

OUTDOORS

IDEAS AND INSPIRATION FOR STYLISH OUTDOOR LIVING



INSPIRATION: STATELY ESCAPE

MOTIVATED BY THE TONES AND TEXTURES OF THE NAPA VALLEY IN CALIFORNIA, THIS ELEGANT OUTDOOR RETREAT IN SYDNEY'S NORTH DELIGHTS ALL YEAR ROUND

Words ANNA McCLELLAND Photography NATALIE SPADAVECCHIA

It's safe to say this sophisticated Napa Valley-inspired pavilion, with its soaring ceilings, luxurious finishes and astonishing attention to detail, isn't your average cabana. Overlooking a tennis court on one side and a glittering pool on the other, it's testament to the skilled eye of Darren Mills, co-founder of architectural design and construction firm Cadence & Co, who was tasked with creating a luxurious outdoor retreat on a rolling acreage just inland of Sydney's northern beaches.

Part of a large-scale project to transform the five-acre site – a former horse facility that had run into neglect – the pavilion mirrors the tones and textures of the new family home beyond, which is nestled in a stunning landscape that includes rejuvenated stables, a kitchen garden and chicken house. “We chose an earthy, natural palette to help the structures soften into the surrounding landscape,” Darren explains. “We wanted a mountain home similar to what you'd find in the Napa Valley, with natural materials and a real sense of scale.” A facade coated in Resene Oilskin Half, rough-sawn hardwood pergola and Western red cedar shingles, left to age naturally, combine to create a look of rustic luxury, while inside, dramatic vaulted ceilings and vertical cladding give the effect of a cosy American lodge – particularly when the fire is roaring in winter. “It's a versatile space that gets used by the family's children and grandchildren, all year around,” Darren says. “When you're working on acreage you have the luxury of space, which means you can include many different elements.”

Shaded by a wisteria-covered arbour, a row of deckchairs runs parallel to the pool, complete with an outdoor fire pit for cooler nights and a hammock for lazing in the sunshine.

The size of the property also demanded a rethink of standard building scale. “You can't use suburban scale when you're working on acreage, or everything will look undersize,” Darren explains. “Everything has to be generous in proportion.” Even the plantings, while minimal, serve as striking showpieces, such as the pair of massive Canary Island date palms flanking the pavilion, which also cast spectacular reflections in the pool.

“It's a very relaxing place to be,” Darren says. “It gives you the ability to get out of the sun and spend more time around the pool.” On a scorching summer's day, where else would you rather be?



GRAND AMBITIONS

"We wanted the pavilion to feel and function like a proper room," explains Michael Kilkeary, Cadence & Co head of design, who devised the pavilion concept. Carrying the walls' paint colour – Resene Drought Half – onto the ceiling in a quarter-strength accentuates the room's grand sense of height, while providing a warmth beyond the reach of standard white. James Hardie 'HardiePlank' cladding and pine batons line the walls for a luxurious lodge look that's surprisingly inexpensive. "It's typically used as cheap external cladding, but in a different format can actually give a very luxe feel," Darren reveals. >

"THE PAVILION GIVES
YOU THE ABILITY TO
MAKE A DRINK OUT
OF THE SUN"


~ DARREN MILLS, CO-FOUNDER, CADENCE & CO



MATCH POINT

Windows soak up views of the tennis court and glorious bushland beyond. Tactile Solis cane blinds provide protection from the western sun and echo the tones of the Alfresco Emporium jute rug. Custom-mixed Antique Stone floor tiles lay a sophisticated foundation that connects the pavilion visually to the pool.





"WE WANTED TO CREATE AN
underrated SENSE OF LUXURY
THAT FEELS CASUAL RATHER
THAN FORMAL"

~ MICHAEL KILKEARY, HEAD OF DESIGN, CADENCE & CO

OASIS AWAITS

Occupying pride of place at the end of a sun-drenched pool, the exquisite pavilion (opposite) radiates wow factor. The pool's brilliant shade of aqua-blue is thanks to a pure white pebblecrete that naturally throws the colour of the sky above. "The intention was to keep the pool and landscape simple, but with a feeling of luxury," says Cadence & Co. co-founder Darren Mills. Antique Stone coping lends a weathered elegance in keeping with the natural materials. 