is shining through my office window. On days like this it's hard to be stuck inside an office and my mind often wanders to exotic and tropical locations like Bali, where I could be relaxing alongside a pool with a cocktail in hand – and I'm not alone.

Pool designers are responding to a strong demand for resort-style pools and outdoor areas, and the reason for this is simple – people want to spend more time relaxing with friends and family than they are restricted to with their holiday leave. To help you create your own 'Holiday At Home', our feature on page 38 outlines all of the design features suitable for a resort-style backyard, and 'A Piece Of Paradise' (page 42) showcases the best way to decorate your new oasis.

While resort-style pools are a popular option, there are many other trends sweeping through our backyards. Our feature 'In Style' on page 44 lists our top 20 picks for the best pool and outdoor design trends, while 'And The Winner Is...' on page 32 showcases the best pool designs of 2011 as awarded by SPASA NSW.

While owning a pool is a luxury, it does come with the responsibility of maintenance and care. 'Maintenance Made Easy' on page 128 outlines the best ways to look after your pool, leaving you with more time to enjoy your paradise, and 'From The Ground Up' (page 56) looks at the importance of a good builder/client relationship and how your builder can help you after your pool is constructed.

If gardening is more suited to your interests, then we have something special for you this issue. Gardening brand Yates is celebrating 125 years in Australia and we speak to the editor of *Yates' Garden Guide*, one of the oldest Australian books in continuing publication, about the company's continued success.

Jam-packed with a range of stunning pool and landscape projects, this issue is sure to inspire you to turn your dream design into reality. I hope you find all of the ideas and information that you are looking for, and remember to check out our website, www.poolandoutdoordesign.com.au, for more inspiration.

Until next time...

Stevie

Stevie Newbegin

Editor





FLUID DESIGN

EXQUISITE OUTDOOR SPACES

CREATING CONTEMPORARY POOLS AND LANDSCAPES

From large, luxurious swimming pools on acreage properties through to compact plunge pools for small residential courtyards, Fluid Design caters to all of their clients' needs, and the pool featured demonstrates this to a tee.

Proving that luxurious pools aren't restricted to large blocks, this 5.7m x 2.4m concrete pool has been cleverly integrated into this small backyard, allowing it to seamlessly flow between the entertaining areas. The pool boasts the latest in technology in terms of energy efficiency, and its clean lines and contemporary finishes make it the focal point of the outdoor living area.

This stunning architecturally designed house required an equally impressive pool and outdoor living area, so the homeowners called on the skilled design services of Justin Dibble from Fluid Design. They requested a pool that was not only suitable for entertaining, but that also created a relaxed and aesthetically appealing environment for year-round enjoyment.

The charcoal coloured spill-over tile and Gemtex Ebony Glow interior helps achieve the desired contemporary finish, while the inclusion of the infinity wet-edge creates a tranquil backdrop to the outdoor living area, perfect for relaxed entertaining.



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The small, sloping block had its challenges; however it provided Justin with the opportunity to create something special. The pool needed to be raised significantly above ground so that it was accessible from the house. Timber platforms were then wrapped around the pool structure, creating interesting level changes and reclaiming otherwise inaccessible land for entertaining and family living purposes.

As there was limited available space in this backyard, the pool and its location had to be carefully considered. By positioning the pool directly off the existing alfresco area it meant that the pool could not only be conveniently accessed from the house but it also opened up an area large enough for comfortable outdoor entertaining.

The pool has been installed with energy-efficient products, including water tanks for pool top-up and a C-Bus intelligent control system that has been extended to control all of the pool equipment's user controllable settings. This includes full control over the temperature and pump running time schedules, and there are summer and winter presets that can be easily modified from the intuitive touch screen to save energy when required.



Holiday AT HOME

You don't need to travel to a tropical island to relax and escape your busy Sydney lifestyle; constructing a resort-style outdoor area will ensure that every day will be a holiday. Stevie Newbegin investigates this popular trend and learns how you can create your own private oasis in your backyard.



Fluid Design

Fluid Design

Fluid Design

Every year Australians retreat to tropical locations like Thailand or Bali to spend a few weeks relaxing and unwinding from the stresses of everyday life. There is no denying the allure of these locations and their lavish resorts, which promise days full of peace and quiet – the ultimate luxury.

