

Viewing pleasure

A contemporary, Palm Springs-inspired urban outdoor retreat of national renown



WHEN DESIGNING A GARDEN, THE PRESSURE IS on to create something uniquely tailored to the lifestyle of the owners and the specifics of the site. When you're doing that in front of a national television audience – and in a ridiculously tight timeframe – well, that really is pressure.

Luckily, David Franklin of Franklin Landscape and Design, who designed this garden for Madi and Jarrod Coppock, contestants on the top-rating television show, *The Block*, thrives on a challenge. "We had to design and build the garden, with the help of Madi and Jarrod, in just five days," says David. "We also had every tradesman on-site at the same time trying to finish their jobs, which created a very hard work environment. Oh, and it rained everyday!"

Madi and Jarrod wanted the garden to have a Palm Springs feel but with a modern twist. David's design, with its gentle sweeps, architectural planting, and contemporary mix of colours and materials, strikes just the right balance between relaxed resort style and up-to-the-minute urban.

This is a garden that abounds with eye-catching elements, starting with the matching curved timber seats at either end of the garden. One faces a firepit



set atop an area paved in granite setts, the other takes pride of place on a raised timber deck and wraps around a timber dining table.

“The table, custom built using recycled timber, is a special feature in its own right,” adds David. “It has three recessed spaces: two are planted with succulents and the third is used to store bottles of beer or soft drink, depending on your pleasure.”

The timber table, seating and decking are the perfect foil for the natural stone that is used throughout the garden. This includes the granite setts used for paving and as capping for the planters, the granite steppers that lead through the lawn and link the two seating areas, and the striking feature wall comprised of vertically installed pieces of split stone, which have all been set at a rakish 45° angle.

Along the base of the bold feature wall, the garden bed is planted with three different types of succulent, each a different colour and shape to add visual interest. In fact, succulents and cacti have been liberally used throughout the garden, chosen for their low-maintenance requirements and to reference Palm Springs, which is a desert-based resort city.

“As this was a north-facing garden, we didn’t want to close out the sun so we kept the design as open as possible,” says David. “And, as the space was somewhat limited, we introduced lots of curves to create a sense of flow and take the eye on a journey.” The result is a modern masterpiece.

Project details

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