

DESIGNED FOR LIVING

Clean lines, form and structure complement natural surroundings for understated luxury.

WHAT'S HOT
IN NATURAL LUXURY



BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

Diverse materials and stark colour emphasise the different wings and functions of this sprawling U-shaped home set on a 10-hectare greenfield site in the Byron Bay hinterland on the north coast of NSW.

White painted brick walls surround the indoor/outdoor living area and master bedroom, the two side wings that contain the office and three other bedrooms are clad in Scyon™ Linea™ weatherboard painted charcoal.

"The U-shaped plan provides the separation between sleeping and living spaces,

and office and home, that we wanted," says designer and owner Sharon Fraser, who lives there with her family.

"Our views were to the west, so the U-shaped plan was developed to maximise views without compromising precious north aspect. Sun enters virtually all rooms in winter, but not in summer. The temperature inside the house is pretty much a constant throughout the year. There are ceiling fans but no air conditioning – and certainly no need for it based on the design."

External walls and roof

are insulated and the entire concrete slab is fully insulated via a solar heated hydronic underfloor system.

"It reticulates the solar-heated domestic hot water throughout the entire slab, and only uses gas when solar cannot be relied upon," she says. "It cost more to install than electrical underfloor heating, but unlike electrical it is incredibly energy efficient to run. It is also zoned into nine areas so that only areas in use are heated.

"Adjustable electronic louvre blade pergolas (Vergola™) have

been used in the large outdoor terrace, so when opened, adjacent interior spaces do not become darker and colder in winter months. Traditional wraparound verandas don't do most of the adjacent interior spaces any favours in terms of light and sun control. Vergola solves this problem."

Rooftop photovoltaic cells generate electricity and, as there is no water connection, rainwater tanks serve the house and pool. There is no sewerage service, instead there is an on-site aerated waste management system.

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DESIGNER: SHARON FRASER / PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHARD POWERS (MAIN SHOT) AND SHARON FRASER (INSET) / WORDS: LUISA VOLPATO

- 1 Lightweight construction reduces cost of building on steep sloping sites.
- 2 Use non-combustible materials in bushfire zones.
- 3 Use a solar hydronic system for underfloor heating.
- 4 An open plan merges indoor and exterior living spaces.
- 5 The orientation of a house should capture the sun and breeze to best effect to ensure good passive solar design.

Lightweight luxury

It seems hard to believe budget was a consideration in this expansive four-bedroom home that also has a study, media room, gym and huge open plan living area. Not to mention the workshop and huge garage surrounded by five patios.

The rationale for this design is based on clean lines, bold form and simple materials, says designer Norman Richards.

"Construction budget was limited, so the house is mostly conventional timber stud with metal roofing, and the cladding is a composite of rendered brick veneer for its thermal mass, and rendered HardiTex® [system] for lightness and ease of construction," he says.

"HardiTex was used extensively and allowed a seamless transition between the rendered brick veneer and lightweight elements,

and provided continuity from inside to outside. It was used for the fascias, soffits, patio ceiling and boxed-in beams, and also eliminated the need for expensive brick lintels over the large window openings.

"Sliding doors and louvre windows allow passive ventilation, keeping the house cool in summer, while extensive glazing on the north side and the thermal mass of a concrete slab and ceramic tiles keep the house warm in winter.

"While a zoned air-conditioning system has been installed, its use has been minimised through passive solar heating and good ventilation.

"The house is a comfortable and practical contemporary home designed to take in the expansive 270-degree views of the Sunshine Coast hinterland of Queensland," he says.



ROOM WITH A VIEW

To make the most of the views to the Coffs Harbour coast in New South Wales from this steep sloping site, simplicity was the key in the design of this single-storey two-bedroom home with an open plan living area, says designer Richard Malcolm.

"Minimal site works, a lightweight structure, a simple floor plan and roof design reduced construction costs and made it possible for the owner-builder to do the work and keep to his \$200,000 budget," he says.

"To satisfy local bushfire regulations, the steel substructure was covered in a non-flammable membrane made of reconstituted car tyres and the house was totally clad in non-combustible Scyon™ Linea™ weatherboard. It ticked all the boxes on this job. It was also chosen for its style, low maintenance and because it is resistant to damage from rot and white ants,* which are a problem in the area.

"Due to the ease of construction, it's also the

perfect material for a handyman to do the job himself, especially considering the excellent technical advice available.

"The way the Linea weatherboard is applied results in a tight building with no air gaps, which - along with insulation and the reflective steel roofing, that doesn't absorb heat - helps maintain a comfortable inside temperature," he says.

"The house faces east to the ocean and the mountains block the northern sun, so the large amount of opening glass was used to trap the warm air that rises up the valley into the house," says Malcolm.

"The main bedroom and guest bedroom are at opposite ends of the house, while the internal and external living spaces merge into one, giving the illusion of a much bigger home.

"The number of walls has been kept to a minimum contributing to a single 'great' room and expanding the magnificent vista," he says. ■

*When installed and maintained correctly.

