



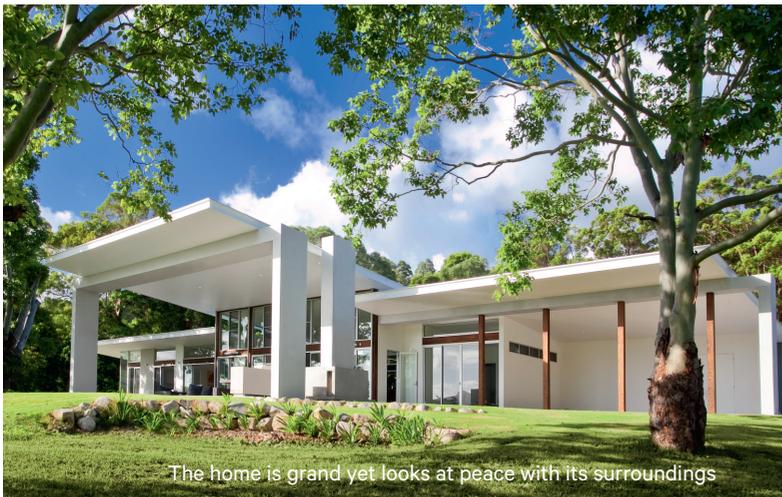
The new structure is light and airy

A MODERN MARVEL

The renovation of a lifetime has transformed a dull and dark home into a light and bright masterpiece

■ WORDS / Tessa Hoult ■ PHOTOGRAPHY / Paul Smith





The home is grand yet looks at peace with its surroundings

BEFORE The existing home was lifeless and dark



Australia's landscape is a wonder. Whether living in iconic surrounds of the Snowy Mountains in Victoria, the Kimberly in Western Australia or Uluru in the Northern Territory, most Australians love the colours and textures of their land and to have the tiniest view of it from your home is a privilege.

Jared and Maree Watts had their glass half-full when they bought a property: it had beautiful hinterland surrounds but was in dire need of some TLC. With two young boys who were growing fast, the existing house was not meeting their needs. "We knew that we had one shot at obtaining a home that suited our lifestyle," say Jared and Maree.

To come up with a design that could fulfil their needs, the couple called on architect Gerard Smith from Mojo Design. The brief they presented to Gerard called for open-plan living throughout the house, with the kitchen, dining and living spaces connected. "Other than the request for a contemporary-styled

The application of timber creates warmth in the kitchen





Glass on all sides allows
light into every room



■ *“We felt that the beautiful parcel of our land deserved a home that was equally as beautiful — a home that took full advantage of all of the beauty that hinterland life has to offer while being sympathetic to the land on which the home is built,”*
say Jared and Maree ■





■ *Even though this home is modern and open, it doesn't have the lifeless feel that can sometimes come with contemporary homes that get a little too carried away with the minimalist theme* ■



The ensuite is an extension of the main bedroom, and continues the open-living feel seen throughout the home



ABOVE The swimming pool area is warm and soft at night, but bright and welcoming during the day

home as opposed to a traditional country-style dwelling, we were not specific about the aesthetic of the design,” say Jared and Maree. “Rather than steering Gerard in a particular direction, we provided him with a relatively open design brief.”

As is the case with most renovations and new-home builds at the moment, sustainability was at the forefront of the home’s design. Jared and Maree made sure their design was solar passive, had generous water harvesting capacity through the use of subterranean concrete tanks, and installed energy-efficient hot water systems.

The existing structure looked lifeless and hollow. The cream brick and tinted windows limited the light that entered the home and made it more of an eyesore than eye-catching. “We felt that the beautiful parcel of our land deserved a home that was equally as beautiful — a home that took full advantage of all of the beauty that hinterland life has to offer while being sympathetic to the land on which the home is built,” say Jared and Maree. “The fact that the existing home was run down, dark and quite closed from the land it was built on emphasised that we definitely wanted an open-plan design.”

The unique aspect of the design is just how open the home feels. This is due to the intelligent design that allows the main area to connect with the outside. “With no privacy issues, extensive use of glazing was used to invite all the beautiful aspects of the site deep within the home,” say Jared and Maree. By opening the sliding doors on both sides, the alfresco and swimming areas become part of the house. This not only allows air to flow freely through the home, but also turns the entire entertainment area into one large outdoor room.

The alfresco area is easily going to become a favourite part of the home. With a built-in barbecue and kitchenette, the area is covered by a smooth roof that has an element of weightlessness to it. By rising slightly at the



tip, it permits light to reflect off the ceiling and naturally illuminate the space.

To the opposite side of the alfresco area sits the large and inviting swimming pool. Contrasting with the greenery it is surrounded by, the pool is connected to the home by another outdoor area that is no doubt soon to be covered in wet footprints and inflatable pool toys.

Even though this home is modern and open, it doesn't have the lifeless feel that can sometimes come with contemporary homes that get a little too carried away with the minimalist theme.

Gerard's design is smart and innovative as it incorporates the location and light around the home and funnels it inside the dwelling. Even though the home makes a strong statement in its size and colour, it never encroaches on its surroundings or looks out of place. Every room has a view and every room is full of light; a complete contradiction to the old home.

Following this mantra, Jared and Maree have nicknamed the home "Satori", which is in reference to the Zen Buddhist term of individual enlightenment. "To say we are happy with the final result would be an understatement," say Jared and Maree. "We are over the moon with the final result. It is such a beautiful home to live in; it still takes our breath away." 🏡

