

The previously concreted courtyard has been transformed into a beautiful area for outdoor living and shows how style can be achieved in a small space. Pictures: Cat Lynn



The screens look like weathered, rusted laser-cut steel but are made from fibre composite.

# Classy court enjoys warmth and intimacy

■ Maya Anderson

Wanting a place with a pool, the owners of this 12-year-old Lathlain house had been thinking of putting their home on the market.

Ironically, it was a real estate agent who advised them to stay put and spend the money they would have spent moving on putting in the pool they had always dreamed about.

The result is a beautiful alfresco area that proves that serious style can be achieved in a smaller space.

The owners asked Belle Maison Renovations director Ashley Peverett to design and install their new outdoor area.

Mr Peverett said when one considered the high costs of moving house, which included the agent's commission, bank fees, stamp duty and removalist fees, sometimes it made better sense to stay put.

"It can cost around \$50,000 to change your home," he said.

"So they took the agent's advice to spend that money they would have spent on moving on improving their outdoor area instead."

While the garden now has a warm, intimate and stylish feel, Mr Peverett said the formerly

concreted courtyard was in need of more than a new pool and a basic freshen up when he began work.

The owners are keen entertainers and wanted a pool and alfresco space that could be used all year round.

"They had a generous budget but left the design decisions pretty much up to me, including the plants and furniture," Mr Peverett said.

"The main challenge was making the most of the small space which also doubled as the main entrance to the house."

Mr Peverett created a patio-style privacy screen solution that divides the pool and dining area from the gateway entry.

Privacy screens give the garden a luxurious look. While they look like weathered, rusted laser-cut steel, the screens are made from much less expensive fibre composite. The screens are available through Belle Maison.

Tasmanian oak battens flank the screens while the underside of the patio has been finished in cedar. A stainless-steel barbecue to the small kitchenette area has a built-in jarrah chopping board alongside.

The tall planter beds of the privacy screen were planted with lush, tropical plants.



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The pool was installed by Barrier Reef Pools. A combination of a plunge pool and spa, it can be heated to 38C and can be enjoyed year round.

Mr Peverett opted for a palette of warm tones for the outdoor area when it came to the materials and furniture, to link the area to the house's light, sand-coloured brick.

He said he chose timber-look tiles that were used as feature panels and for the water feature to tie in with the warm hues of the cedar panelling and Tasmanian oak battens.

Striped cushions complement the tiles, while the wall to the garage was covered in spiffaced sandstone blocks.

Mr Peverett said he left the

gaps unfilled to emphasise the shapes of the stone, highlighted even more in the evenings with the halogen feature lighting, and chose liquid limestone for around the pool.

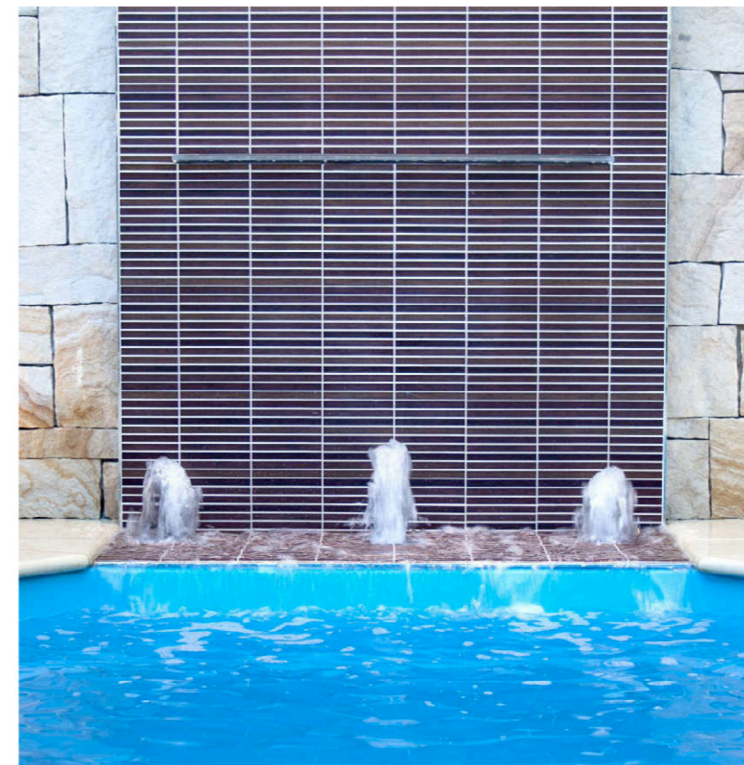
"I really like liquid limestone as there's no problems with weeds, it's easy to do around a pool and it's cool underfoot."

A blade water feature plunges on to a sunbed water feature below with bubble jets.

"Sunbeds are a really nice way to add a water feature to a pool — they're not expensive and they make a pool seem bigger," he said.

With work on the garden taking two months, the project was wrapped up just in time for a 30th birthday party, giving the owners a gorgeous space for outdoor wining, dining and entertaining.

**CONTACT** Belle Maison Renovations, 0415 564 856; Barrier Reef Pools, 1800 449 585



Ashley Peverett, of Belle Maison Renovations.