

# BACKYARD BLITZ

## Swimspace Garden



The Rozos family have 3 children, 2 of which suffer from a rare condition called hereditary spastic paraparesis. It is a degenerative condition, which affects gross motor skills, stiffening and weakening lower body limbs. There is currently no cure, and treatment options are limited. However, one of the most effective ways of reducing pain and maintaining mobility is through regular hydrotherapy.

Until Helen Rozos asked Backyard Blitz for help, she had been making a two-hour round trip to deliver the girls to their regular sessions of hydrotherapy. With one child in a wheelchair and the other requiring the aid of a walking frame, this was an exhausting process. Helen asked for some help on behalf of her children and to help ease some of the pressure on her overworked husband. As you can imagine, the team was more than happy to help.



## Design intent

Jamie Durie has created a contemporary garden that merges style with the therapeutic needs of the Rozos family. A professionally installed, swimspace provides a focal point around which much of the garden design turns. A timber ramp from the rear patio enables the girls to finally access the backyard independently, while a central garden bed filled with colour and succulents will provide year round interest with a minimum of care.

## 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 approvals:** This pool was designed to meet the complying development regulations of the council area within which it was installed. Speaking to your local council during the design phase of your project can save money and time.

## Getting started

A bobcat stripped the unwanted turf and vegetation. An excavator was driven through the garage to excavate the hole for the pool, and levels were established for a paved area and new lawn. Heavy materials such as roadbase and pavers were carried in and the team got to work on the garden construction.

## Garden elements



**Swimspace:** Specialised Pools and Spas generously donated the therapeutic swimspace to the Rozos family to cater for their special needs. The sandy site soil made excavation trouble free and enabled the excavated soil to be reused for backfilling once the pool shell was installed. The pool shell was slowly filled with water and backfilled by hand at the same time. The swimspace features gas heating, swim jets and underwater lighting, so installation is strictly a job for the pool professionals. **Blitz Tipz** Swimming pools on private property are subject to a range of council regulations and requirements. Discuss your proposal with the council before you commit to the contract of sale for your pool, as there may be limitations regarding the type of pool you can install on your property.



**Timber ramp:** Scott created a small access ramp leading from the rear patio down onto Nigel's new paving. Treated pine posts (H4, 90x90mm) installed in-ground in rapid setting concrete support bearers (140x45mm) bolted in place with galvanised cup head bolts (10mm diam. 150mm long). Joists (90x45mm) skew nailed perpendicular to the top of the bearers create the angle required for the ramp. Treated pine decking boards (90x20mm) connected across the joists with spiral shanked stainless steel nails complete the ramp. **Blitz Tipz** Use a stringline stretched tightly between the top and bottom of the ramp as a guide when attaching your bearers. Measure down the thickness of the joist and decking board from the string to create the desired step down in the bearer heights.



**Paving:** Large format pavers (Classique Stone pavers, 400x400x50mm) provide a stable and level surface for the girls to access the garden and pool. All vegetation was stripped and a 100mm layer of roadbase was spread and compacted with the vibrating plate compactor. Nigel ensured that the roadbase fell away from the house and shed before spreading the bedding sand. Coarse washed river sand was screeded to provide a bed for the pavers, defining the final height and slope of the paved surface. The pavers were laid in a geometric pattern and fine-grained grouting sand was swept between them to help lock them in place. Nigel used quick setting concrete to haunch the perimeter of the pavers and lock the whole job in place. **Blitz Tipz** Planning the position of delivered materials will minimise your workload. Plan to move pavers once - from the delivery location into place on the ground.

**Timber garden beds:** Jamie created colourful planting beds with chunky treated pine sleepers. Treated pine posts installed vertically in-ground in rapid setting concrete provide the framework against which the sides of the planter boxes are connected. Sleepers stacked horizontally and bolted in place with galvanised cup-head bolts retain imported soil and allow the garden bed heights to be staggered. Bright coloured paints on either side of the posts brought the dull timber structure to life and set a tone of fun and frivolity to the space. **Blitz Tipz** Jamie designed the garden beds to be viewed from the lounge room inside the house. Placing the lowest garden bed closest to the house and the tallest further away allows all plants in the garden bed to be enjoyed at the same time.





**Garden beds:** The existing site soil was very sandy so Jody incorporated an organic garden mix to improve plant nutrition and aid water holding capacity. An organic fertiliser in the form of pelletised animal manure was sprinkled around the new plantings of citrus to give them a kick-start in their new home. An organic mulch of recycled hardwood called 'Forest Fines' was spread to a depth of 75mm to reduce weed growth and reduce moisture loss through evaporation.

### Steal this design idea

Chunky blue metal (60mm) was spread as a mulch around the pool - organic mulches are light and tend to end up in the pool.

**Painting:** the existing external shed and vertical posts of the central garden beds were painted with fine flat exterior Stonepaint from Porters Paint. We used Azure Blue on the rear shed, Priscilla and Lemon yellow on the vertical posts. **Blitz Tipz** Always discuss your painting project with a professional to determine the type of finish and level of preparation required.

