





DESIGN DETERMINATION

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Stacker doors open up the entire double height space to the entertainment and pool area



A property on a narrow site with no views and surrounded by four houses and a duplex, does not sound like a charming prospect. But the location, just a few streets back from the beach and within walking distance of the Sunshine Beach village with its vibrant cafes, restaurants and boutique shops was a dream for the Melbourne family who had been visiting the area for years.

A call was made to Stephen Guthrie and Lindy Atkin of Bark Design Architects, who fortunately, approach a difficult challenge with unwavering design determination.

How to create a private oasis with so many potential peering eyes was the first and most important consideration. How to design a property that in itself would provide the views that were lacking in the street environment was the second.

The brief to Noosa's Bark Design was to design a retreat-style home that could be easily closed up when the owners returned to Melbourne, yet would have all the hallmarks of an authentic beach house to reflect the seaside/village ambience of the area.

The property had to be a complete contrast to the owners' Melbourne property, a place they could escape to for short or long breaks where everything required for their comfort and holiday living was waiting.

Although it was paramount for the home to offer practical liveability, with kids and friends tramping in from the beach, it also had to look contemporary and fit in with the other striking homes in the desirable area of Sunshine Beach.

Lindy and Stephen set about designing a home on the awkward block that would fit all the family's requirements. They immediately saw that two

separate wings would work well. Kids and their friends and guests at one end with their own space, the parents at the other.

These two separate wings had to be centralised around a relaxed but modern living space and above all, the house must be light-filled while at the same time keeping neighbouring houses out of sight as much as possible.

Polished concrete floors offer practicality when the gang comes in from the beach, but is softened by an abundance of warm timber on stairways, and sturdy carpet in the bedrooms.

Off the entry and upstairs is the guest/children's wing, media/rumpus room and mezzanine office area. This wing is connected to the parent's retreat by a timber bridge that looks over the double height living space.

Bunk-style bedroom furniture in the guest wing has been designed and custom-made to ensure the home can sleep as many people as possible – up to 12 at a time. The bedrooms all have upholstered window seat boxes that overhang the building, giving a sense of more space, and the intimacy of a reading nook.

Across the timber bridge the entire northern wing comprises the master-suite retreat. Again the window seat floods the space with light, and in here, again the furniture has been designed by Bark to reflect the home's contemporary design and add to the simplicity of beachside living.

The ensuite bathroom is an oasis of privacy – surprising when you consider its internal louvres look down on to the living area.

"We put the louvres in upside down in here," Lindy laughed. "That way anyone using the bathroom can look down to the living area but the people downstairs can't see up. It offers privacy yet at the same time gives extra light and natural breeze."





Downstairs, the galley timber and stone kitchen overlooks the dining/living and lounge area that extends out to a large billiard/games room at the end of the space. To the side, stacker doors open up the entire double height space to the entertainment and pool area offering an indoor/outdoor area protected from all weather conditions.

This is the heart of the house, the place where the clever use of space and the raised concrete pool with long glass panel just above ground level become the view.

To block out neighbouring properties overlooking the entertainment area Stephen and Lindy designed a high level 'green' screen of timber, coastal vines and stainless steel wire that filters light while giving complete privacy and striking aesthetic appeal.

The barbeque area by the pool is easily accessed from the kitchen, making entertaining easy, never separating the hosts from their guests. With its sleek CaesarStone bench, timber cupboards and butlers' pantry, the kitchen is as practical as it is beautiful.

High level clerestory windows and low window panels are a distinctive feature of the living space and not only provide essential northern light in a crowded neighbourhood but give delightful glimpses of the sky and outside greenery.

Furniture has been kept simple but glamorous with built-in wall cabinets, low banquettes, a gas fireplace, a king sofa, and round coffee table, all selected by Bark in conjunction with the clients. Nothing is overdone and it allows the large David Trubridge woven bamboo chandeliers hanging from the double height ceilings to take centre stage. At night with the clever use of up and down lighting, along with the blue glow through the glass panel in the pool, the house becomes impossibly romantic.

Being so close to a surf beach, careful material choices were essential. Timber and glass louvres, exposed timber framing, polished concrete, exposed studs and fibro weatherboards have all been used, and while they create a contemporary look so suited to Sunshine Beach, they can easily stand up to strong coastal wind and ocean elements.

Nothing has been overlooked in the design of this house to ensure the Melbourne family can arrive and make themselves comfortable within minutes of opening the front door.