

Renovated delight

This striking garden is as show-stopping as its newly renovated abode

...

words kylie baracz
photos highlyte photo

After recently renovating their Brighton home, the owners wanted their property to reflect that of their modern and minimalist chateau. The brief stipulated that the north-facing garden was to complement the bold aesthetics of the newly built wing, and the entryway was to be striking and functional, without drawing attention to the two separate front doors of the home.

Although the homeowners were looking for a timeless and sophisticated landscape for their family to enjoy, they also wanted it to remain practical and complement the architecture of the home. “We were careful to create a garden that had a good scale of proportion that enhanced the size of the space and didn’t conflict with the exterior decor,” says Steve Taylor, director of COS Design. “The other main focus was to create a striking entryway that had to service both front doors without highlighting this fact.”

To achieve this, Steve and the team at COS Design, along with Esjay Landscapes and Pools, incorporated large floating concrete steps and a grand 6m custom steel water feature to create initial drama. “The front entryway and 6m-long water chute, which runs alongside the architectural concrete, is both impressive in size and creates a beautiful, tranquil sound as water moves through it,” says Steve.





Not only is this garden elegant in design, it is also practical and child-friendly, with the original lawn split in two to create separate functional spaces, one with an inbuilt trampoline for the children to enjoy. “We had a big area to work with and it would have been so easy to add many other elements. The key was in the balance,” says Steve. “The awkwardness of the original sloping lawn, which we decided to break into two levels, was a challenge. We had to work in with the existing pool and the rest of the garden had to harmoniously tie in with this area, as well as the home itself.”

The dwelling’s modern minimalist design was complemented by the stunning architectural concrete installed by Hungry Wolf Studio, which creates the new entryway and floating steps. Along with the concrete, bluestone organic rounds let visitors journey through the lower garden and up to the two separate higher lawn areas. Glass fencing is used around the pool and along the decking to ensure an unobstructed view from every angle.



“

*We had a big area to work with and it would
have been so easy to add many other elements.
The key was in the balance*

STEVE TAYLOR



To soften the bold concrete, a combination of *Ophiopogon japonicus* (mondo grass) and *Buxus* spheres are scattered throughout. The pool area is brought to life using a feature *Acer platanoides* 'Crimson Sentry' maple underplanted with *Trachelospermum asiaticum* (Asian star jasmine), and existing *Ficus* hedging creates an informal screen along the boundary.

The Lump Sculpture round vertical wall pods add greenery to the otherwise plain pool fence, while huge The Balcony Garden pots add a variety of texture, with cacti, *Asparagus densiflorus* (asparagus fern), *Dichondra* and *Sansevieria laurentii* (snake plant) lining the entrance. "We chose low-maintenance plants so that when they are established, they won't require too much watering," says Steve. "Hardy, durable, locally and timelessly sourced products were also chosen that will stand the test of time and won't need replacing."



WE LOVE

The custom steel water feature

The garden is also a delight at night, with striking LED lighting by Gardens at Night subtly illuminating the heavy concrete structures and the custom steel water feature. "The gentle trickle of water can be heard as soon as you walk through the front gate, capturing the attention of anyone who enters," shares Steve.

When creating gardens for his clients, Steve says the definition of good design is simplicity of form and function. And, when working on this masterpiece, he drew inspiration from the home's architecture and bold elements. "The house itself was very wide, so the entryway complements this. The two architectural elements tie in together and plants are added as decor to soften all the hardscape areas," he says. "The architecture of the home plus the client's personality draw it all together. The client is the one using the space, so their garden design must reflect their lifestyle and tastes." cosdesign.com.au

