

AUSTRALIAN

H&G HOUSE & GARDEN

Holiday at home!

Easy ways to
comfort & style

In the
kitchen
with five
top chefs

New year, new view
H&G organises your
home, room by room

*Gardening secrets from
a landscaping guru*

SUMMER LIVING

- Garden know-how
- Clever ideas for pools
- Chic outdoor furniture



313006 000709
JANUARY 2009 *\$6.95 *NZ\$7.90 (*incl. GST)

MEET THE RISING STARS OF AUSTRALIAN DESIGN

Contents

COVER STORIES

Holiday At Home From summer decorating to New Year organising, this issue shows you easy ways to be both comfortable and stylish.

28 Summer Living Chic outdoor furniture, clever pool ideas and garden know-how.

58 Meet The Rising Stars Of Australian Design We profile eight bright designers.

104 Gardening Secrets From A Landscaping Guru Explore a family-friendly oasis.

122 The Healthy Chef's Tips For Eating Right Organise your way to a healthy diet.

128 In The Kitchen With Five Top Chefs

148 New Year, New View *H&G* organises your home, room by room.

35 Moody Blues Furniture, accessories and lighting in waves of ocean hues.

39 Let's Stick Together Branch out with homewares that echo organic forms.

43 Buckets Of Fun Stylish wine coolers.

52 The List Five cheerful outdoor chairs.

181 Kitchen Capers Innovative new products.

192 Where To Buy Find a stockist near you.

DECOR

28 Rooms With A View The latest crop of all-weather furniture and accessories.

44 Chateau Chic A masterclass in elegant, yet effortless, French-style decorating.

DESIGN

55 Insider The latest design news.

58 On The Edge Of Fame Australia's brightest up-and-coming design stars.

SHOPPING

22 Bright Sparks Enliven every room in the house with these colourful pieces.

This issue we launch our special campaign to help you organise your home, room by room. Turn to page 148 to transform your kitchen into a spick-and-span space.

GARDENS



Behind the gardener's gate

Leading Sydney landscape designer Matt Cantwell takes us on a journey through his family's private oasis while sharing tips about child-friendly gardens.

STORY ELISABETH KNOWLES STYLING RACHEL BROWN PHOTOGRAPHY JASON BUSCH



White paint and oversized fibreglass-reinforced concrete pots contrast with the lush green hues of Matt's garden. In summer, frangipani flowers add both a heady fragrance and a dash of colour. A drought-tolerant jade shrub in the roof tubs screens out neighbouring houses. Gandia Blasco Silla Clack armchair and Gandia Blasco Farol Cuadrado candle holders from Parterre Garden.



Visit
our
website

For more landscaping tips and
planting ideas, go to [www.
houseandgarden.com.au](http://www.houseandgarden.com.au).



A sculpture by Melbourne-based Lump Sculpture Studio is placed in front of a white wall for maximum effect. Royal Botania teak table from Parterre Garden. **BELOW** Matt with his wife and Secret Gardens of Sydney General Manager, Rochelle Abood. **OPPOSITE** Layered decking can double as extra seating when party numbers swell. Cushions from Terrace Outdoor Living.

Tucked away in a leafy enclave in Sydney's eastern suburbs is a private oasis entirely befitting a couple who so evocatively called their business Secret Gardens of Sydney. It is a soothing and stylish space, with surprises at every turn.

But, says its owner, landscape designer Matt Cantwell, this is not just a place to be looked at, it's one to be experienced. His garden was created with children in mind. Everything in it – from the plants and water features to the outdoor furniture and sculptures – can and has been fondled, fiddled with and flogged by toddlers. Better yet, it has all lived to see another day (except the tomatoes, which never did make it past the green stage before being picked by eager fingers – but that's another story.)

"When we were designing our house renovation we had one child and when the development application was with the council we discovered we were having twins," says Matt. That put pressure on their garden plans, which suddenly had to cater to five humans and one large German shorthaired pointer, Vegas.

"It's a pretty small block at only 267 square metres," he says. "Both Rochelle [Matt's wife and business partner] and I are fans of gardens and as much as possible we wanted to bring the sensation of the garden into the indoor space. It had to look good and function well for kids."

One of the biggest challenges was the block's multi-level terrain. Many parents believe a flat yard is best for small children, but Matt says his layered garden provides a playful layout for the kids. "We toyed with the idea of putting stairs inside ▶





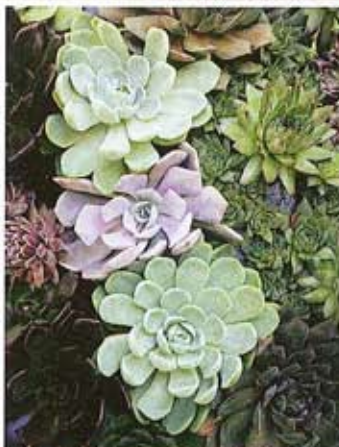
◀ and levelling off the backyard,” he says, “but there is as much advantage to the kids being on one level inside the house as there is outside. I think it’s important for a child’s development to negotiate changes of environment – and there’s no better place to do this than at home.”