While my last trip to Thailand was full of adventure and sightseeing, it is the moments relaxing by the pool with a book in hand at my resort that I miss the most. Having this private place to retreat to and unwind from the busy year that I had was just what I needed, and was certainly beneficial to my health and wellbeing – sometimes you just need time out!

Although it wasn't possible for me to bring the resort home with me, I did bring home one little keepsake – a bright purple hammock. After my trip I was determined to put a little peace back into my life, and promised myself that I would spend more time relaxing and enjoying the simple pleasures in life that I often enjoy on my holidays.

While my hammock was just a small change to my living environment, this act illustrates a greater trend that has been growing in Sydney's outdoor design industry. As people are now spending more time in their backyards than ever before, the idea of having places to relax and enjoy with family and friends is becoming more and more important for people leading a busy life, and resort-style living is becoming a popular request.

This trend needs little explanation; holidays are occasional, and our homes are everyday. As a result, it is natural for people to want to combine their place of residence with the style and design that brings them so much happiness on their holidays, so that they can live a lifestyle that is relaxed and fun; a holiday every day of the year.

Justin Dibble, director and owner of Sydney-based pool and landscape design company Fluid Design, has noticed a significant increase

in people wanting to incorporate resort-style elements into their outdoor design.

"With the amount of traffic on our roads, it is a lengthy journey for most to even get to the beach. Staying at home on the weekend is becoming a favoured option to miss battling weekend traffic, so people are tending to spend more money creating an oasis in their own backyard," says Dibble.

"Who could think of anything better than coming home after a hard day's work to your own piece of paradise, where you can unwind and relax with your family? Resort-style [design] brings that sense of relaxation and escape into our life which is increasingly sought after, to compensate for how busy we all seem to get year after year."

To recreate your favourite resort in your backyard, there are many design features, furnishings and accessories that you can use to create your own private sanctuary. So, whether you want to construct a new outdoor room that is resort-style inside and out, or you want to take cues from this new popular design trend, the following guide aims to get you one step closer to backyard bliss.

RESORT-INSPIRED LUXURY

Designing a resort-style outdoor area is a fun and exciting process that will allow you and your designer/builder to let your creative juices flow. From the outset, it's important to work out exactly which aspects of your holiday life you would like to bring into your home life, and be realistic about how you can incorporate this into your existing home's design.

Dibble finds that the most common requests for resort-style outdoor areas are for places that promote relaxation and a sense of calm, as well as places where the family can spend time together on weekends. Whether this is your wish, or you would prefer something more suited to entertaining or leisure, it's a good idea to work out your needs early on.

Once you have decided what you want from your resort-style space, it's important to consider

how you can integrate this into your existing home. While most people will picture a resort as a tropical hideaway, this style will not suit every property, and Dibble believes the best place to start is to choose a design that complements the style of your home.

"A Balinese garden will not suit an English-style home. This does not mean a resort-style garden can't be created, it just means the style of the pool and garden needs to be sympathetic to the style of the home. A resort can have a more formal theme through shapes, colours, planting etc," says Dibble.

While there is no set template for a resort-style backyard, the following popular design elements will set you on the right path to your own private retreat.

The Main Attraction

At the heart of any resort is a swimming pool or spa, and Dibble finds that the pool and close surrounds form the basis for resort-style living.

"When you book a holiday, the [major] thing that attracts you is the pool area, as this is where the most time is spent relaxing or playing with the kids. Most hotels and resorts use images of the pool for their marketing to attract people to their resort," he says.

While there are certain design features that suit resort-style pools more than others, designs are really flexible and the most important thing is to incorporate lots of different areas to suit a range of needs.

"There is no particular shape for a resort-style pool. It is more a combination of shapes integrated to form an interesting and exotic look and feel. Each part of the pool is created for a particular reason, whether that is a swim-up bar, swim-out area for kids, waterfall, wet-edge spill over or integrated spa," explains Dibble.

There's nothing better than sipping on your favourite cocktail while relaxing in a refreshing

pool on a hot summer's day, so swim-up bars are a popular option. They are also extremely convenient, as you don't have to leave the pool to get your next refreshment. Design your bar to have funky bar stools, and add a sound system and TV so people can enjoy a drink, as well as some light entertainment, and you will be on your way to pure bliss!

