

6 It feels like a bush house when you enter the front door.



Sustainable living ... With its concrete composite floors (above), removable decking in the bathroom (below right) and preservation of the site's original trees (below, opposite), this Sunshine Coast house makes the most of its natural setting.



You could say there are three “main events” in experiencing this house at Peragian Beach on the Sunshine Coast. One is the outlook north to a wetland reserve through walls of operable glass. The second is the lovely journey up a series of timber platforms, under mature Moreton Bay Ash trees and banksias, to the front door. The third is the evocative suspended pandanus leaf sculpture of a stingray that hangs above the dining table, compliments of Arnhem Land artist Vera Cameron.

The house was built for a family of four who moved from hinterland acreage to be closer to the sea and to schools, and who wanted to downsize and reduce maintenance. Their brief to architects Lindy Atkin and Stephen Guthrie of Bark Design was to create a home of sustainable materials. The aptly named Bark preserved and celebrated the existing trees, and built the house around them. “It feels like a bush house when you enter through the front door,” Guthrie says.

Bedrooms were made compact so that more of the budget could be allocated to the central living space, whose floors are concrete mixed with fly ash (an aluminium by-product), a “green” alternative. Another feat of compaction is in the main bathroom, where removable timber decking acts as the shower floor and can be uncovered in threes to reveal a sunken bathtub. A glass ceiling provides views to the trees, and a plunge pool and spa also nestle under foliage.

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