

Fun and games

A wide variety of recreational options means the owners of this home enjoy their garden all year round

Having an outdoor space that caters to a variety of recreational activities promotes a healthy, active lifestyle that both family and friends can enjoy.

In this garden, for example, the owners can play tennis or swim in the pool, before retiring a few steps away to lunch in a shaded courtyard. The large outdoor living area forms part of a renovated 1920s Georgian-style home belonging to a family of keen sports enthusiasts. Landscape designer Ben Scott says he worked closely with architect Brett Gilbert to create a multi-functional space that complemented the formal style of the home.

An alfresco dining area covered by a pergola provides a hub connecting the various parts of the garden. Sprawled out on the same level are the swimming pool and spa, while a short flight of steps on one side leads to the tennis court, on a strip of land that once formed part of the neighbouring property. Various pieces of customised wrought-iron furniture subtly define the different spaces of the courtyard without detracting from the overall look, says Scott.

To detail the courtyard's low retaining walls and steps, Scott has used the same red bricks and blue clinkers found on the exterior of the house. Further accentuating the red and blue colour scheme are large expanses of paving made up of blocks of grey and blue slate.

Plantings include trees, shrubs and flowers that were retained from the original grounds and a number of new plants, all of which ensure the garden flourishes all year round, says Scott. Two mature box elder trees provide shade to strategic parts of the courtyard, while roses underplanted with catmint, German iris and lamb's ears add a splash of colour. Scattered clumps of arum lily, Dutch irises and giant onions complete the plantings. Nestled between the agave that highlight the end of the pool are three brass taps from which a steady stream of water flows. More than just an aesthetic touch, the splashing water adds ambience and a fun aspect to the pool.

Right: This renovated outdoor space is designed to facilitate a number of recreational activities. The alfresco dining and barbecue area is highlighted by a pergola with an electronically controlled canvas awning that rolls out to provide shade. To complement the home's 1920s Georgian style, planting has been kept relatively formal and includes low box hedging.



Landscape design: Ben Scott, Land Edge (Melbourne)
Architect: Brett Gilbert, Gilbert Simons
Pool design: Brett Gilbert and Ben Scott
Pool builder: Rob Johnson, Exotic Pools
Outdoor furniture: Custom made
Courtyard paving and pool surround: South Australian Slate
Walls/hard landscaping: Old red brick and Australian slate
Fencing: Frameless glass
Lighting: Megabay range from Gardens at Night
Water feature (pool): Brass taps from Gardens at Night
Garden ornaments: Bourgeoisie white urns from Circa Studios Sydney and French glazed jar

Photography by Shania Shegedyn

Previous pages and left: White Carrara tops the outdoor dining table. All the furniture features wrought iron frames for a light, delicate look.

Facing page, top: A French glazed urn provides a visual focal point, helping to break up a row of low retaining walls.

Facing page, below: The water feature comprises brass taps set against a wall of slate tiles.