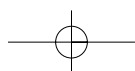
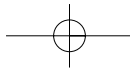




# The good life

A spacious deck delivers an elegantly simple outdoor entertainment area





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**Photography by Glenn Weiss**

The homeowners' brief was clear. They wanted their garden transformed into a practical, simple yet elegant, external living room that would provide extra outdoor space for entertaining guests.

They wanted a deck that would maximise the use of the yard by extending through to the fence line. They also wanted their new entertaining area to be large enough to be functional, yet not so formidable that it would impede the flow of the rest of the yard. The latter was imperative, which is why the deck and surrounding landscape were designed to complement the architecture of the house.

"The main emphasis of the entertaining area was to capture the wonderful views. For this reason we slightly raised the deck from ground level," explained Rob Carlile of Vision Scapes.

"As busy professionals, low maintenance was extremely important and the clients' requested no turf areas be incorporated into the design. They also insisted that only first-quality materials were to be used."

Describing the landscape style as "Australian contemporary with tropical influences", Renai Carlile of Vision Scapes said they decided to use mainly natural earth tones throughout, adding colour through the plant selection. These natural tones can be seen in the merbau timber deck and complementary merbau timber slat fencing, the exposed aggregate driveway and the GB Norfolk link block retaining walls in Sydney Blend.

Only drought-tolerant, easy-to-maintain plants were selected. These included Golden Cane palms for screening along fence lines, cordylines for colour, and cycads were selected in feature areas for their strong architectural lines.

"The landscaping has wonderfully transformed the home. The timber deck has not only brought the indoors to the outdoors but the colour of the timber is a lovely contrast to the colour of the home," said Renai.

