

AUSTRALIAN

HOUSE & GARDEN

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ALEXANDER'S**
Christmas table

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outlook*

A modern
country garden

Christmas AT HOME

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ENTRANCE Frequent entertainers, the owners of this bayside home in southern Sydney wanted to wow their guests from the outset. Mature date palms, a granite path and immediate view of the 15m pool do the trick. For similar chairs, try Adirondack Chairs Australia. Velvet cushion, Ruby Star Traders. Sunloungers, Robert Plumb. Landscape design by SiteDesign+Studios. For *Where to Buy*, see page 218.

FEATURE PLANTS

- FRONT YARD
 Date palms
(Phoenix canariensis)
Buxus microphylla japonica
Dracaena draco
Zamia
Rhapis excelsa

Plain sailing

In a tightly held waterside Sydney suburb, one family's pursuit of their dream property nets a home with all the benefits of resort-style living.

STORY *Vanessa Walker* | STYLING *Louise Bickle* | PHOTOGRAPHY *John Paul Urizar*

Stylist's assistant Shirin Brunello



Many home journeys involve chance or good fortune; others are strewn with hurdles. In the case of this Sydney family, the dogged pursuit of location, land and an on-point home design have yielded the ultimate reward: the home of their dreams. And so it is that a decade after identifying their ideal home scenario, they are excitedly anticipating Christmas in their spectacular digs.

Their journey began when the couple, now parents to two teenagers, realised they no longer enjoyed living in their very contemporary home; the high-gloss finishes and spare details were giving them an aesthetic headache.

In 2005 they began the search for the right piece of land in their chosen location, Burraneer Bay in Sydney's south. They had very specific criteria: it had to be a large block with an 'estate' feel that received morning and afternoon sun, and it needed to be on the waterfront with useable facilities. Only 40 homes fitted the bill.

After a four-year search and year-long negotiation with the owner of one of these prized patches, the family secured a 2650m² waterfront block and moved into the existing house. They wanted to experience it - and its wind directions in particular - through the seasons.

During that time the husband dwelt upon what their new home would look like. "I thought a lot about how we could create a calm and coastal feel, and came up with 'Hamptons, with a touch of [Sydney's] Palm Beach,'" he says. But - cue next challenge - his wife wasn't convinced.

Ever practical, he took her on a 'site visit' to Shutters on the Beach in Santa Monica; a resort known for its Hamptons aesthetic, ►



FESTIVE PALETTE



Printed linen



Metallic blue



Silver-grey accents

This is the life

Open, airy living was the goal for this bayside house. There are few walls upstairs, contributing to the open-plan feel, and all doors are recessed to allow uninterrupted sightlines. Louvres above all windows ensure cooling breezes flow straight through the home in summer. "We don't need to use airconditioning in the house," says the owner.

LANDING The stairs and one wall are all that remain of the original home. Furniture placement and rugs demarcate zones in this open-plan space, with the selective use of detailed panelling creating a sense of intimacy. Teenagers Declan and Taylor, with cavoodle Bolli, enjoy the build up to Christmas Day. Pendant light, The Lighting Guild. Armchairs, MCM House. Cushions, Pottery Barn. Side table, Coco Republic. Lamp, Essentials for Home. Assorted Christmas tree decorations from Ruby Star Traders, Papaya, Paper2 and The Country Trader.

Smart buy: Casablanca wool rug, from \$306/m², Armadillo&Co.

BREEZEWAY This deep entrance is a handy spillover area during pool parties. Granite pavers, ColorTile. Pendant light, The Lighting Guild. Table, MCM House. Fir wreath, Papaya. Throw rug, Inka Designs.

For Where to Buy, see page 218.

VERANDAH Absolute frontage affords spectacular views across sparkling Burraneer Bay, making it the perfect spot for a family breakfast before Christmas guests arrive. Chairs, Eco Outdoor. Plates, linen napkins, wineglasses and furry owl, all Papaya. Cutlery, Citta Design. Napkin rings, tumblers, goblets and bottle, all The Country Trader. Placemats and shell Christmas tree, Ruby Star Traders. Wrapping paper, ribbon, glass dome light, all Paper2. Flowers from Mr Cook. **Smart buy:** Mallee Gum linen-cotton tablecloth, \$149, Utopia Goods.

KITCHEN The kitchen is the heart of the home, with views of the pool to the east and the bay to the west. Here, an American-oak island bench topped with Calacatta marble creates a dramatic focal point in the open-plan space. Pendant lights, Designers Guild. Bar stools, Cafe Culture+Insitu. Joinery by Concept Kitchens.

