



THE GROWING PLACE

Gwinganna lifestyle retreat

High on a plateau in a quiet region of the Tallebudgera Valley on Queensland's Gold Coast you will find Gwinganna – a health retreat created to take its guests on a journey of self-realisation and healing.

The vision of the Gwinganna ('lookout' in Aboriginal) Lifestyle Retreat on its 420-acre setting came a step closer in 2006 with the completion of two projects within the scheme – the Orchard Suites and the main dining and leisure facility.

As their name suggests, the accommodation suites are sited within a fruit orchard, requiring buildings that conform to the ecology and are 'Australian' in aesthetic and feel.

"We chose a pallet of natural materials which, when combined with traditional and older building techniques, delivered accommodation befitting and enhancing the experience of the guests," says architect Pouné Parsanejad. "We were influenced by the existing Queenslander style surrounding the property and juxtaposed that with recycled Australian hardwood reclaimed from various buildings and bridges throughout the country.

"The timber brought with it a story and a legacy of times gone by. The warm reds of the karri and ironbark [from a wool store in Fremantle and bridge piers at

Brett's Wharf in Brisbane] were set against the cold grey-blues of the reclaimed bluestone [often used as ballast on convict ships]."

The architects and construction company were also commissioned to renovate the ruins of the dining area partly destroyed by fire, and to extend the project into a large exterior deck and leisure area. The end result is a dining room extending through bifold doors to an outdoor dining deck and leisure area with infinity swimming pool, jacuzzi, amphitheatre and outdoor fireplace.

The dining and lounge area features recycled ironbark bridge timbers constructed using the old post-and-beam method. The structural classification obtained from the supplier was estimated at F42. Bracing was also recycled ironbark, used with VJ lining board. The combination produced the engineers' specification of N4.

Timber flooring is used extensively. "Internally, it continues with the darker karri that is matched to the timber used for the joinery," says Parsanejad. "[It is] a stunning 150-mm-wide board that has been carefully top nailed, polished and finished with a natural wax sealer."



OPPOSITE

The accommodation suites are sited within a fruit orchard

TOP

Wrap-around verandahs of recycled ironbark are high above the ground, contrasting with stainless steel handrailing

BOTTOM

External cladding is salvaged wire-brushed and painted recycled spotted gum



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The dining and leisure area demonstrates how timber can be used playfully and creatively to create spaces of interest within the outdoor environment. A focal point is the vast ironbark deck – wire brushed and painted using superior wood paints for protection and rustic warmth.

The interior of the dining and lounge area features 200 mm recycled blackbutt flooring – matching the existing heritage floor of the adjoining area and achieving a smooth, reflective finish by polishing and coating with natural wax sealants.

The architect made special mention of recycled timber supplier Australian Salvage – dedicating part of production to what was in effect sizing timber to meet some of the modern elements. “In providing these timbers, they advised and provided timber paint protection and maintenance procedures that will continue to enhance the look and performance of the timbers.”

In addition to extensive use of recycled timbers, all were coated with natural paints and sealant waxes, as opposed to polyurethane-based coatings. The architect also highlighted the greater stability of recovered wood over untreated ‘green’ timbers. Aesthetically, aged timber offers richer colours and tighter, more appealing grain patterns.

(This project was shortlisted in a number of categories for the 2006 Australian Timber Design Awards.)

TOP

‘Queenslander’ architecture juxtaposed with reclaimed Australian hardwoods

BOTTOM

Window, door and bathroom joinery is recycled karri

PROJECT Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat, Syndicate Rd, Tallebudgera, Qld

ARCHITECT Pouné Design in association with Peter Phillips Construction

WOOD SPECIES Treated H2 pine framing, recycled ironbark (structural columns, verandahs and decking), spotted gum (external cladding), recycled karri (internal flooring, window, door and bathroom joinery), pine boards (ceiling lining), recycled Oregon (decorative rafters)