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backyard & garden design ideas OUTDOOR ENTERTAINING

**backyard**  
& GARDEN DESIGN IDEAS

# outdoor entertaining

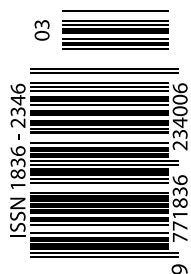
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Issue three



*design gallery*

# BUSHLAND BEAUTY

Designed for year-round use, this Sydney garden merges seamlessly with its bushland surrounds

Words: Justin Dibble  
Photos: Blue Poppy Photography

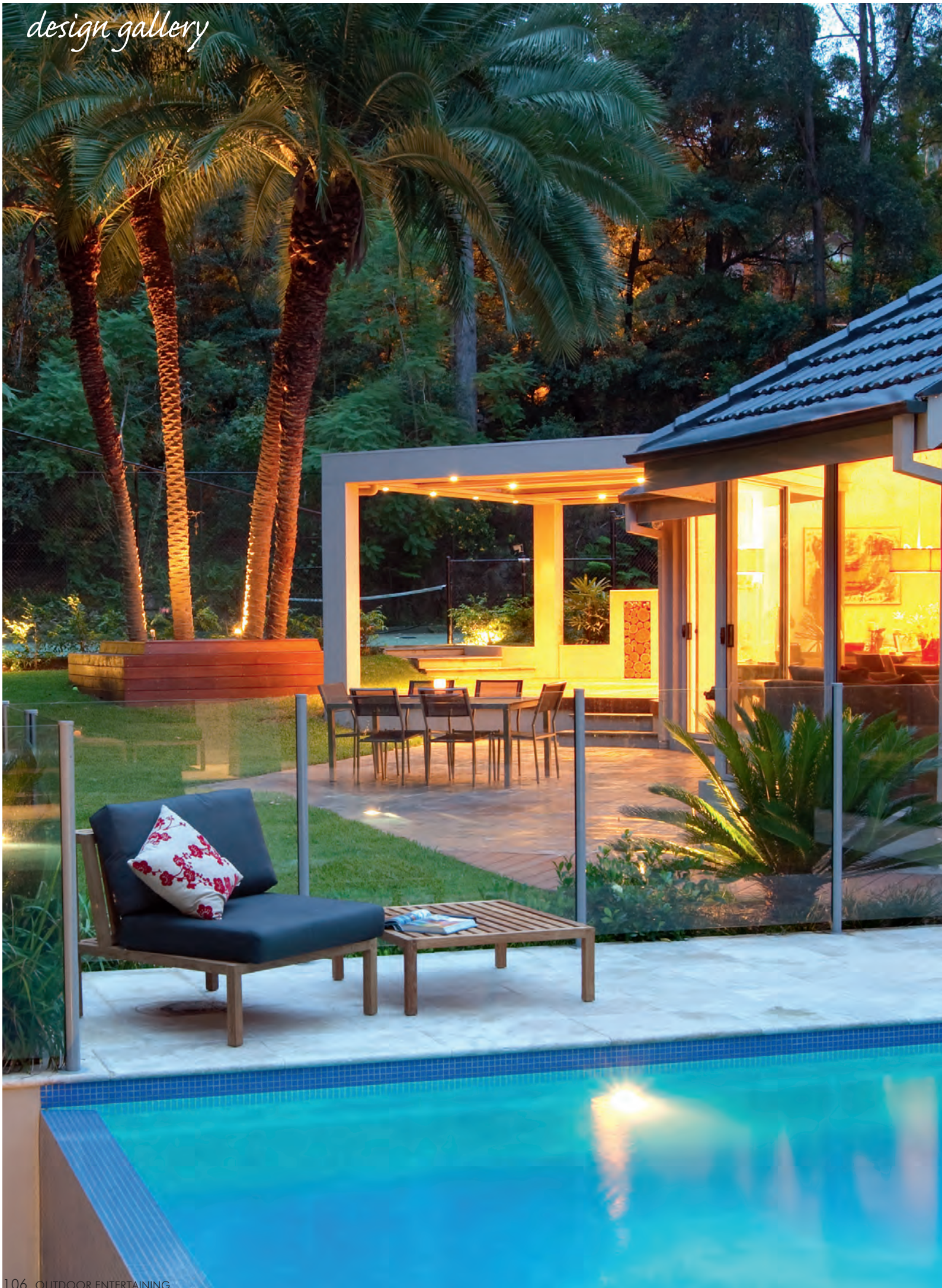




*design gallery*



*design gallery*







This site in the northern Sydney suburb of Lindfield is located in a gully on the lower side of the road. A steep driveway leads down into the property, which features a beautiful natural watercourse lined with palms and large tree ferns, giving a rainforest feel. The home blends well with its bushland surrounds and while the European-born owners consider it their private Australian oasis, they realised that the garden areas around the home were looking a bit tired. Wanting a fresh new look — as well as an inviting outdoor entertaining area, a swimming pool and a space where the children could play — they called for a complete redesign.

