

BACKYARD BLITZ

Ultimate Outdoor Entertainer



Isn't it every family's dream – to have the ultimate outdoor entertaining area? In this episode, we created a luxury outdoor entertaining area for an Aussie family that love living outdoors.

Having won our very first ever Backyard Blitz "Battle of the Backyards" Competition, 10 year old Courtney Howard from Queensland wanted the garden to be for her hero, her father John. Blitz however, also had a little surprise in mind for Courtney. Thinking that they were to stay in Sydney for the week, we instead sent the whole family to Fiji! Not bad for a family that hadn't been on a plane before!

Meanwhile battling the recent South East Queensland floods, no expense was spared on the outdoor room that included a BBQ, sink, granite benchtops, an ice-making fridge, and a plasma television.



Design brief

To create a garden that complemented the recently installed pool and to give the family an outdoor entertaining area. To achieve this, we built retaining walls to give levels, a paved area with pergola for shade, a dry river bed beside the pool and a pavilion with an outdoor kitchen complete with dishwasher, insulated panels, barbecue, fridge, sink and plasma television.

We used predominantly native plants in this expansive garden to complement the borrowed backdrop of existing eucalypts on the block.



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 then incorporate the desired elements from our makeover. As your garden will be a different size you will need to estimate the amounts of materials you will require.

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 approval: check with your local council regarding regulations about earthworks and drainage. If you are changing existing levels or installing drainage ensure no water run-off is directed toward neighbouring properties. Any water entering the storm water system must be free from debris and sediment.

Getting started

Clear the garden of unwanted debris and vegetation.

Once the design is complete, mark it out on the ground with aerosol survey paint and ensure that everything fits and make any necessary

adjustments.

Garden elements

Retaining walls: Sandstone boulders (\$100 - \$150 per sq.m) this size will require the use of an earthmoving machine to place them. A boulder that can be man- handled will take much more time and labour to place.

Paving: Nigel excavated 200mm to allow for substrate of compacted roadbase, approx. 120mm thick and 30-50mm of screeded paving sand. Nigel laid pavers in pattern, edges were haunched with a 4:1 sand/ cement mixture to keep pavers in place and stop any movement of pavers.



Verandah: Scottie drilled holes for metal posts and beams were bolted to the top of these posts. Rafters were not required as Solarspan can span up to 5 metres without support. C-channel was attached to fascia of house and Solarspan was rivetted to the C-channel

Pavilion: The ground was levelled and the positions for the posts were measured as these were to be concreted in when we lay out the slab. Special care was taken to make sure the posts were in exactly the right position. Formwork was then put into position and plastic laid out as a moisture barrier. Reinforcing steel F72 was placed into position, overlapped at least two grids, and tied with wire. 50mm saddles were used to separate the mesh from ground level. The concrete was poured and screeded. Once the concrete went off, C-channel was bolted to the concrete so that the Solarspan wall panels could be placed. Once the walls were in place, the ceiling was attached using aluminium angle and rivetted to the walls. At this stage, the bifold frame was put into position and the doors attached. The doors were double-glazed for insulation

properties after they were installed. Various fascias and gutters were put into place to finish off the job.



Deck: Scottie prepared the area around the pool. 100mm of roadbase was then compacted. Sleepers were used as bearers, directly laid on the ground, using a straight edge to make sure they were all level to each other. 140x45mm merbau hardwood was used as decking boards. These were screwed into position using galvanised bugle head screws.

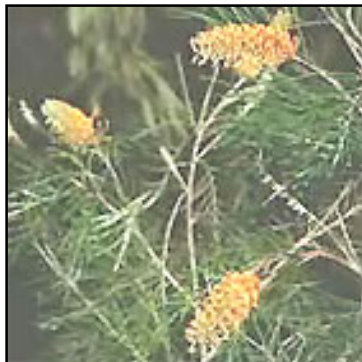
Drainage: A dry river bed was created to stop water flowing through into the pool and to allow quick exit of water to another part of the yard. To finish off, riverstone was laid to give a decorative finish.

Similarly, the turf area had a layer of 10mm gravel, followed by river sand to aid in drainage. Then a sand/soil mix as a turf underlay was screeded prior to laying turf. The turf was then rolled.

Garden: We went for a predominantly native feel in this expansive garden to complement the borrowed backdrop of existing eucalypts on the block. To breath some life back into the compacted and nutrient poor soil we incorporated a great native garden mix, tilled the soil over with our excavator and mounded our beds to improve drainage. Lime was added to the soil in accordance to recommendations we received from a soil testing facility which showed the existing soil to be slightly acidic. We also applied a slow release native fertiliser to our beds after planting.