LIVING Light colours, weathered finishes and natural materials create a cool, coastal aesthetic. Sofa, armchairs and side table, all Coco Republic. Coffee table, Ralph Lauren Home. Candleholders, Elements I Love. Rug, Armadillo&Co. **Smart buy:** Jute and foil cushions (40x60cm), \$85/each, Ruby Star Traders. *For Where to Buy, see page 218.*



Christmas at home

Come December 25, a crowd of about 20 family and friends will gather to enjoy this expansive house and its incredible facilities. The kitchen is equipped with multiple ovens for exactly this purpose. "After a day of feasting on traditional Christmas fare and lots of fun, everyone will probably end up in the pool," says the owner – just as he imagined it all those years ago.

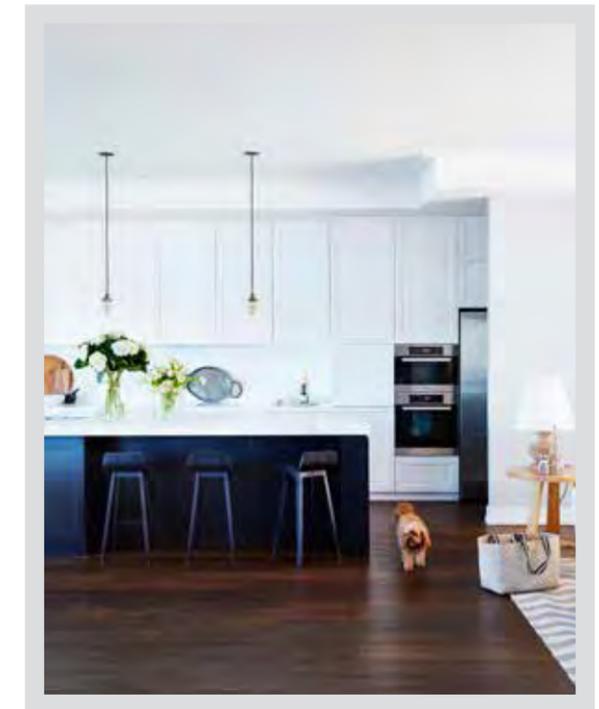
◀ then on to the famed east-coast holiday location itself. Happily, it was an easy sell.

The couple hired an architectural draftsman to draw up plans for a two-storey, four-bedroom home that paid special attention to framing the views. They requested an open-plan kitchen and living areas, a 15m pool and outdoor kitchen on the entry level, with bedrooms, each with an ensuite, on the floor below.

Interior architect Tonka Andjelkovic was brought on board to create the 'calm coastal' look, with interior decorator Malise Sassano briefed to fill it out.

Today, after a 19-month build and some settling in, the family couldn't be happier. On the first floor, engineered European-oak floorboards provide a solid base and absorb light, the matt finish reducing glare. The Australian/Hamptons style comes together via details such as shiplap panelling, ceiling mouldings and a bevelled-glass front door. When furnishing the home, Tonka and Malise chose weathered timber pieces, woven rugs, linens and accessories in whites and blues with soft, beachy appeal.

With their long-held home goal realised, this family is intent on enjoying - and sharing - the spoils. ▶ **Tonka Andjelkovic Design, Bondi Junction, NSW; 0418 479 581 or www.tonkaandjelkovicdesign.com. Malise Sassano, Edgecliff, NSW; 0410 474 424.**



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MAIN BEDROOM The bedrooms all enjoy peace and quiet thanks to their position on the ground floor. Wall sconces, The Lighting Guild. Bedside table, Coco Republic. Curtains in Natural Linen by Rolletna. The cabinet, built by Concept Kitchens, houses a pop-up TV. Celine 12 carpet in Marron, Feltex Carpets.

Designer buy: Sloan English roll-arm occasional chair, from \$2035, Coco Republic.

DECLAN'S ROOM Keeping it simple is the key to this teenager's room. Bedlinen, Sheridan. Cushions, Ascraft. Celine 12 carpet in Marron, Feltex Carpets.

Smart buy: Pendleton blanket, from \$395, Collector Store.

ENSUITE Carrara marble tiles laid in a brick pattern line the floor and shower wall in this spacious ensuite. Kaldewei bath and Scala mixer, Reece. Stool and bath towels, Citta Design.

SITTING A large *Spathiphyllum* 'Sensation' takes pride of place in this cooking/dining area, which directly overlooks the swimming pool. Armchairs and dining chairs, Eco Outdoor. Shutters from Rolletna. Table, Alfresco Emporium.

For Where to Buy, see page 218.

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THE LAYOUT

