

Create backyard bliss



An outdoor room can add 15 per cent to your property's value (left) and (inset) the same home before the work.

JULIE MOFFATT

THERE'S little doubt we all need a tranquil escape, an outdoor sanctuary where we can retreat and relax in the comfort of our home surrounds.

Northern beaches residents must be at the top of the class for having embraced the idea that their gardens should become an extension of their home. In fact, having an outdoor living area is all but compulsory whether you live by the water or in a bushland setting.

And when it comes to property values,

most real estate agents will tell you that attractive landscaping can add up to 15 per cent to your property value. So it's worth the time and effort to extend your indoor living area outside; even more so when you consider how much pleasure it will give you and your family.

Amanda Elboz from Space Landscaping Designs at North Curl Curl said an individual and inspiring outdoor space was easy to achieve with some planning and a good selection of plants.

Space Landscape Designs is a young, innovative company committed to creating inspiring outdoor rooms.

Amanda said she aimed to meet the needs of their clients by creating an individual, innovative outdoor space that remained in harmony with the environment and surrounding architecture.

As the firm's principal designer, Amanda has built her business around her passion for designing and her work encompasses every aspect of the outdoor environment. Projects she has worked on include mall courtyards, residential homes, commercial properties and new developments. Having grown up in and worked mainly on the northern beaches Amanda brings a lot of background

knowledge to her designs both as it applies to plant selection and council requirements.

To help anyone considering adding a special outdoor space to their home, Amanda has put together some suggestions:

- Decide on a style and atmosphere which suits your personality and house before selecting any plants or materials
- Water brings light from the sky to ground level, adds life to the garden and instantly cools an area

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An example of Space Landscape Designs' handiwork

Turn inside out

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- Use colour for dramatic effect. Select a bold colour for an accent with more subdued colours for the background
- A simple focal point opposite a seat or turf provides a place to sit, pause and reflect
- Use some plants that provide fragrance which in turn will add another dimension to the garden sanctuary
- The materials chosen for hard surfaces should highlight the plants rather than dominate the design

- Selection of plants and materials should blend in scale and harmony
 - For small areas, use some tall, narrow plants for strong accents. They will provide height and move the eye upwards
 - Keep it simple. Use repetition and avoid excessive plant varieties
 - Light up the garden. Lighting adds a new dimension creating atmosphere, highlighting features and providing another room for evening entertaining.
- » Space Landscape Designs is a member of the Australian Institute of Landscape Designers and Managers and further information is available on www.spacedesigns.com.au or Amanda can be contacted on 0404 943 556.

A must for all devotees of digital cameras

CALLING all digital camera buffs. This coming weekend (May 27 and 28) Harvey Norman Balgowlah is holding a Digital Camera Expo where customers can see the latest technologies, try out the cameras and, of course, get a good deal.

Representatives from all major camera brands will be on hand to speak to customers and technical experts and professional photographers will also be there for you to chat to and interact with.

All the big names will be represented, including Canon, Olympus, Fujifilm, Samsung, Casio and Panasonic. As well, the expo will showcase some great photo-finishing ideas.

In addition to ideas for frames and albums, you can find out about some new ways of dressing up your photos with image-editing software, digital photo-albums and scrapbooking.

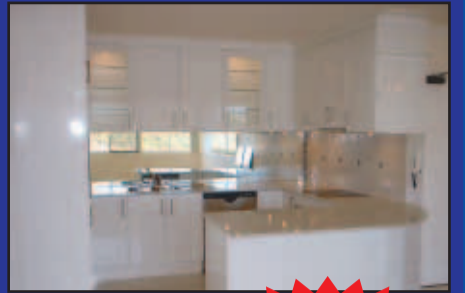
As well, the Harvey Norman photo-lab is going to be doing 15¢ 6x4 prints all weekend.

There's sure to be something for everyone, with some great bargains to be had as well as a number of other bonuses.

The expo has been designed to interest all photographers including those starting from scratch and those who are keen to take their skills to the next level.

» You will find the Digital Camera Expo at Harvey Norman Computer Superstore, Balgowlah.

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