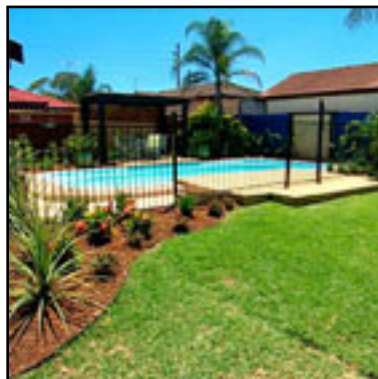


# BACKYARD BLITZ

## Jungle Fever



Michael Luxford is an old fashioned bloke from a large family, so when he met and fell in love with Therese he fell in love with her five children as well. Michael has become the model husband and father to Therese and her children, giving them all his constant support, encouragement and time.

Therese feels that Michael has helped her to kick start her life again and wants to thank him by having the backyard ready for their upcoming wedding ceremony. Therese wrote to Backyard Blitz last year asking for some help in surprising and thanking the new man in her life.



## Design intent

Landscape designer, Lisa Whitton, has captured Therese's love of the tropics in this idyllic poolside landscape. Large palms, bright colours and a boardwalk provide the oasis theme, while a rustic pergola creates a cool spot to sit and watch the children play in the pool.

## Design ideas

Uniformity in materials and colours provides a strong backdrop to this garden design. Many people make the mistake of introducing too many different materials into a design, which makes the space appear cluttered and busy. Try to limit your design to a few strong colours for the best results.

## Adapting this plan to your garden

Make a detailed scale drawing of your backyard (eg 1:100) showing the location of the house and major features, and then incorporate the desired elements from our makeover. As your garden will be a different size, you will need to estimate the required amounts of materials.

**Note:** On your plan show the locations of any services (water pipes, sewerage, power, phone, etc) so you can avoid damaging them during the makeover.

Permits and approvals: Check with your local council regarding regulations about structures in the backyard. Always talk to your neighbours and the council before commencing your project as it could save you thousands of dollars and will help to make the project run smoothly.

## Getting started

The limited access to the rear garden meant that the initial clear out of the site had to be done by hand. The old pool fence was removed to increase access and the concrete pavers were lifted and removed in preparation for the new paving.

## Garden elements

**Rustic pergola:** Scott knocked up a rustic pergola to provide a sheltered spot for Therese and Michael to watch the children at play and to blend into the newly planted garden. Scott created a chunky look by connecting two treated pine posts (90x90mm, H4) close together for a more robust looking structure. Posts were installed vertically in quick setting concrete after they were pre-painted. Beams (190x45mm) were bolted in place with rafters (140x45mm) nailed between the beams to create a sloping roof. Two rolls of Natureed (1800x3600mm) connected to the top of the pergola with fencing staples provide shade and a tropical feel to the space beneath.

**Blitz Tipz:** A waterproofing agent called Gripset was diluted with water to give the new treated pine a distressed timber appearance. Experiment on scraps of timber of the same colour to achieve the desired effect.



**Natureed and bamboo screens:** Jamie made some stylish screens to enhance the jungle theme by cladding the existing fence with Natureed and bamboo. Treated pine (70x35mm) screw-fixed to the metal fence provides a framework to attach the cladding. A finishing gun or electric stapler provides a clean neat finish and will hold the screens in place.



**Sleeper boardwalk:** Jamie and Scott built matching sleeper boardwalks on opposite sides of the swimming pool. Sleepers (2400x200x75mm) laid as bearers at right angles to the direction of the sleeper boardwalk provide a stable and level framework for the sleepers nailed above them. Galvanised decking spikes (150mmx9mm) were used to connect the boardwalk sleepers to the bearers. Once the sleepers were laid the ends were cut flush and straight.

**Blitz Tip:** Timber shrinks and swells when exposed to weather. Make sure the sleepers are nailed close to each other to minimise the impact of weathering.

**Paving:** Nigel laid Stepstone pavers (400x400mm, Sunstone colour) to provide a flat level surface to walk around the pool, and to give the space a more contemporary feel. A compacted sub-grade of roadbase 100mm thick supports the coarse washed bedding sand spread 30mm thick. Pavers were laid in a stretcher bond pattern and grout sand was swept through the gaps. A concrete haunch around the perimeter of the job locks it all in place and prevents the bedding sand from washing out.

**Blitz Tip:** Start your paving along the longest straight edge you can to minimise the need to cut pavers.



**Pool fence:** A new pool fence was installed by Jamie. A black fence was chosen as it blends well with the background. As required by law it has a self closing gate and lockable magnetic latch. The pool fence cost about \$1200 for materials only and could be installed by any competent handyperson.

**Blitz Tipz:** Pool fences must comply with a number of height, bar spacing and ground clearance requirements. Swimming pool fence requirements vary across Australia so check with your local Swimming Pool and Spa Association (SPASA) in your state.



