

BACKYARD BLITZ

Take It Or Leave It



Like many Australians Therese Fox was holidaying in Bali in October 2002. Therese was the most severely injured Australian survivor of the Bali bombings and is still receiving hospital treatment to this day. Therese faces an uncertain future until her injuries heal and she can assess any work she may be able to perform. As a single mother to two children Therese deserves all the help she is offered and the Backyard Blitz team were only too happy to provide some joy for Therese and her family by creating a stylish sheltered courtyard for them to enjoy now and take with them when they move.



Design intent

Landscape designer, Jim Fogarty has created a stylish portable garden in what was an unattractive carport. Subdued colours create a calming feel while the new garden elements lend sophistication and a casual elegance to the space. Jim's design objectives have been achieved with planning and an eye for detail by the whole team.

Design ideas

This courtyard has a reason to be used now that it has been enclosed and a sense of intimacy created. Privacy has been created through the clever use of shadesails and outdoor blinds, but also through the arrangement of the internal features. This garden feels more like an outdoor lounge room than an extension of the garage.

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 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 water features. If your water feature is deeper than a certain depth, you may be required to erect a pool fence around it. The depths vary between council areas across Australia.

Getting started

A bobcat was used to lift the existing pavers and to excavate soil to appropriate levels. Roadbase and sand were brought onto the site and a high pressure cleaner was used to bring the dirty pavers a new lease on life.

Garden elements

Timber benches: Scott knocked up some great looking portable timber benches using treated pine and Merbau decking. A rectangular frame of treated pine (90x45mm) nailed together provides a solid support for the decking timbers and the people sitting on top. Merbau decking cut to length and nailed to the frame with stainless steel spiral shanked nails fired from a nail gun covers the top and sides of the benches. A coating of tung-oil enhances the timber colour and will offer protection from the elements.

Blitz Tipz: Always pre-drill any nail holes closer than 25mm to the end of the timber to avoid splitting.



Water feature: A prefabricated, stainless steel water feature, designed by Rudi Jass, is the centrepiece of this garden. A square base houses a submersible, low-voltage pump that feeds water via a clear pipe up to a steel stand. A copper emitter pours water into a pebble-filled stand that filters the water back down to the base beneath creating a cascading rainfall effect. The pond pump is powered by a low voltage transformer that reduces the 240 volt household power source to 24 volts. **Blitz Tipz:** A licensed electrician installed a weatherproof power-point inside the garage to supply power to the low voltage light and submersible pump within the water feature. This cost about \$180.



Paving: Nigel had a big job ahead of him upon entering this site as he not only had to lay all the pavers he had to lift them first. The bobcat helped to lift the pavers which were then cleaned in the backyard with a high pressure cleaner before being re-laid. All sand was removed and soil excavated to a depth of 180mm. A 150mm layer of roadbase was installed and compacted with a plate compactor before a 30mm layer of course washed river sand was brought in. Nigel and Jamie re-laid the pavers in a stretcher bond pattern before sweeping grout sand between the pavers. A concrete haunch around the perimeter of the job locks all of the pavers in place and prevents the bedding sand from washing away. **Blitz Tipz:** Connect a piece of old carpet to the base of the plate compactor to protect the surface of the pavers when compacting them.



Potted plants: Jody created a portable garden by installing most of the plants into large steel pots. A quality potting mix was installed into each pot before planting with a mixture of trees and colourful groundcovers was undertaken. A decorative mulch of gravel provides a contrast to the foliage above and prevents potting mix from being splashed out of the pots during watering. **Blitz Tipz:** Planting out pots in one location keeps the mess in one area. Roll pots into place on a trolley, skateboard or on their bottom edge.



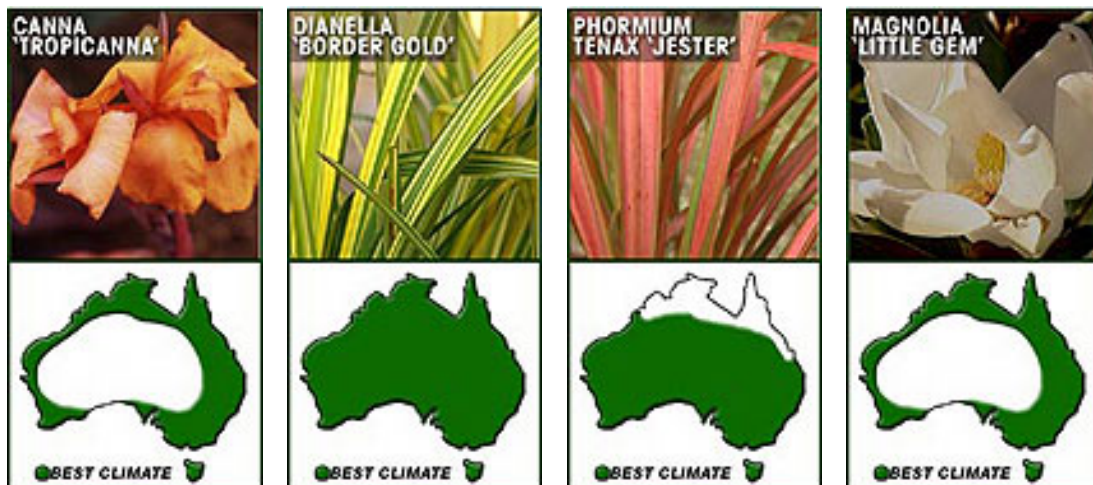
Shadesails: Scott installed several shadesails to the top of the existing pergola to provide contrasting shapes and colours and to replace the original green fibreglass roofing. Galvanised screw-eyes fitted to the top of the beams provide a strong anchor point against which to tension the sails. Two small triangular sails (3.6x3.6x3.6m, Bluestone colour) and two larger sails (5x5x5m, Desert Sand colour) crossed over each other to provide a shaded enclosed outdoor room. Galvanised turnbuckles, d-shackles and chain was used to create tension and lift sails above each other. **Blitz Tipz:** Shadesails can act like a sail during high winds and may damage structures or become dangerous. Always consult a qualified builder or engineer before fixing sails to your house.

Plants

Colourful and hardy plants have been chosen for their year round impact and ability to survive as a potted specimen.

Trees: Dwarf evergreen magnolia (*Magnolia* 'Little Gem')

Perennials: canna lily (*Canna* 'Tropicanna'), dianella (*Dianella* 'Border Gold'), New Zealand flax (*Phormium tenax* 'Jester'), renga renga lily (*Arthropodium cirratum*)



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 \$11,766. The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$10,135.

Product details

- Merbau decking timber is available through all good timber suppliers from about \$3.50 per lineal metre.
- Steel pots are available through Made from Steel in Melbourne. Phone (03) 5426 2499 for more details on their great range of pots.
- Shadesails and blinds are part of the Coolaroo range available at large hardware outlets. The shadesails cost \$130 for a 3.6m triangle or \$190 for a 5m triangle. Blinds cost about \$70 each.
- 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.

Acknowledgments



Design by:
Jim Fogarty Design Pty Ltd
61 Station Street
Malvern, Vic
Phone 1300 888 916

Water feature designed by: Rudi Jass, phone: (03) 9728 3146 web: www.jassdesign.com.au

Holden Australia - donated the Cruze all-wheel drive, worth \$20,000

ANZ Home Loans - \$10,000 towards Therese's rent

GIO Insurance - car and contents insurance for one year

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



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