

BACKYARD BLITZ

The Entertainer



Marty and Mitch's love is contagious. They have the extraordinary ability to make everyone around them feel welcome, special and completely loved. They have 2 sons, James who is 10 years old and Saxon who is 4 years old. They have been married for 15 years and their extended family is enormous.

Design intent

The aim was to design a garden with plenty of wide open spaces for all the kids and an area for mum and dad to entertain their large, extended family and their friends. Designer Andrew Davies created a garden with a tropical theme, featuring attractive foliage plants and an expansive lawn area. A Balinese-style pavilion sets off the tropical theme and gives family and friends a place to relax, while watching the kids play.



Design ideas

This household is a home away from home for Marty and Mitch's family, who are mostly Tongans. The backyard had to reflect the strong family values of the Tongans. There also had to be plenty of space for kids, and outdoor areas for the adults to entertain their friends. The Balinese hut is a perfect place to unwind, and the tropical theme in the garden will remind the family of home.

Adapting this plan to your garden

Make a detailed scale drawing of your backyard (e.g. 1:100) showing the location of the house and major features, 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 or water supplier regarding water restrictions. We employed a plumber to ensure that no water is wasted in our water feature and that all regulations could be met.

Getting started

A bobcat was used to excavate the site. Post holes for the deck were drilled with the auger on the bobcat.

Garden elements



Sheltered deck: Scott built a deck under the beautiful Balinese pavilion. It was slightly raised above the ground by 400mm. He used joists (200x50mm sleepers), and pre-stained, H3 treated pine decking boards (190x35mm). The decking boards were laid in a cross-thatched pattern with overhang at the edges. Scott tacked the decking boards down onto the joists with a nail gun, and once he was satisfied that everything was straight, he then screwed them down using batten screws. The decking was attached to posts that were set in the ground using rapidset concrete. The decking was bolted into the posts with galvanised bolts. **Blitz Tipz:** We used treated pine sleepers as joists because they are suitable for in-ground use.

Balinese-style pavilion: The pavilion comes in a kit form with the timbers pre-cut, and simply fits together like a jigsaw puzzle. The beams are notched to accommodate the posts and roof rafters. Once Scott and the team from Bali Style finished the assembly, the pavilion was thatched with Kunai grass, or Alang-Alang as the Balinese call it. The hand-woven thatch was lashed onto bamboo battens spaced on the rafters at 60mm centres. A nail gun with galvanised nails was used to fix nails through the bamboo battens and into the roof rafters. Finally, Nigel attached Balinese carvings to the posts, beams and fascias, to give the pavilion an authentic feel. **Blitz Tipz:** Kit form pavilions are available in a range of sizes to suit your budget. See the website for details: www.balistyle.com.au



Oriental fountain: Jamie used an Indonesian terracotta water bowl to create a water fountain. He drilled a hole through the side of the pot and glued a flange on both the inside and outside, then inserted a 19mm plastic pipe through the hole and up through the pot. A custom-built bamboo spout on top of the pipe, with a bamboo side piece positioned over the top of bowl circulates back into the bowl. A low voltage pump was used to pump water up the spout into the bowl. **Blitz Tipz:** Tank flanges are available from irrigation specialists and rural stores.

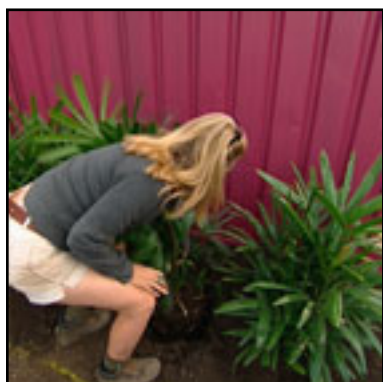


Balinese statue: Jamie positioned a Balinese statue in the middle of the dianella border. First, he built a simple brick plinth to raise the statue up out of the garden. He then drilled a hole in the base of the statue, inserted a rod and then attached the rod into the plinth with concrete. **Blitz Tipz:** Ensure ornaments in the garden cannot fall over.

Reed screen: Jamie decided that the old tin shed needed a quick makeover to match the rest of the backyard. He attached a product called 'Natureed' to the shed. It comes in 1.8m lengths x 3.6m widths. He installed battens into the top and bottom of the shed and stapled the reed screen to the battens with a staple gun.

Garden plants: Jody wanted to use lots of lush foliage to give the garden strong colours that are so typical in a tropical garden. She went to a nursery and discovered a wonderful subtropical plant she had never used before called *Alberta magna*, which she planted along the fence as a screen. She painted the fence a bright scarlet colour to add drama and provide a backdrop to the shiny green foliage and salmon-coloured flowers of the albertas. Around the hut in the curved gardens Jody planted cordylines, ctenanthes, and New Zealand flax. The garden was edged with white pebbles, held in place with flexible Roocycle garden edging. **Blitz Tipz:** Flexible Roocycle garden edging is available from Moodie Solutions. They come in 2.4m lengths x 100mm widths x 8mm thickness and cost \$12 per length.

Potted plants: Jody added good quality potting mix and horticultural grade pine bark to two Bali style pots, which she then planted with assorted bromeliads to give year round colour on the deck.



Plants

Trees: Natal flame bush (*Alberta magna*)

Foliage plants: dianella (*Dianella 'Border Silver'*), cordyline rubra (*Cordyline fruticosa 'Rubra'*), variegated shell ginger (*Alpinia zerumbet 'Variegata'*), mini mondo grass (*Ophiopogon japonicus 'Compactus'*), New Zealand flax (*Phormium tenax 'Yellow Star'*), bromeliads (*Bromeliad* hybrids), ctenanthe (*Ctenanthe 'Grey Star'*)



Cost and availability

We used mature plants in our makeover to create an instant effect for television. As a result, our cost of plants and materials for this makeover was \$13,850. Using smaller plants would reduce the price to \$11,427.

Product details

- The power broom fits only Shindaiwa brushcutters and costs around \$1200.
- The Balinese statue cost about \$250 and is available from Bali Style. Contact phone no: (02) 4365 5440.
- The Bali pavilion cost about \$6000 and is available from Bali Style.
- 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.
- All tools used are commonly available for hire, including the mini loader and nail gun.



Getaway details

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Acknowledgments

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