**Garden beds:** Jody incorporated an organic soil mix through her new garden beds to ensure quick plant establishment. A mulch of horticultural grade pine bark (15mm) spread to a depth of 75mm thick will help to maintain soil temperature and reduce weed regrowth, as will the Nepean River pebble (20-40mm) she spread for a contrast.

**Blitz Tipz:** Large diameter pebbles were chosen to prevent them from being blown or washed into the pool.

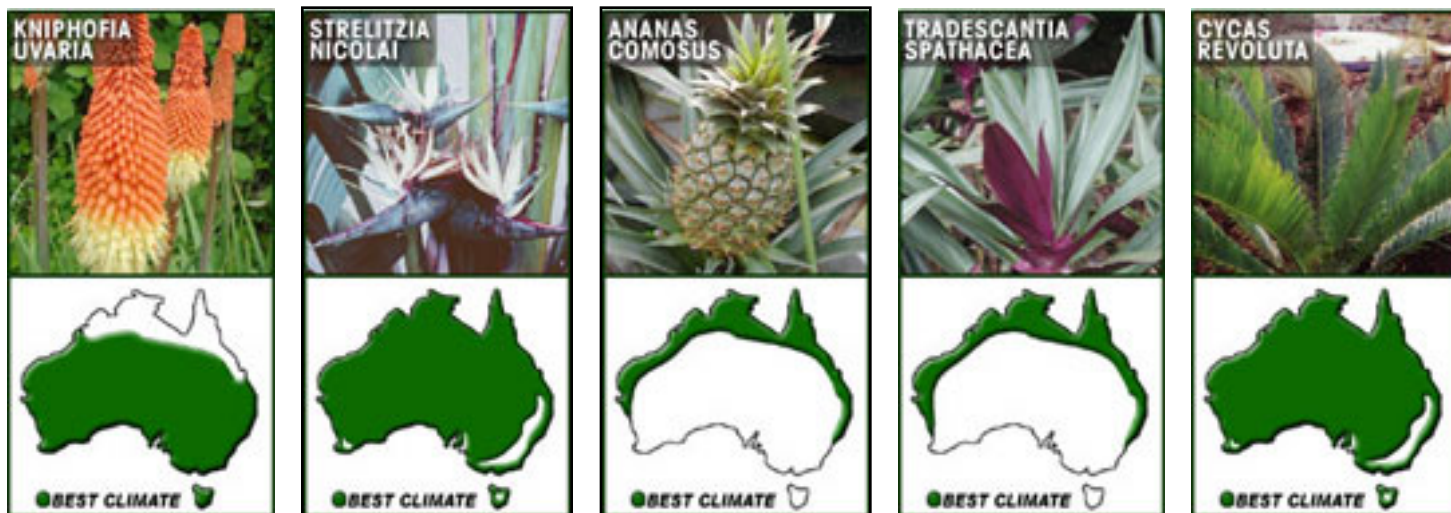
## Plants

Hardy, attractive plants have been selected for this poolside location. These plants are a great choice for a pool surround as they require a minimum of care and create very little mess.

**Tall accent plants:** giant bird of paradise (*Strelitzia nicolai*), golden cane palm (*Dyopsis lutescens*), New Zealand cabbage tree (*Cordyline australis*), cycad (*Cycas revoluta*)

**Shrubs:** ixora (*Ixora chinensis*), xylosma (*Xylosma japonicum*)

**Perennials:** dietes (*Dietes iridoides*), liriopie (*Liriopie 'Evergreen Giant'*), pineapple (*Ananas comosus*), red hot poker (*Kniphofia uvaria*), rhoeo (*Tradescantia spathacea*)



## Cost and availability

We used mature plants in our makeover to create an instant effect for television. As a result, our total cost for plants and materials was \$10,798. The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$8675.

## Product details

- The beautiful green pots were sourced from Motyaj in Sydney, phone (02) 9618 6866 for more details.
- The Sunstone coloured pavers are from the Stepstone range manufactured by C&M Bricks. They cost about \$45 per square metre.
- Natureed and bamboo cladding was supplied by House of Bamboo in Sydney. Phone (02) 9666 5703 for more information on their great range of products.
- Most of the plants we used are readily available at, or can be ordered from, nurseries. Nurseries can also advise on similar varieties suited to your area. You may need to contact specialist nurseries for some plants. Your local nursery should be able to provide you with contacts.
- Most other materials are available from large hardware stores or building or landscape suppliers.
- All tools used are commonly available for hire, including the concrete mixer and the nail gun.



## Getaway details

### Accommodation:

Mowbray Park  
Barker's Lodge Road  
Picton NSW 2573  
Phone: (02) 4680 9243  
Web: [www.farmstayholidays.com.au](http://www.farmstayholidays.com.au)

## Acknowledgements

**Design by:**  
Lisa Whitton



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Construction by the Backyard Blitz team (all gardens are gifts from Backyard Blitz).



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