Since it's a roof garden, the plant palette needed to be visually interesting and low-maintenance, as well as tolerant of full sun and shallow soil. Native rosemary (*Westringia* 'Grey Box'), a species with silvery foliage and a naturally clumping habit, brings texture to the space and is paired with strappy-leaved *Lomandra* 'Lime Tuff' and 'Blue Ridge' for contrast. Kangaroo paw (*Anigozanthos* 'Big Red' and 'Yellow Gem'), creeping thyme (*Thymus* 'Pink Chintz') and yellow buttons (*Chrysocephalum apilculatum*) provide pops of seasonal colour.

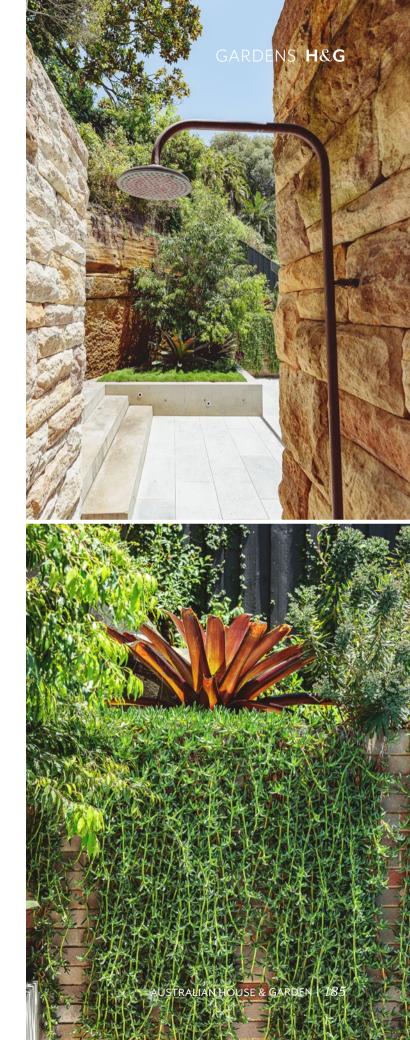
While the rooftop garden engages with the wider landscape, helping settle the new home into its surroundings, the back garden is more insular. Yes, there's continuity in the overall aesthetic, but leisure is the design focus here: a lawn to play on, an entertaining zone and, of course, the pool.

An existing stand of wild date palm (*Phoenix reclinata*) provided some privacy in the pool area, but Ben and his team filled in the gaps with weeping lilly pilly (*Waterhousea floribunda* 'Sweeper'). Surrounding the pool are a series of raised beds, some featuring imperial bromeliads (*Alcantarea imperialis* 'Rubra') under-planted with no-mow grass (*Zoysia tenuifolia*) – like ruby crowns showcased on cushions of emerald velvet. Hardy native pigface (*Carpobrotus glaucescens*) and Mediterranean spurge (*Euphorbia wulfenii*) are abundantly planted nearby for additional texture and colour poolside.

Of course, there were challenges along the way such as bad weather, drainage issues, sharing the site simultaneously with multiple trades, protecting all finishes and managing difficult access. "Materials had to be either craned in or heaved up in buckets from the street," says Ben. "Thankfully long-reach truck cranes meant the bulk of the soils were delivered in. This allowed landscape works to be sequenced around the final stages of building works."

The result? A garden with two equally lovely personalities - one a public persona; the other, more private. It really is possible to have it all. Formed Gardens, Brookvale, NSW; (02) 8036 8580 or www.formedgardens.com.au. Melissa Wilson Landscape Architects, Surry Hills, NSW; melissawilson.com.au.

TOP A custom-made copper outdoor shower is tucked into a corner off the pool area, enclosed by walls of hand-cut sandstone. The bed beyond is planted with weeping lilly pilly (Waterhousea floribunda 'Sweeper'), imperial bromeliad (Alcantarea imperialis 'Rubra') and no-mow grass (Zoysia tenuifolia). The pavers are a light-grey limestone. RIGHT The pool area is encircled by planters at varying heights, some in off-form concrete and some in brick. This one features an imperial bromeliad, under-planted with a cascade of native pigface (Carpobrotus glaucescens) and a side of Mediterranean spurge (Euphorbia wulfenii).





BEST OF BOTH

A showy front garden that makes the most of spectacular views, a tranquil back garden to retreat to... The owners of this Sydney home have it all.

story $Andrea\ Tomaz$ | photography $Ollie\ Bruns$



Gardens

Red and yellow kangaroo paw, Iomandras, native rosemary (Westringia 'Grey Box') and pretty yellow buttons (Chrysocephalum apiculatum) are some of the hardy species used for the stunning roof garden at the home in Sydney's east. An existing Murraya paniculate hedge (far left) was pruned to direct the eye to the harbour in the distance; Grevillea 'Moonlight' fills planter on the garden's opposite boundary





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