

A place of tranquillity

A backyard sportsground is transformed into a leafy secluded oasis

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This flourishing sanctuary is far from the barren grassland that was used as a backyard cricket pitch and footy field for the owners' young sons.

The family was looking for a place where they could relax, entertain and provide a seamless extension of the indoor dining and living areas of the home that face out to the garden.

"For more than 10 years, this garden was a large patch of grass used extensively year-round by the boys for their favourite sporting pursuits of football and cricket," says Justine Carlile, owner of Justine Carlile Landscape Design. "When the boys finished their school years, a dramatic transformation of the garden was required to create an area for relaxation and entertainment."

Justine and her team drastically transformed this outdoor wasteland into a rustic, secluded and attractive space full of life and greenery. To create height and interest, a hardwood timber pergola was erected at the rear of the garden for both an entertaining and relaxing space away from the home. The solid structure of the pergola is laced with *Vitis vinifera*, Ornamental Grape Vine, to provide lush summer shade and a magnificent display of colour in autumn. This makes year-round entertaining a breeze, with shady days in summer and warm sunlight in winter.

A well-considered furniture layout under the pergola allows for zoned entertaining, with bar stools and table at one end and outdoor sofas at the other. The casual timber decking, made using Australian hardwood, subtly joins





the spaces without overpowering them and blends nicely with the pergola above. "The centrepiece of the garden is the relaxation zones incorporated into the pergola," says Justine. "They are used constantly by the whole family year-round."

A clever placement of bluestone steppers creates a lovely connection between the pergola and the home, keeping the existing grass lush and maintained while the plant selection creates a peaceful atmosphere. *Zantedeschia aethiopica*, 'Green Goddess' Arum Lilies, stand in the shade of the rear of the pergola, providing a continuous production of beautiful flowers, while the front is bordered by *Buxus sempervirens*, English Box hedge, to give the space a lush formality.

Cycas revoluta, Cycad, is planted in a stunning concrete bowl between the two entertaining zones to create a central feature with lush underplanting of *Murraya paniculata*, Murraya hedge, to casually blend it into its surrounds. *Pyrus calleryana*, 'Cleveland Select' Ornamental Pears, planted at each end of the pergola, provide added greenery to the space and feature an underplanting of *Anthropodium cirratum*, Rock Lily. This is all serenely surrounded by



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The formal planting palette





well-maintained mature *Cupressus*, *Cyprus* 'Leighton Green', and *Waterhousea floribunda*, *Waterhousea* hedges, creating a private, calm and seasonal space for the whole family to enjoy.

By selecting low-water plants, Justine and her team ensured the garden will be sustainable and eco-friendly. Herb gardens featuring rosemary also provide delicious herbs for cooking. And to keep their sons happy, much of their original lawn space has been retained in case they ever feel the need to bring out their old football. "The clients are extremely satisfied with the finished product, which is well supported by its constant use by the owners' sons and friends," says Justine.

With its new entertaining space and chill-out zone snug under a stunning leafy pergola, this rustic, tranquil garden has certainly found its wow factor. Creating a picturesque view from inside the house, the garden's unique planted centrepiece will draw its owners outdoors all year round. "From a designer's perspective, the finished product achieved all the design aspirations and it is particularly pleasing that the clients were entirely satisfied with the outcome." justinecarlile.com.au

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JUSTINE CARLILE