For the kids or those who want to chill out in the shallows, swim-out areas are a must for resort-style pools, and allow a range of pool activities. In these shallow sections, or even in deeper areas, built-in seats or ledges that run along one side of the pool are also common. This is great for people to sit back and relax with a beverage in hand, or for those who want to watch a movie or read a magazine in the comfort of their pool.

To ensure family fun, it's also a popular idea to add waterslides, caves and waterfalls. These pool accessories can be built along with the pool, or at times retrofitted, and will provide hours of enjoyment for family and friends. They can also double as water features, which can be enjoyed visually from inside and outside the pool, as well as creating a tranquil acoustic.

To ensure use year-round, integrating a spa into your pool design is an absolute must. One of the best benefits of visiting a resort is that you get to relax and unwind, and there is nothing better than a spa to help you achieve this at home. Spas have numerous healing qualities, and are the perfect place to entertain guests.

In terms of resort-style aesthetics, negative-edge designs are popular, as well as designs that incorporate deep colours and bright lighting. Size is also a consideration, but will be determined by the size of your site.

"The size of the pool is determined by the site constraints and of course the owners' budget. Yes, resort-style pools are usually quite large, but this is to accommodate a lot of people. Small pools can still be fun and interesting. It's amazing what can be created within a small

space if there is enough time and thought put into the design and planning," says Dibble.

The Support Act

While the pool may be at the heart of your design, no resort-style outdoor area is complete without the addition of an alfresco area and surrounding landscape. You, your family and friends will all need areas in your backyard to lie, sit or gather to relax, dine or play.

"The pool, outdoor entertaining space and garden should all be well connected," says Dibble.

"Poolside pavilions are a good way to introduce some structure to a pool area. They can be small enough for a daybed or big enough to accommodate a full outdoor kitchen, fireplace, bathroom, barbecue etc.

"These pavilions are great as they provide shelter by the pool, which allows you to use the space during the hottest part of the day as opposed to retreating inside. It also provides an area where adults can hang out while keeping an eye on the kids in the pool."

There is a range of furnishings and designs you can include in your outdoor room to promote resort-style living, from outdoor showers to fire pits, sun lounges, bar fridges, televisions, pizza ovens, hammocks, and the list goes on.

"Outdoor showers are great for kids or even for those who don't feel like diving in the pool and just want to freshen up after mowing the lawn," says Dibble.

"There is also a lot of quality furniture out there these days. Outdoor lounges can be designed and built into a space, or a freestanding lounge can be purchased to fit in the space created, giving the flexibility to move it if need be.

"Outdoor kitchens have probably seen the greatest evolution due to their popularity over the past few years. Outdoor kitchens can be designed to accommodate all that is required for lunch or a dinner party and people don't need to go back

and forward to the house for supplies; more time can be spent entertaining with friends."

Another important feature of a resort-style outdoor space is the effective use of outdoor lighting. Choosing the right outdoor lighting will allow your new space to be functional at all times of the day and increase the useable hours of your investment, as well as adding an ambient touch.

Indoor-Outdoor Relationship

For a resort-style design to be successful, you need to feel as though the house and garden area are connected, and ensure a seamless flow from indoors to out.

"Resort-style homes create free-flowing interaction between indoors and outdoors which is what people love about being in a resort. Our climate allows us to spend time outdoors so a lot of homes now have wide expanses of opening doors to give that feeling of connection with the outdoors. Being able to see the pool and garden from within the home brings a sense of relaxation to the soul," says Dibble.

To establish an integrated indoor and outdoor area, ensure easy access from the internal living areas to the external living areas, as well as a clear view from indoors to out. This can be achieved through large windows, bi-fold doors, integrated alfresco areas and by designing the pool in close proximity to the home. It's also important to use similar materials throughout, to ensure a seamless flow.

"Use all natural elements; water, fire, stone, timber and an abundance of glass to appreciate all from inside [your house]. Natural colours and textures used well can provide a stunning look to any backyard while giving you a feeling of connection with the outdoors."

Once you have decided on the best way to create your own tropical paradise, sit back with a drink in hand and enjoy not only your new outdoor space but also your new lifestyle – relaxed and blissful.