Broad-domed trees such as tuckeroos and poincianas set the backdrop and enclosed the area with under plantings of lomandra and ground-hugging grevilleas. Specimen bottle trees drew the eye throughout the garden and added some drama to the landscape whilst a mixture of hardy native strappy plants such as paroo lilies, kangaroo paws and aristeas not only added texture and movement to the garden but also

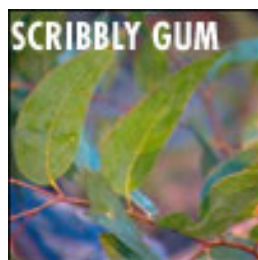
add colour throughout the seasons with their striking flowers. To introduce our beautiful native birds back into the garden we used some of the best grevilleas including 'Honey Gem', 'Moonlight' and 'Ned Kelly' which in turn will fill our beds in the foreground with masses of flower.



Plants

Trees and shrubs: Tuckeroo (*Cupaniopsis anacardioides*), scrub cherry (*Syzygium 'Aussie Southern'*), scribbly gum (*Eucalyptus racemosa*), poinciana (*Delonix regia*), bottle tree (*Brachychiton rupestris*), grevillea (*Grevillea 'Moonlight'*), (*Grevillea 'Honey Gem'*), (*Grevillea 'Ned Kelly'*), (*Grevillea 'Scarlet sprite'*)

Perennials: creeping boobialla (*Myoporum parvifolium*), fan flower (*Scaevola Mauve Clusters*), kangaroo paw (*Anigozanthus Bush gem* series), paroo lily (*Dianella caerulea*), blue fescue (*Festuca glauca*), lomandra (*Lomandra 'Tanika'*), Spanish iris (*Diets bicolour*)



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 \$100,550. The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$94,847. The cost excluding the pavillion, patio and accessories was \$29,129.

Product Details

- 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 mini loader and the nail gun.
- All timber supplies and information come from Midcoast Timber Centres Website: www.midcoasttimber.com.au
- Bondor supplied Solarspan™ insulated panels. For information on these panels and other insulated panel systems, visit www.solarspan.com.au
- G. James Glass & Aluminium supplied the 6 panel bi-fold door glazed with new Solect® High Performance Grey Laminated Glass. The frame finish featured new Effecta® Cedar Powder Coat; in NSW and Queensland, phone 132 877 or visit www.gjames.com.au. For enquiries in other states, please phone (07) 3877 2238.
- BeefEater barbecue and Ivis outdoor kitchen, phone 1800 356 660 or visit web: [www: beefeaterbbq.com](http://www.beefeaterbbq.com)
- Parbury Silestone bench tops, phone 1300 361 313 or visit www.parbury.com.au
- Rheem Instant Hot Water, phone (02) 9684 9100 or visit web: www.rheem.com.au
- Fridge, dishwasher and plasma television from Harvey Norman, visit www.harveynorman.com.au
- Table - supplied by "Konteaki" - Leichhardt, Sydney (02) 9518 1755, web: www.konteaki.com
- Chairs – supplied by "Sit 'n Sleep" - St. Leonards, Sydney, phone: (02) 9460 9935.

Backyard Blitz would like to thank the following companies for their generous donations to the Howard family: Bondor, BeefEater, Woodlands Home Products, Parbury, Rheem, Harvey Norman and G. James

Holiday Details

The Howard Family flew with Air Pacific plus Qantas Holidays

Web: www.airpacific.com

Web: www.qantas.com/holidays

Accommodation

Sydney: Sheraton on the Park
161 Elizabeth Street, Sydney
Phone: (02) 9286 6000

Fiji: Sheraton Denarau Villas
Denarau Island West
Phone: (679) 675 0777

The Sheraton Group website - www.starwoodhotels.com/sheraton

Activities

The Howard's recreational activities were facilitated by the ATS Pacific travel group.

Web: www.atspacific.com.au

Viti Eco Tour

Offers day trips intended to introduce something of Fiji's culture, tradition and natural beauty.

Lot 17, ATS Subdivision

Votualevu, Nadi

Phone: (679) 672 4312

Web: www.fijiecotours.com

South Sea Cruises

Is one of Fiji's most established cruise operators, and provides a range of day trips through some of Fiji's most picturesque locations. The family took the South Sea and Mana island tours.

Port Denarau, Nadi, Fiji

Phone: (679) 675 0500

Fax: (679) 675 0501

Web: www.ssc.com.fj

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

© CTC Productions 14 2005

For more Step by Step Constructions click [here](#)