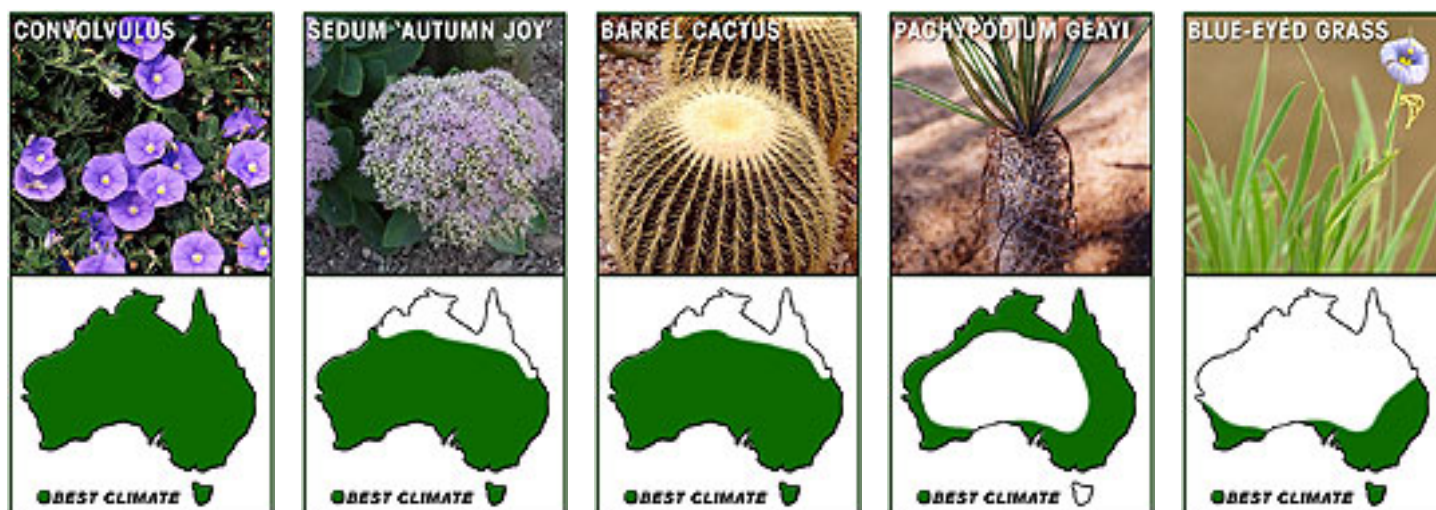
### Plants

Hardy, but infrequently used plants add talking points to this already amazing garden.

**Fruit trees and accent plants:** cabbage tree (*Cordyline australis*), emperor mandarin (*Citrus reticulata* 'Emperor'), lemon (*Citrus limon* 'Meyer'), New Zealand flax (*Phormium* 'Surfer Boy'), orange (*Citrus sinensis* 'Washington Navel'), spineless yucca (*Yucca elephantipes*), Tahitian lime (*Citrus aurantifolia* 'Tahiti')

**Groundcovers:** blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium* 'Devon Skies'), ground morning glory (*Convolvulus sabatius*), ice plant (*Aptenia cordifolia*), sedum (*Sedum* 'Autumn Joy')

**Cacti:** golden barrel cactus (*Echinocactus grusonii*), pachypodium (*Pachypodium geayi*)



## Cost and availability

We used some mature plants in our makeover to create an instant effect for television. As a result, excluding the pool, our total cost for plants and materials was \$12,772 or \$10,138 using less mature plants.

## Product details

- Swimspace from Specialised Spas and Pools is valued at \$19,900. Phone (03) 9725 2411 for more details or view the website at [www.specialisedspasandpools.com.au](http://www.specialisedspasandpools.com.au) Specialised Spas and Pools P/L acknowledges the generous support of Glen Wilson from Gem Pools and Hurlcon P/L for their provision of materials and installation assistance.
- Pool fencing from Dunn & Ferrugia fencing cost about \$1200. Phone (02) 4731 6974 for more details.
- Ivory coloured Classique Stone pavers are available from TTI Stone Pty Ltd in Melbourne. Phone (03) 9357 4863 for more details.
- Stylestone - Rusticstone pavers were sourced from Boral. They cost about \$67 per square metre and are available in four colours. Phone 1300 134 198 for more details.
- Flat exterior paint from Porters paints cost \$85 per 4 litre tin.
- Most of the plants we used are readily available at nurseries or ask your nursery to order them for you or advise similar varieties suited to your area. You may need to contact specialist nurseries for some plants. Your local nursery should be able to provide contacts to you.
- Most other materials such as mulch and pebbles are available from large hardware stores, building or landscape suppliers.
- All tools used are commonly available for hire including the nail gun and the bobcat.

## Getaway details



### Accommodation:

Roches Resort  
265 Sandy Point Rd  
Salamander Bay  
Phone: (02) 4984 1111

### Tours:

Tamboi Queen Cruises  
Wharf 1  
Victoria Pde  
Nelson Bay  
Phone: (02) 4981 1959

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## Acknowledgments

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

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