The levels also work for grown-up activities. “With any garden design, we start by asking, ‘Where are the homeowners going to entertain?’ says Matt, “so first we installed built-in seating. We put in a 65cm-wide concrete bench which is cantilevered to give a feeling of space and allow for underlighting. Then we designed a timber bench with cushions so Rochelle could recline on it and feed the twins when they were babies.”

While the double garage was knocked down to make more garden space, the undercover area and a sliding gate were maintained. “It was really handy when we had a triple pram to move in and out,” says Matt, laughing. “It also provides a shaded entertainment area and a place where the kids can still play outside when it’s hot.”

Instead of lawn, Matt chose timber decking for surfaces because it’s softer underfoot and more cost-effective than concrete or paving for split-level gardens. A patch of artificial, smart grass provides another comfortable spot for the children to play and paint. “We just hose it down afterwards,” says Matt.

The garden has two safe water features, one at the front and one at the rear of the house. The front one is designed with a false bottom to block off the depth of the water reservoir. “With the rear green feature, the kids can stand on the grill and lean ▶





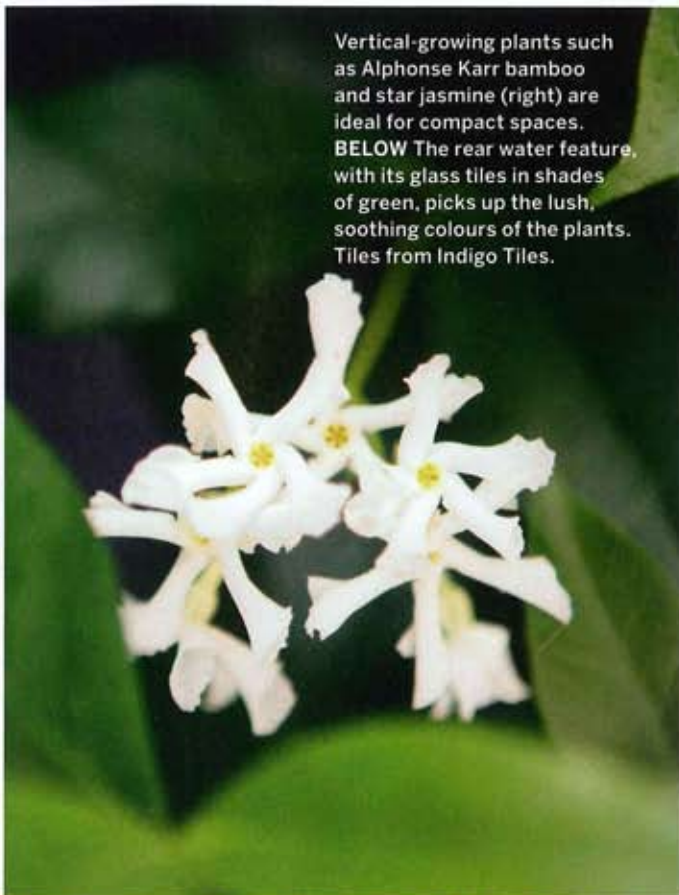
Matt created a courtyard garden at the front of the house with potted succulents in a variety of shapes, sizes and colours, from greens through to blues and purples.

OPPOSITE TOP The custom-designed water feature, by Secret Gardens of Sydney, is a welcoming feature at the front door. Arctic White pebbles from Eco Concepts.

OPPOSITE clockwise from bottom right Canary Island rose (*Aeonium arboreum* 'Schwarzkopf'); chalksticks (*Senecio serpens*); mother of millions (*Echeveria*); agave (*Agave attenuata*).

Matt and Rochelle's children – Luca, four and twins Estelle and Max, two – join Vegas the dog in their favourite activity: playing on the garden path. Sirch wooden car from Top3 By Design.





Vertical-growing plants such as Alphonse Karr bamboo and star jasmine (right) are ideal for compact spaces. **BELOW** The rear water feature, with its glass tiles in shades of green, picks up the lush, soothing colours of the plants. Tiles from Indigo Tiles.

◀ against water and get wet. It's also a great way for them to cool off, because we don't have a swimming pool."

For planting, Matt selected hardy, drought-tolerant varieties. "I chose them so we don't have to think about them too much," he says. "You don't do anything to a frangipani: just plant it and forget it, as you do succulents. All of our garden beds are quite thin, so they require plants that can be kept narrow, such as star jasmine and box hedging. The bamboo grew quickly and created a privacy screen."

He used two types of bamboo: Alphonse Karr, which has a green-and-gold striped stem, and Slender Weaver, which is taller and grows more vigorously. "Throughout the garden they are my only plants that like regular water, and I have 5000-litre rainwater tanks under the house on an automatic system to look after them."

"This is a very low-maintenance garden," he says. "Of course I enjoy tinkering, but I just don't have a lot of time. I'd rather spend the time I do have with the kids."

Matt's devotion to family is obvious in his delightfully child-friendly garden. "When clients ask me to design a garden for their kids, I stress that it doesn't need swing sets or trampolines. Instead, I provide developmental challenges such as changing levels and ramps or interactive elements like water features and tactile plants or flowers with smells they can respond to."

HAG

Secret Gardens of Sydney, NSW; (02) 9314 5333 or www.secretgardens.com.au.

