



PURE POP

An architect couple lets loose with a riot of colour to create a happy, relaxed coastal weekend

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When Shane and Rachael built their weekenders at Seal Rocks (top left) on the NSW north coast, they designed the home to reflect the surrounding area, with a vivid palette inspired by the brilliant aqua ocean and the bright flowers of the local bush and gardens (top right). This bold colour scheme creates a suitably relaxed, fuss-free feel – perfect for a holiday home where the most stressful activity should be choosing which of the bright Bunnings hammocks to lie in. “We thought we’d be okay with four hammocks, but they’re so popular we’re contemplating a fifth one,” says Shane. “This is where most people spend their time.” Here (left), the couple’s three children swing happily in the shade with a neighbourhood friend.

Murobond

Ripple

DINING AREA To create a fun and functional look on a budget, Shane and Rachael headed straight to Ikea, where they found everything from the dining table to the sofa, beds and bedlinen. "We have a real love affair with Ikea," says Shane. "They have a lot of well-designed pieces, like the dining room 'Nordmyra' chairs, which are lovely and sculptural." Friends were enlisted to minimise the challenge of putting all the flat-packed pieces together. "We went up one weekend with friends and did it in one lot," says Shane. Bright colours keep the mood in this room upbeat, with a long stretch of wall in Murobond Ripple contrasting with the funky Ikea cushions and rich red banquette seating that runs the length of the living room. "Daybeds are such a comfortable place to recline," says Shane. >





Murobond
Eggshell

KITCHEN The galley kitchen is tucked along the narrowest side of the house, opening directly onto the deck and conveniently close to the barbecue, which is built into an adjacent alcove. "We went for a bare-basics fit-out because we barbecue so much," says Shane. Inexpensive formply was used for the cupboards, with benchtops in vivid red laminate adding a complementary injection of colour. Bold accessories are an easy and budget-friendly way to play with contrasting hues; here, a stripy No Chintz tea towel, lime green bowl from Plenty and a burnt orange Chee Soon & Fitzgerald jug add vibrant colour.

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A holiday home should be a place that invites you to kick off your shoes, put your feet up and have a little fun, away from the rush and routine of everyday life. That's exactly the feel of this simple but cleverly designed weekenders at Seal Rocks on the NSW north coast. Newcastle-based architect couple Shane and Rachael of Bourne Blue Architecture designed the home, called Kurreki, as a seaside escape for themselves and their three children, Memphis, 12, Huon, 10, and Cibella, seven. The riot of interior colours, including lime, chocolate, tangerine, aqua and cool coastal shades, sets a joyful tone, while the open-plan layout, with all rooms built around a large central courtyard, lets the family relax while connecting with nature.

"We were keen to build something pretty simple, using basic materials like fibro and timber," say Shane and Rachael, who bought the block of land in the isolated seaside hamlet in 2001. They had fallen in love with Seal Rocks after spending many holidays there and working on several projects in the area, so when they spotted the one-line classified ad listing the block for sale, they snapped it up without even seeing it. Several years later, they finally had the time and funds to start designing their home away from home, which was completed two years ago.

From the outside, the house sits comfortably within its bushy surrounds, with the unobtrusive style of traditional holiday shacks in the area. "Our brief was to build a reasonably low-impact house in terms of the exterior," says Shane. Inside, it's all colour, fun and

airy, laidback spaces; each room opens to the courtyard and garden, allowing sky vistas and an easy connection to the outdoors. In summer, the doors are thrown open, with most of the living and entertaining done around the barbecue and outdoor table.

Although it's not a large house, there's plenty of room to relax. In the living area, a cushioned banquette along two sides of the room encourages daytime lounging, as do the four hammocks strung in a shady stretch of the deck. A large kids bunk room and two double bedrooms mean there's enough space for two families when friends come to stay. The kitchen and bathroom are spare and utilitarian but comfortable, with the added appeal of opening up to the outdoors.

Shane and Rachael were on a tight budget, so they kept the finishes and furnishings simple. Most of the furniture was bought in one big shop at Ikea, and they went for cost-savvy options such as zincalume sheets (a malleable steel) for the kitchen splashback, particle board on the floors and fuss-free light fittings. "We bought \$8 plastic light fittings from Bunnings for the whole house – just little plastic spotlights externally and light bulbs with rice paper lanterns for inside," says Shane. "You can spend thousands on light fittings and we spent just a couple of hundred for the whole place."

