

A GRAND DESIGN

A new-build beach house combines a sturdy and sleek structure with a mid-century modern aesthetic. The result? One very **cool & contemporary coastal** retreat



Comfort in style
Homeowner Matthew Hodgson regularly has family and friends to stay at his new beach house, including good friends the Noerings – and their daughter Charlotte, 9 (pictured). The interior of the home is contemporary and stylish, but comfortable, too. An Eames lounge chair and ottoman provides the perfect spot to kick back and relax.

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Warm welcome

The use of timber cladding at the home's entrance provides a focal point and offers a welcoming vibe. Balau wood was chosen because it ages well and gives a sense of warmth and texture. →

cladding used to stunning effect →

Soft touch
The hardness of the predominantly concrete and steel structure is balanced with the softness of timber and the surrounding natural environment of sand dunes and greenery.

WHILE ON A FLIGHT Matthew Hodgson doodled a design for his beach house, Waterline, on the back of a sick bag. From this inauspicious start, a low-slung, modern beauty – with svelte lines and sleek footprint – was born.

Situated in a seaside village, only 40 minutes from the city, the house has a relaxed vibe. “I love beach-house living because it affords total privacy and yet lends itself to the communal living of family and friends who come to stay,” Matthew says. “It’s the recipe for good living.”

The house was built from scratch by Matthew and Anthony Meyer, his business partner in design consultancy firm Mooi Interior Concepts. “It was an incredible experience designing and building this house,” Matthew recalls. “Both Anthony and I threw ourselves into the project. In fact our brief was to create an iconic structure that would change the way people think about beach living.”

The duo’s idea for a clean, uncluttered design had them researching the work of mid-century architects Richard Neutra, Mies van der Rohe and Craig Ellwood, as well as looking at beach houses in Australia, Bali, Singapore and Hawaii. “It was a wonderful experience to devote ourselves to researching what has been done architecturally, and how we could implement these learnings into Waterline,” Matthew says.

While Matthew and Anthony were tweaking the final design for the 1600 sq m plot – which is fronted by 600m of sand dunes – a huge storm claimed the roof of a neighbouring home. As a result, they went back to the drawing board and reinforced the concrete structure of the home with steel and installed tougher windows and door frames that sealed completely.

The structure is predominantly concrete and steel, so wood was used in the interior, as well as exterior decking and cladding, to help →

who lives here?

Design consultant Matthew Hodgson

1 All-weather drama “I wanted a house that was enjoyable in every weather condition,” Matthew says. “So whether the fog rolls in and you’re surrounded by an eerie mist or the hot summer sun is pounding on you from above, the house is designed to capture as much of that natural excitement as possible.”

2 Green aspects Concrete and screed flooring on the ground level absorbs the morning sun, keeping the home warm through the day and reducing the need for artificial heating. Full-height sliding doors on the northern and southern sides of the house allow for cross ventilation. Silent Gliss electric blinds can cut direct sun penetration, helping to maintain the internal temperature without using aircon. Eco-friendly floating fireplaces use ethanol as a heat source. And the garden is planted with waterwise native species.

Sea of green (right)

The neat garden provides a cosy respite from the grand expanse of space – the views of mountains and ocean – enjoyed from the upper level.

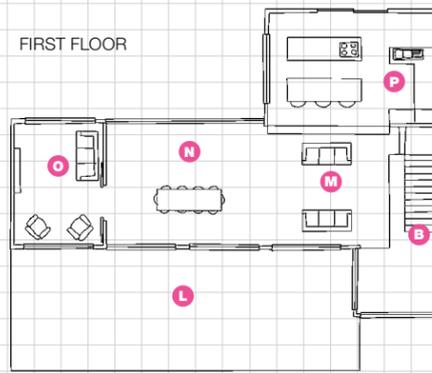
Go with the flow (below)

The kitchen flows onto a deck with outdoor lounge as well as into the main living area of the upper level. The home has two indoor lounge areas, providing a choice of where to relax. This one has views of the ocean.