The location of the pool and integrated spa was chosen to maximise the view to the surrounding bush and the amount of lawn area available for the children. Given the view, only a pool with a wet-edge spill-over would do as this would give the impression of the pool water disappearing into the watercourse beyond. The pool also boasts six-metre-wide entry steps along the high side. These are a great place to relax as they overlook the pool's spill-over and draw the eye deep into the bushland beyond.

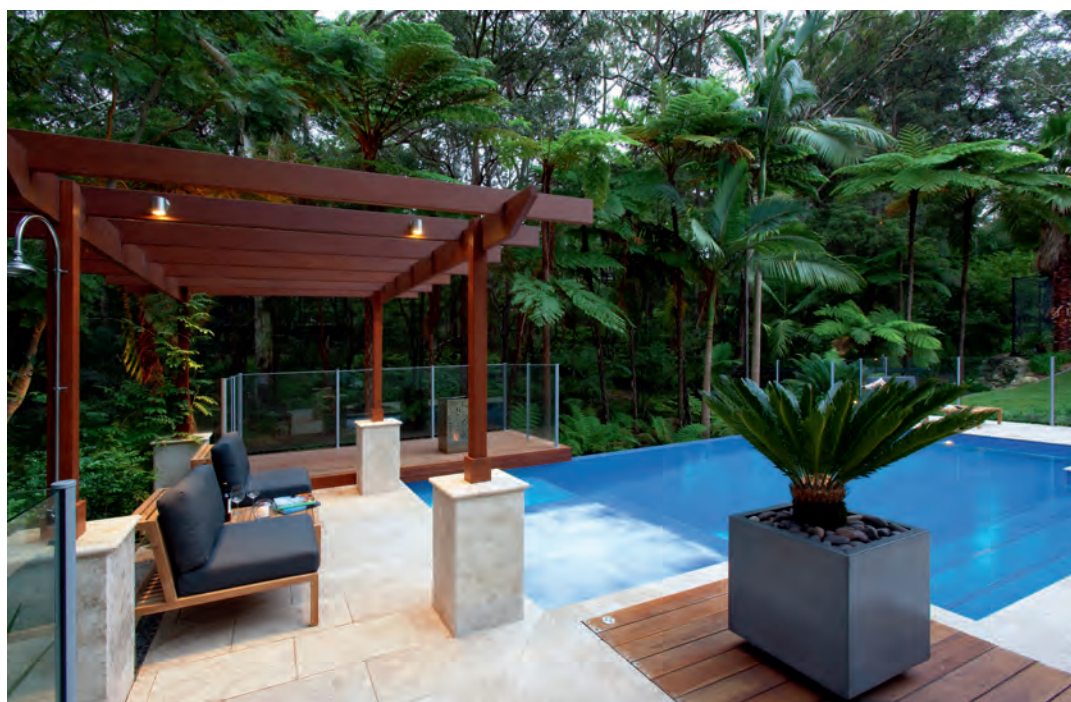
The timber arbour at the far end of the pool provides a design focal point as well as a tranquil spot where the parents can relax with a glass of wine and a book while the kids play in the pool and spa. There is also an outdoor

shower attached to the arbour for rinsing off before jumping into the water.

At night, when the spa is bubbling away, the rising heat helps to warm the arbour seating area. For extra warmth and ambience, there's a stainless-steel EcoSmart fire kept on the timber lounge deck that sits adjacent to the pool spill-over. This deck cantilevers over the

watercourse, giving the sensation of floating amid the mature tree ferns and providing amazing views along the stream and across the backyard.

The paved pool surround allows ample space for children to play and guests to gather while the choice of glass fencing maintains the open feel of the overall landscape design →





## design gallery

and preserves the all-important views. As the owners often have overseas visitors, several areas were created where people can gather to sit and relax, including a covered outdoor entertaining space, purpose-built for year-round use. This timber deck area leads out from the home's main lounge and kitchen areas to make transporting food and drink from inside the home out to the deck a simple matter. From this position, the deck also offers a lovely view of the entire backyard, which includes the new pool and the existing tennis court, making it the ideal space for entertaining guests from abroad.

We were able to almost double in size the existing lawn area beyond the deck by building a new retaining wall along the watercourse. This allowed us to level out what used to be a

void and turn an unusable area into extra play space. We also built an inviting timber bench seat and daybed around a grouping of existing multi-trunked palm trees growing near the new covered deck. This has become a feature of the backyard as well as a place where the owners can relax and unwind.

Overall, the design has created a larger, more enjoyable backyard for the family with several spaces that can be used for entertaining. And at night, when the outdoor lighting brings the pool, entertaining areas and garden to life, the owners can't wait to show their contemporary outdoor living areas to visiting friends and family. ■

*Justin Dibble is a Sydney-based garden designer and director of Fluid Design.*

