

spreading the joy

Featuring a soothing green and white colour palette, this elegant poolside sanctuary in Sydney's Inner West is one young family's happy place

WORDS Karen Booth PHOTOGRAPHY Simon Whitbread DESIGN Garden Society







The aim was to use mature plants to create a rich, deep-green backdrop

design file

OBJECTIVE

With a new pool installed and a pool house built, it was time to pull together the outdoor entertaining spaces. The aim was to establish a seamless transition between zones with a unifying palette of plants and materials.

SOLUTION

To create cohesion between the three living spaces, each has a look of casual elegance and an emphasis on classical planting. The owners favoured a fresh palette of green and white, and the repeated use of these colours has an extremely soothing and unifying effect.

OUTCOME

The pool forms the centrepiece of a beautiful, perfectly blended outdoor entertaining hub that enjoys a tranquil ambience and an always-green outlook. The addition of the pool house gives the family another place to relax on a sunny weekend and the kids love it.

Frank and Anna had just completed a renovation of their family home in Concord, considered to be the “parklands” of Sydney’s Inner West. The renovation extended to putting a swimming pool in the backyard, much to the delight of their three children and Louie the French bulldog. An addition to the garage made possible the creation of a pool house and with that, the major structural components of the family’s new outdoor entertaining space were in place.

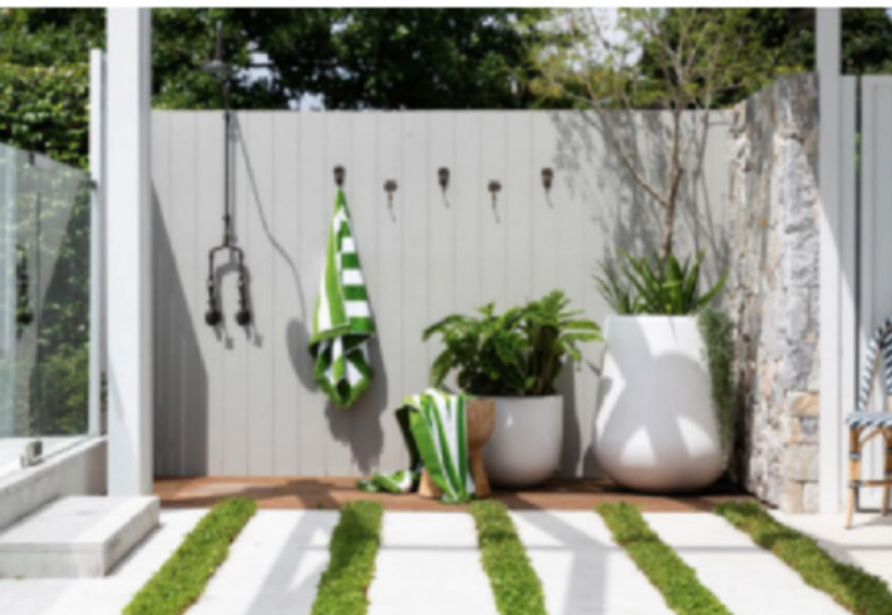
Building work done, the baton passed to Lyndall Keating. A landscape designer, horticulturist and founder of Garden Society, Lyndall worked closely with Anna to carry the vision she had for the backyard over the finishing line.

“Anna’s brief was very clear. To create a classic entertaining space using a subdued colour palette of green and white. The renovated areas of the home had a strong aesthetic and we needed to carry that through in the design of the garden so there was a seamless transition,” says Lyndall.

The look they yearned for was one of informal elegance, but the layout had to be functional and the flow natural. “This was achieved by creating three distinct zones. The top tier is the alfresco area at the rear of the house with an outdoor fireplace and pizzeria. The second is the pool and then you take a step down to the pool house,” says Lyndall.