The holiday home may have been designed with simplicity in mind, but the smart, efficient spaces, beautiful bush surrounds and brilliantly bright interiors are nothing short of luxurious.

LIVING ROOM {top} All the indoor living at this weekenders is done in this long room, which opens out to the central courtyard on one side and catches cool sea breezes through louvred windows on the other side. Great dollops of bright colour on the walls and upholstery, balanced by a natural timber 'Lillberg' sofa and wicker pendant lights from Ikea, create a cheerful, casual vibe. "It's actually a pretty narrow and small living space, so we put in the world's longest daybed to perform a variety of functions," says Shane. "It anchors the room, provides storage and lets us be fairly efficient in the room planning, with one part of the daybed a lounge and another forming part of the dining setting." Instead of expensive upholstery, Shane and Rachael topped the daybed with plain red futons from So-Fon Australia. >



MASTER BEDROOM {above} The home has been designed with all the bedrooms on one side of the house to form a sleeping zone, with glass sliding doors linking each room to the outdoors. "On a hot night, the doors can be open and you can sleep under a mosquito net, but also have a sense of security as the home is closed to the outdoors," says Shane. Walls in the soothing pearlescent green of Murobond's Aqua Glaze Pearl in Lotus and draped mosquito netting create a romantic space, enlivened by tropically bright bedlinen from Ikea. Bedside tables have been conveniently fashioned from Ikea 'Benjamin' stools.

BATHROOM {left & opposite} There's only one bathroom in the house, but it's roomy and functional, connecting to a double shower room which can be enclosed by roller doors or left open to the elements. The space has a deliberately rustic, camping-chic style. "We saved money by not blowing lots on bathrooms," says Shane. "It's got a bit of a holiday feel, like an amenities block at a campsite, with no tiles, just timber duckboards and zincalume sheeting on the walls." A length of pipe has been ingeniously hung as a towel rail. "In a beach house, you need places to hang bath and beach towels for seven to eight people, so we installed 12 metres of copper plumbing pipe on the walls instead of spending \$100 each on 12 towel rails," says Shane. A simple vanity has been built from open timber shelves topped with compressed fibre cement sheeting. Baskets from Howards Storage World hide away small essentials, while bright lilies from Pearsons Florist add lively colour. >



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"We like THE HOME'S PAVILION, OPEN-AIR STYLE; THE KIDS ALWAYS FEEL SECURE, AND IT'S PRIVATE WITH ITS OWN OUTLOOK."



OUTDOOR DINING {opposite} In the warmer months, the outdoor dining table is the heart of this weekender, with the family doing all their entertaining in the open air. A timber bench built into the deck makes clever use of the outdoor space and, topped with comfy futon pads from Rapee, provides seating to match a timber table and bench from The Outdoor Furniture Specialists. "We like the home's pavilion, open-air style; the kids always feel secure, and it's private with its own outlook," says Shane.

EXTERIOR {above} Shane and Rachael designed their weekender to blend in with the surrounding bushland. The single-storey building features neat, square lines with little detail, and compressed fibre-cement cladding that echoes the older fibro homes in the area.

"Our approach was to build in a way that retains the language of the existing houses and is respectful of context," says Shane. >

Inside story

Who stays here? Shane and Rachael, architects and partners in Bourne Blue Architecture; and their children Memphis, 12, Huon, 10, and Cibella, seven.

What was your design brief? Shane: "We wanted to build something like fancy camping, with a holiday feel and lots of circulation between the outside and the living areas and bedrooms."

What's your favourite space in the house? "The hammocks are easily my favourite spot. They're everyone's favourite spot when we come to stay and we have to work on a kind of roster system so everyone gets a turn."

