

Asian Appeal

A 1970s era house was the setting for this project, a time period that called for a casual and rustic design.





The established theme is reflected in the random bluestone paving and extensive use of timber, given the garden that needed 'period-setting' feel. Previously, two posts, positioned to hold up the roof, had impeded the blue stone area. These were removed and a high span beam installed, with 300 x 300mm timber hardwood posts, opening up the whole courtyard to allow for two functional outside entertaining areas. Thus a previously unusable section is not only improved upon, but also incorporated into the whole layout of the garden. These new posts were additionally used on the entrance gates as well. To remove past confusion as to where the main entrance to the yard was, two large Chinese gates were positioned in accordance with the home's entrance doors.

Natural Style used large floating pieces of bluestone in combination with Mondo grass to lead through the entranceway, adding direction and focus. In the past, the building itself had been more a hindrance than an asset, so a large bay of windows was removed and replaced with bi-fold doors, allowing the indoor dining room to flow on to the outdoor entertaining area. A deep spotted gum deck for the outdoor area was established at the same height as the indoor area to accentuate that 'flow'.

In respect of the already established trees, there was a deliberate aim to complement the original style with a Japanese theme, created using elements such as maples, azaleas and Mondo grass. Four individual circuits for the lighting were added, in order to create a sensation of warmth at night. As a further utilisation of the lighting, a slatted screen was installed to the boundary of the property, filtering the lighting out onto the street - a stunning effect. As such, this landscape is enjoyed not only by the residents, but by the neighbours as well.

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Photography by Robert Churchus

Garden Tracks

Here is a unique garden with special features - a fully automated model train track running live steam and electric locomotives.





The garden is quite a work of art with a model railway, swimming pool and putting green adding a dimension of fun!

Located in an exclusive Melbourne suburb, the garden makes great use of the limited space with clever focal points at every turn. However the design execution had its challenges. Stuart Griffiths from Natural Style Landscaping explains, "This job was interesting from a construction point of view. The train track posed several complications. The curves had to be a precise radius or the trains may derail, the owners wanted the track on a cement base through the garden beds and inset in paved areas so getting the levels and gradient right absolutely was crucial. Secondly, with the track's various curves and cross-over points cutting the paving stones had to be done on site by hand to meet the intricate requirements. The result is something unique and quite spectacular delighting the owners."

Stuart said "We liaised closely with the builder and owners during the construction process. The pool also had its challenges, with two long steps underwater, two waterspouts requiring the paving to be cut in perfect circles with narrow slits allowing the water to accurately stream across the pool."

There has been some careful consideration made towards maintaining the garden. In the front garden, under the putting

green, there is a 20,000 litre water tank holding plenty of water to keep the garden looking lush all year round.

The products and materials have been carefully chosen to reflect the design and theme of the house. The paving product is Tasman grey granite from Granite Works. The plantations have been chosen to reflect a refined and formal theme. There are creepers on the walls, as well as espaliered lemon trees set up with stainless steel wire. This landscape has all the bells and whistles; an automatic sprinkler system run off tank water, garden lighting and gate access controlled by a Crestron system, and the fully remote-controlled trains and track complete with station platform, sidings, lights, signals, multiple points and a bridge at the rear of the pool connecting the garden track to an internal siding to store locos and carriages!

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Photography by Matthew Mallett