

contemporary building that dominates the space in which it sits.

The landscape design had to complement the architecture; its role was to ground the building on the street; to turn the bare terrace into a friendly space; and to screen and soften the pool area. To make it happen, Ziad turned to landscape designer Adam Robinson. Also trained in interior design, Adam has built a reputation for outdoor spaces that link seamlessly with the buildings they match and the interiors they extend. "The starting point for an outdoor space like this is always the architecture," he says. "I often find that as garden designers, we are not so much creating as re-creating – pulling the architecture and the interiors outside."

The key for the large terrace was, as Ziad says, "to soften it without making it fluffy". Adam paved the area with grey granite tiles and used small clusters of oversized round white pots to break up its rectilinear lines. These were planted with frangipani, and the native *Correa alba*, and matched with slightly smaller pots of *Furcraea*. The large table setting from Cosh Living was matched with upholstered seats for comfort. "It's important in an outdoor space like this that the furniture looks like it is meant to be outdoors and can develop a bit of an aged look," says Adam, "rather than being glossy and stark."

The minimal interventions by Adam have had a major impact. "The terrace is still open," says Ziad, "but the layering approach that Adam took, with the pots of different sizes, a few plants and the tabletop, means you're not just looking at an expansive view, but a view framed by the frangipanis and those other elements."

# "IRRIGATION WASN'T POSSIBLE ON THE TERRACE SO THE PLANTING HAD TO BE BULLETPROOF"

ADAM ROBINSON, LANDSCAPE DESIGNER





The pool area (left) is overlooked by the cantilevered balcony that comes off the master bedroom. "The Tribù 'Mood' oversized daybed from Cosh Living near the pool (top) is a more versatile option than having a couple of sunloungers," savs landscape designer Adam (pictured opposite). It took four men to carry the big white pots **(right)** up the stairs to the terrace. A striking frangipani tree is underplanted with Correa alba while the broad silvery-grey leaves of Sansevieria 'Moonshine' contrast with the curved mottled grey planter.

## **5 PLANTS FOR TOUGH SPOTS**

When plantlife needs to survive and thrive with minimal maintenance, these tough customers are landscape designer Adam Robinson's picks

#### SILVER TORCH CACTUS

This tough cactus has a rigid vertical form but is covered with short white spines that catch the light and give it a soft, furry look, making it feel comfortable to sit near, unlike other spiky plants.

#### **SANSEVIERIA** 'SILVER SWORD'

This variety of the tough mother-in-law's tongue has a lower, broader leaf than the original, with a wash of grey that's a great match with contemporary architecture.

FRANGIPANI Frangipani are reliable in pots, growing slowly so they don't demand continual

their trunk and branches, so they can survive periods of neglect - and then there's the tree-like form and the gorgeous, fragrant summer flowers.

#### ALOE ARBORESCENS

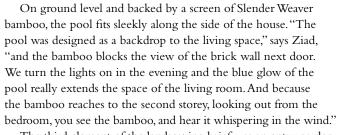
This tall-growing aloe flowers beautifully in winter, has a wonderful form and is extremely tough.

### CARISSA GRANDIFLORA

of the Natal plum fills the same kind of role as buxus, but with a looser, more relaxed appearance. It can form a dense glossy mound to a metre tall and wide, with bursts of beautiful white stars based flowers.



An extendable awning **(below)** offers protection from summer sun, and an undercover nook offers more relaxed seating, an old lounge setting from Domayne. Silver torch cactus, rhipsalis, zamia, *Agave* 'Blue Glow' and sedum lend sculptural appeal. Outside the living area **(right)**, tall *Sansevieria stuckyi* contrasts with *Euphorbia* 'Diamond Frost'.



The third element of the landscaping brief was an entry garden. "The aim was to complement the architecture but also to soften it a bit and ground it in the property," says Adam. He chose a palette of tough plants with a range of forms and textures, from the stiff swords of mother-in-law's tongues, and firm fronds of zamia, to the soft *Zoysia* grass and fluffy *Carex*.

Ziad has been surprised how successful this part of the landscaping has been, and how welcoming it is to walk into the house through the lush garden. "I'm not a patient person, so we went for mature plants, and it looked beautiful from day one. Now, a year on, it's just phenomenal – it looks like it's been there for years."

In most building and landscaping projects, there is a tinge of regret within the celebration of the new – something that didn't work out quite as planned, or an opportunity missed. But in this project, says Ziad, everything turned out just the way it should, just as he'd envisaged. "In this house, there's no component I would go back and change," he says. "The landscaping and the architecture – everything works really well, hand-in-hand." 
For details on Ziad's work, visit cdarchitects.com.au. For more of Adam's designs, visit adamrobinsondesign.com. Garden Society installed and maintains the garden – visit gardensociety.com.au.