Scenic sanctuary

The lower lounge area faces the garden. "I love sitting here at night, glass of wine in hand, with the doors open to the garden and the trees all lit up," Matthew says. ->



- KEY**
- A Entrance
 - B Stairs
 - C Living area
 - D Garage
 - E Store room
 - F Bedroom
 - G Ensuite
 - H Laundry
 - I Private courtyard
 - J WC
 - K Dressing room
 - L Terrace/Pool
 - M Family room
 - N Dining
 - O Media room
 - P Kitchen

floorplan | alice gleadow

soften the hard lines. "We were lucky as the surrounding environment, with sand dunes and long grasses, does a lot to soften the minimalist lines we tend towards," Matthew says.

Matthew and Anthony didn't want the house to feel closed off from the elements, but given the vagaries of the weather – particularly the wind – it had to be carefully oriented on the block so outdoor living areas would be protected. When south-easterly winds threaten in summer the back of the house is closed while doors on the upper deck at the front can be left open. Similarly, during winter when the north-westerly blows, the front of the house acts as a protective barrier for the back deck and garden. As the house faces north, light streams into all rooms year round, while 2.8m ceilings, with 6m open voids in

the entrance and main area, make it feel like an airy pavilion. The entire house, including the interior, has been carefully considered – and crafted – to perfection. "Anthony and I did all the interior design ourselves, with every piece of furniture purchased or custom-made specifically for each space," Matthew says. Designer chairs sit alongside a collection of poster-size photographs by Matthew and artwork commissioned on travels. "I wanted the furniture and the art to act as the 'glue' between the design of the house and it's mid-century roots," Matthew explains. "Accentuating those roots was at the top of my mind with every purchase I made."

Surrounded by sand, sea and sky, the house is a modern marvel of meditation and relaxation. "It's what living the holiday is all about." **11**



Peaceful retreat
 "The house works well as it allows for privacy, with the bedrooms private, silent and contained spaces," Matthew says. "The bedrooms spill onto the garden and the soft, lush greenery it offers."

photography: elisa young/frank features (lifestyle shot) | still-life styling: tainnee carroll

FINISHES
FLOORING Recycled tallowwood (A; 200mm), \$160 a sq m, Ironwood.
BENCHTOP Formica linea in Oriental Block (B), from \$70 a sq m, Formica.
CABINET DOORS Colourtech painted in Polar White (C), from \$75 a standard door, Laminex.

Stylish storage
 Echo Storage 2x4 Cube shelving in Chocolate, \$999, Freedom. 1.74m x 90cm x 40cm

Sleek stool
 Replica Shin & Tomako "Lem Piston" bar stool, \$395, Matt Blatt.

Soft 'n' smooth
 Velvet cushion cover in Charcoal (50cm), \$69, Nordic Fusion.

The windows are positioned to frame the magnificent views

MATTHEW'S MOODBOARD Mid-century design and contemporary style mix with natural textures and a neutral palette

Classic light
 Replica Tolomeo "Mega Large" floor lamp, \$349, Clickon Furniture.

PAINT
INTERIOR Dulux Wash & Wear 101 Barrier Technology in Lexicon Half, \$74.95 for 4L.
EXTERIOR Dulux Weathershield low sheen acrylic in Natural White & Dieskau, each \$74.95 for 4L.

LEXICON HALF
 NATURAL WHITE
 DIESKAU

Luxe leather
 Replica Classic lounge chair & ottoman, \$1499, Life Interiors.

Smooth skin
 Natural cowhide rug in Reddish Brown (3 to 4 sq m), \$419, NSW Leather Co. For stockists, see page 160.

Timber touch
 Chunky planter boxes, from \$1230 for 45cm (excludes plants), Robert Plumb By William Dangar. Made from New Guinea rosewood with galvanised steel lining.