The pool is embraced by frameless glass fencing which allows clear sightlines around the garden. This enables the eye to

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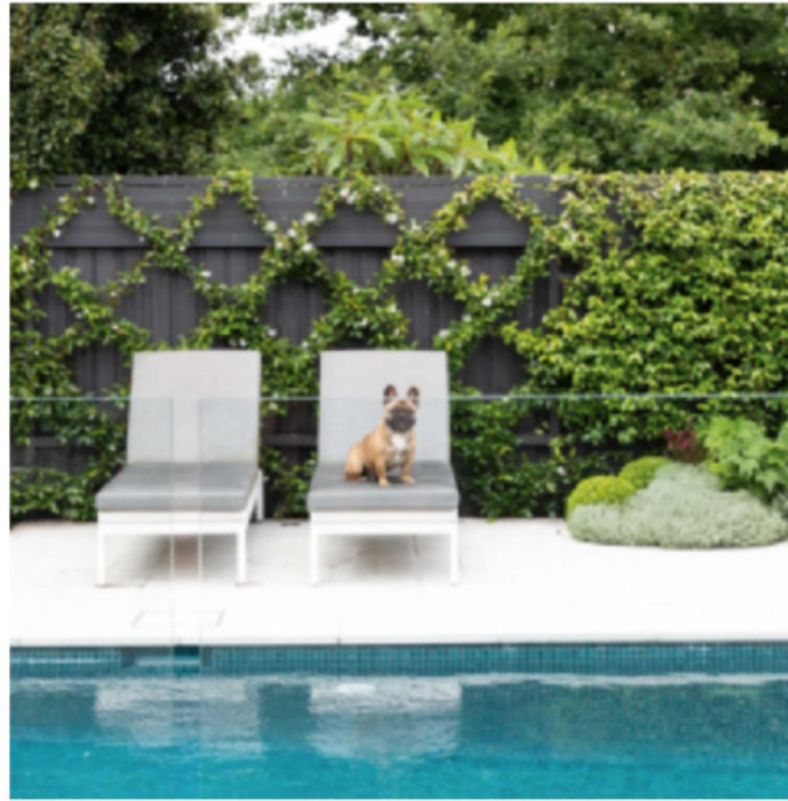


Ensuring an effortless transition from the home through the pool area and down to the pool house was essential





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room free from obstruction, reinforcing the easy sense of flow and ensuring the entire pool area feels open and welcoming.

It's the planting along the boundary wall that makes the transition from home to pool house so effortless, however. Located in the centre of this wall of green is a work of living art — star jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*) trained to grow on wires arranged in a diamond pattern. This flourish of formality intrigues and when the star jasmine is in bloom, the scent is intoxicating.

The plantscape is of classic style but there is a softness about it. "Anna was very involved in the choice of plants, requesting white flowers to complement the greenery and adding in a few of her favourites," says Lyndall. "These favourites included some fragrant plantings like the star jasmine and gardenias."

Ensuring there will be something in bloom from spring to late autumn, there is a mix of perennials with different flowering times, such as licorice plant (*Helichrysum petiolare*). Low-growing shrubs, butterfly bush (*Buddleia davidii*) and lavender cotton (*Santolina chamaecyparissus*), also contribute flowers as do the hydrangeas (*Hydrangea macrophylla*) planted along the base of the garden beds lining the fence on the far side of the garden. These beauties are another of Anna's faves.

"We wanted the garden to have a deep, rich-green backdrop and the borrowed landscape certainly assisted with that," says Lyndall. "To create the established look we

wanted within the walls of the backyard, we used mature plantings for the trees and hedging, thereby avoiding that awkward development stage and going straight to that grown-in look and feel."

In the space between the pool and pool house, long tiled strips were installed with kidney weed (*Dichondra repens*) planted in between to provide instant coverage. "The result is an area that feels dry underfoot, even when you have just stepped out of the pool. Visually, it offers a nice softness and cools the area down during the height of summer," says Lyndall.

To one side there is an outdoor shower area with two large white feature pots. One is home to a zebra plant (*Calathea zebrina*), a real head-turner with its boldly-striped lime-green foliage. Two more white pots, one positioned at the base of each support post on the other side of the pool house pergola, have been planted with a climber, *Dipladenia*, known as Brazilian jasmine. In time, this will grow over the top of the pergola to provide dappled shade.

"Frank and Anna love how each area blends seamlessly with the next, and they use those areas often, either as a family or when they entertain. For me, one of the most satisfying aspects was working with Anna. It's always a pleasure when there is a mutual love of gardens and a shared understanding of how a garden can bring so much joy to one's life," says Lyndall.

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THIS PAGE The planting leans towards the classic with many of the owners' favourites, such as hydrangeas, included in the mix

OPPOSITE PAGE Large white pots draw the eye but allow the feature plants to be the focus, adding a burst of strong colour