



HOT STUFF

The clean, simple lines of this decked courtyard epitomise modern, easy-care garden design

Story: Karen Booth
Photos: Patrick Redmond

An invitation to join someone in the hot tub used to be considered just a little bit seedy — like a line out of a bad '70s movie. But in this clean and contemporary courtyard the hot tub is purely for relaxation — not shenanigans. It's also a rather clever element of the garden design.

When space is at a premium, making use of every centimetre becomes a priority. The challenge is to include everything you want but without the space feeling crowded. In other words, you need to be a little creative.

By creating a raised deck around the hot tub, the garden designer Terry Meehan from Seasons Landscape has done more than provide a convenient means of slipping in and out of the bubbling water. He has introduced a new level into the space that adds interest and gives the illusion of greater depth and dimension.

With such a small outdoor space, having lawn didn't really make sense, so Terry opted to floor the courtyard with 140mm wide merbau decking boards, oiled with Cutek. Merbau is a popular decking timber that starts its life a yellowish to orange-brown colour maturing to a brown or dark red-brown. To



complement the expanse of smooth, evenly textured decking, the same timber was used for the fencing.

An uncluttered design was clearly called for and it works extremely well. The connection between the interior spaces of the home and the courtyard is equally noteworthy.

"At the rear, bi-fold doors open up to the courtyard and the internal timber flooring complements the outdoor deck," says Terry. "And when you stand at the entrance to the home you can see all the way along the hall to the large feature urn and the merbau screen. This really invites you to continue on through the house and outside into the backyard."

To carry through the theme of minimal maintenance, feature pots are planted with easy-care succulents and *Pittosporum* 'Green Pillar' has been used to screen the fences, its dense compact foliage cocooning the space in glossy green.

Although irrigation needs are modest, when the plants do require a drink their thirst is slaked by filtered greywater delivered via a drip system. The same greywater filtration system supplies the laundry and toilets. ■

