

BOUGH DOWN

WORDS

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Let's pay our respects to this nature-loving home, where apertures all over allow views of the tree-studded jungle out there.

By day, architectural technician Adam Laming works at Brisbane's Lockyer Architects, but after hours for the last wee while, he's been turning his talents to an exciting side hustle — designing a home in Byron Bay for himself and his project manager wife Sarah Treby to enjoy and share with guests. Laidback pad at the beach meets contemporary cabin in the woods, the result is an inviting amalgam of outdoorsy informality and clean-lined geometry, set within its own lush mini-forest.

To ensure the three-bedroom abode could happily function as both a family home and Airbnb accommodation, it was conceived as two separate parts within the same form. Downstairs, the main dwelling's entry is via a solid rosewood pivot door positioned beyond a covered breezeway staircase. The guest quarters — two bedrooms, each with

their own ensuite and balcony — are accessed via the staircase and a landing bridge, an arrangement that allows visitors to privately come and go from their own secluded spaces.

The house is sited on a 600m² section covered with jungle-ish greenery and protected cypress pines. To further safeguard these special trees, Adam and Sarah designed the home's footprint to work around them, and seized every opportunity to create ways to engage with their tropical paradise.

"Upstairs, the bedroom balconies invite you to step out under the forest canopy, which is why we called the house The Arbour [[@arbour_byronbay](#)]," says Adam. "The breezeway is secured within a large, two-storey void behind a timber batten screen and a timber sliding screen, the intended experiential outcome of which is that the stairs and landing bridge have a strong sense of >



THESE PAGES The couple's dog Alfie (pictured opposite) also lives it up in this leafy glade — a sweet set-up that's complete with a plunge pool for cooling off in the heat of the Australian summer, leaving you spoiled for choice when the beach is also so close by.

THESE PAGES As much as Adam and Sarah wanted their coastal home to feel beachy, it needed to blend into its immediate environment, and a black exterior colour palette (pictured on the previous pages) responded to that nicely. A wide shadow box perched on and overhanging the ground level, the upper storey of the home is clad in horizontal weatherboards. Accentuating this, the lower level is clad in vertical shiplap spotted gum. This timber work and expressed joinery detail in elements such as the balustrades and verandah seating combine to articulate the feel of a timber beach house. In contrast to its dark exterior, the couple opted for a brighter palette inside. Black ribbed panels in the entry hall bring the exterior through to a point before transitioning to white walls and solid oak tongue-and-groove timber with a matte white oil finish on the floor. In the classy but carefree kitchen, a Fisher & Paykel dishwasher with seven wash programmes (plus wash-modifier options that can be added to each, including Quick, Sanitise and Extra Dry — perfect for pesky plastic containers) is integrated into the island (visible below).



connection to the trees — and the sound of the ocean beyond. The void is topped by a skylight that frames a view to the cypress canopy, and there are solid casement shutters on the landing bridge that open up to the trees.

“On the lower storey, the entryway is punctuated by glazing with views of the neighbouring woodland. We used skylights and a high pop-up picture window over the living area to maximise access to the view and light, framing trees everywhere you look. Here, the bay window seat has a large sashless window, so you can slide up the bottom panel and open the entire seat to the garden, while other seats focus on sections of garden that are organised around the bases of the trees. The main bedroom has floor-to-ceiling, wall-to-wall glazing that provides a panoramic vista of the trees from our bed.”



Although your attention is ever drawn outside, the nucleus of this dwelling is undoubtedly the stylish kitchen, with its calming, oyster-grey cabinetry with American oak handles; white tapware; Carrara marble benchtops with dense, cloud-like veins and patches of arrabescato; and island cloaked in textural finger-mosaic tiles. In this relatively minimalist zone, some appliances have been seamlessly integrated to suit the wider context of the open-plan kitchen/dining/living space. Among them are a Fisher & Paykel dishwasher that gracefully recedes into the cabinetry under the island. The couple didn't have the budget for integrated refrigeration, which, says Adam, “is a shame, because the integrated F&P products are slick”. Instead, they chose the brand's chic French door fridge; in a black stainless >

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ABOVE LEFT A Fisher & Paykel Series 9 16cm, 85L, 16-function, self-cleaning oven with moisture-level control via ActiveVent technology makes light work of meal prep opposite a Fisher & Paykel French door fridge with a chilled water dispenser and ice maker, and beside a Fisher & Paykel 90cm 5-zone induction hob and 90cm integrated rangehood with stainless steel filters. **ABOVE RIGHT** Space is expertly utilised in the adjacent pantry, which doubles as the laundry thanks to a sink/tub and a Fisher & Paykel 11kg front load washing machine stacked with an 11kg condensing dryer. The washer's ActiveIntelligence technology removes the guesswork by tailoring detergent doses and adjusting wash times to suit each load, while the dryer is incredibly gentle on fabric and handily doesn't require external venting. **BELOW** "Starting with such a beautiful garden setting made us want to maximise the use of the garden and decks, so the whole living experience feels more expansive," says Adam. Pictured here are spaces on the upper storey, which link to their own private balconies. **OPPOSITE** The upstairs guest rooms.

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ABOVE Giving the impression of warmth underfoot, the pale oak flooring in this guest bedroom and throughout the house is evocative of Scandinavian, North American and Canadian wood cabins. Privacy in the sleep spaces is provided by block-out and sheer curtains that slide away on curved tracks. **TOP RIGHT** Adam and Sarah have come to refer to the aesthetic of the bathrooms as “utilitarian resort”. “We paired the terrazzo tiles with simple square, matte, white mosaics because of our love of the old swim-club changing pavilions around Sydney in places like Bondi, and we chose this colour because its white, grey and blue hues remind us of the coast,” says Adam.

steel finish, Adam deems it “sleek and beautiful” tucked inside the pantry.

“We also chose Fisher & Paykel’s new touch-screen pyrolytic oven, which is fantastic aesthetically and functions perfectly, with fast heat-up times, great temperature distribution and automated-timer and cook-to-recipe functions,” he says. “And we have a Fisher & Paykel induction hob and integrated rangehood as well.”

Additionally housed within the pantry, the laundry (which comprises a stacked Fisher & Paykel washing machine and dryer, plus a tub set into a Carrara marble benchtop that’s also used as a sink for food prep) is arranged within a tight space, yet is another design triumph. “We can’t understand why anyone would want to be stuck in a laundry room doing the ironing, so to us a dedicated room is superfluous to our requirements,” says Adam. “Our

washing machine and dryer are out of the way in the pantry, but conveniently located for throwing on a wash. Plus, the machines are very quiet and look elegant and unimposing, so they don’t interrupt the aesthetic or our day-to-day life in the kitchen.”

As you’d expect, the kitchen engages seamlessly with the outdoors, in this case through a sliding door leading to a verandah made for barbecuing and entertaining. “We love to cook and often have friends around for casual dinners, or the neighbours will come over and we’ll graze on multiple courses at the island bench or on the verandah,” says Adam. When the guests have gone home and it’s simply an evening for two, he and Sarah will prepare a meal in the kitchen, then deliver it swiftly outside, to share under the stars as the sea breeze whispers in the leaves all around them. ■
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