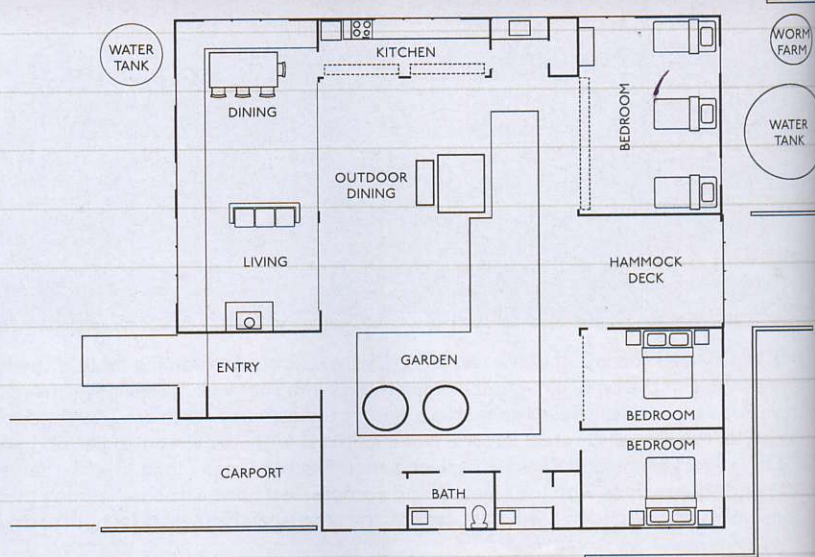
How often do you use the house?

"About 30 nights a year. We rent it out throughout the year and I often work in the area so will go and stay there to do my site visits."

Describe a typical Saturday night at Seal Rocks? "We've become friends with other families in the street so the kids gravitate from house to house and we have what we call 'joined-up dinners' where we all eat together."

Is the colourful interior just for your holiday home? "No, our home in Newcastle is pretty colourful, too. Rachael is the expert there."

What are the home's best eco-smart features? "There are four large water tanks and a worm farm treating sewer waste on site. We've just ordered a 1.5kW grid-feed photovoltaic [solar power] system for the house. The idea is that because the house is only used intermittently, the system will cover the entire power needs for the year."



colour cues

natural inspiration >

The deliciously bright and cheerful palette in Shane and Rachael's house gives the weekend an instant holiday feel. "Inside, we took a more riotous approach to colour," says Shane. "Rachael chose the colours after going for a few different walks near the house and picking colours from everything she could see. We chose colours for the kids' bunk room which are all those you can see in a rock pool, and the greens and reds are from the bush and flowers."

fave find

Balance boisterous colour with natural materials such as wood and rattan.

'Leran' rattan pendant lamp.

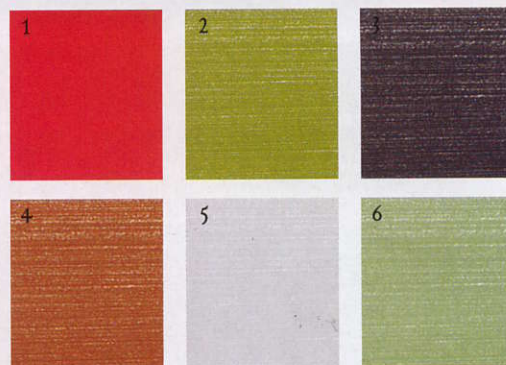
Price: \$59/29cm. Find it: Ikea, ikea.com.au.

"We wanted to build SOMETHING LIKE FANCY CAMPING, WITH A HOLIDAY FEEL."

LIVING AREA {above & left} As well as providing cosy corners to relax, the built-in daybeds offer ample storage, with deep drawers below. Wicker baskets and timber boxes from Ikea are used to stash magazines and firewood for fueling the freestanding fireplace in winter.

FLOORING {below} The couple chose a budget-savvy option for the floors. "All the internal floors are polished particleboard, which comes up like a lovely, warm cork," says Shane.

WATER TANKS {below left} With no town water supply, ample water tanks are an essential feature of the home's design. Placed in the central garden, the two corrugated water tanks are as striking as they are practical, giving an industrial aesthetic to the space.



colour & materials

- 1 Kitchen benchtop Standard laminate in Pillarbox, from \$86/sqm, Laminex.
 - 2 Living room paint Murowash in Ripple, \$39/litre, Murobond.
 - 3 Living room paint Murowash in Espresso, \$39/litre, Murobond.
 - 4 Living room paint Murowash in Papaya, \$39/litre, Murobond.
 - 5 Kitchen paint Murowash in Eggshell, \$34/litre, Murobond.
 - 6 Master bedroom paint Aqua Glaze Pearl in Lotus, \$46/litre, Murobond.
- Stockists, page 175

Due to the printing process, actual colours may vary.

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