

The covered entertaining deck is the perfect vantage point from which to supervise the children.

For the family

A family-friendly pool and entertaining space designed for play and relaxation





“An enjoyable space to use after dark and to simply look at from inside the home”



WORDS: Aaron Worth **PHOTOS:** Craig Perry

A swimming pool. It makes a very simple statement in a backyard but it's often the starting point for a major garden transformation. In times gone by, when the decision was made to install a pool, it was often “dropped” into the back lawn without much thought; the goal was simply to have

a place to swim and stay cool. Now that backyard areas have shrunk and we view our gardens as fully integrated outdoor living spaces, far more thought and planning is invested in the construction of a new pool.

When the owners of this Springfield Lakes home in Brisbane decided to put in a pool, they didn't get too far into the process before deciding to call in a professional to help them make the most of their space. There were children of varying ages in the family so the pool needed to provide most of their outdoor entertainment, although retaining some of the existing lawn was also



important. Their deck provided well for their current outdoor needs but an additional area, where the kids could hang out with their friends as they grew into teenagers, also needed to be integrated into the design. And like most families these days, a vegetable/herb garden was high on their must-have list, partly for educating/entertaining the children and, of course, for the benefits of having home-grown produce.

The pool takes centre stage in the landscape and reads as a seamless extension of the entertaining area thanks to the use of glass pool fencing. At night the pool lights up beautifully while the Lichen natural stone feature tiles on the concrete block retaining wall and the unique water feature add considerable wow factor at any time of the day. The pool filter and equipment is all housed in a storage area boasting timber cladding, a feature wall and Lichen tiling. Serviceable sawn bluestone coping and tile surrounds complete the picture and complement the timber decking and feature tiling.

The existing deck was extended to provide the future alternative entertaining space for the kids and also a transitional area leading to the lawn (turfed in Sir Walter). To link with some of the existing landscape

TOP LEFT The new swimming pool, neatly tucked into a corner of the backyard, is now the family's social hub.

LEFT The existing deck was extended to provide additional entertaining space for the growing family.

ABOVE The children have a lush lawn to play on, a new pool to cool down in and a roomy deck to relax on.



TOP This well-designed project proves you don't need masses of space to accommodate a new pool.

ABOVE The water feature was designed to be enjoyed when in the pool or looking out from inside the house

OPPOSITE PAGE TOP Garden and pool lights work in harmony to totally transform the outdoor spaces after nightfall.

OPPOSITE PAGE BOTTOM Glass fencing divides the pool from the entertaining deck and ensures the space feels free-flowing.

and to reduce costs, the lawn is surrounded by a timber retaining wall with capping. The wall doubles as seating and has a Sikkens finish and Colorbond infill panels (Woodland Grey colour). The existing timber boundary fence was spruced up with a coat of paint, also in Woodland Grey, which will eventually be "lost" behind plantings of *Cordyline 'Negra'*, *Pleomele reflexa*, lirioppe, heliconia and *Elaeocarpus eumundii*, which will provide a sense of privacy from neighbouring properties.

Lighting also plays an essential part in the landscape. Garden, wall and step lights, along with the multi-coloured, multi-functional pool lights, all work together to create an ambience which not only makes it an enjoyable space to use after dark, but also beautiful to look at from inside the home.

The site presented challenges due to the existing slope, the presence of council services nearby, the local authority's inflexible approach to the proposed work as well as the physical dimensions of the area. Through a very meticulous design process, all obstacles were overcome and the owners are overjoyed with the end result. It is now an area which enhances their overall lifestyle, entices them outside more often, is very future-proof and, of course, has a new swimming pool. ■

Aaron Worth is a landscape designer and founder of Brisbane-based Utopia Landscape Design.

