

Inside Out Magazine: Lap Pool for Hamilton Residence

By John Mongard

The design focuses the backyard around a lap pool which has the feel of a long, luxuriant bathing terrace in a tradition going back to ancient Persia. The 12.5m x 2.3m pool creates depth to the square patch of lawn through its linear form. On the cool southern side, a poolside sitting area is created by relocating the golden cane palm to screen the western sun and neighbour. This effectively doubles the outdoor entertainment area by linking to the existing timber deck, and reclaims the north-west part of the garden as usable space. The lap pool is lined up between two palms, one existing and one newly located in the sand-blasted concrete paved area, which features rounded gold pebbles and timber furniture.

A pool arbor of white painted timber battens in alternating directions, create shade and interesting reflections above the sitting alcove in the pool. This alcove would have in built spa jets. The arbor straddles the pool, creating the illusion that the house has stepped into the lawn, breaking up the dull back elevation.

The arbor hides and links the pool fence which connects to the house on the western side and crosses the lawn to the east in a carefully spaced line which maintains a safe child's play lawn 'foyer' as part of the summer terrace. The existing boundary fence encloses the remainder of the pool area.

A key design focus has been how to design a pool fence which divides up the available space in a visible way without the use and look of a conventional pool fence. A big ask!

The front of the house provides all the character cues to bring to the backyard, with its white-painted horizontal lattice structures and hopper window shades. This becomes the style of the pool enclosure, with white timber battens, thin ends facing outward, forming a 1200 high fence which steps up around the pool to be an 1800 high lattice trellis for pandora, wisteria and jasmine vines.

A pre-grown bush cherry hedge breaks up the pool enclosure and hides the transition from existing steps to pool level.

At the sunny end of the lap pool, the pump and filtration equipment is hidden and sound-proofed under a concrete sunning terrace which steps down into the shallow end of the pool. This solves the problems of those people who would rather not listen to the pool filtration system while they are trying to sleep!

New planting focuses mainly on scented and colourful vines to drape over the pool enclosure, arbor and trellises. One advanced tropical palm will break up the paved area and back façade. The African tulip tree makes way for the lap pool due to lack of space and would be recycled by mulching.

The design thus maintains the moderate budget by setting into and maintaining the existing tropical plantings, which is a fine lush backdrop only requiring minor infill where plants have died.

The pool and paving is all insitu concrete. Two wall bands and one floor band of turquoise and burnt ochre Italian tiles reinforce the linear spine of the pool. A submersible light at both ends of the pool casts blue light. The pool arbor contains spotlights to light up the paved area. The pool internal surface is a blue crystalline aggregate finish. Two swim jets are placed at the deep end for fun, and to assist with swimming training.

An infloor pool cleaning system would save the owners hassles of cleaning, but would be an additional \$3000 to the budget.

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