

Daily Telegraph  
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## Decked out

Think outside the box for a new take on a classic beach house **16**

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## The brief

To build a modern, architectural beach house that pays homage to the traditional seaside cottages of the Central Coast



## ARCHITECT

**Angus Crowe** (above)  
True North Architects, [www.truenortharchitects.com.au](http://www.truenortharchitects.com.au)

## BUILDER

**Brad Paterson**  
Paterson Building, 231 Hillside Rd  
Avoca Beach, [paterson5@hotmail.com](mailto:paterson5@hotmail.com)

## THE SOURCE

**Flooring** Polished concrete slab from Boralstone, [boralstone.com.au](http://boralstone.com.au)  
**Weatherboard cladding** James Hardie Primeline weatherboard, [jameshardie.com.au](http://jameshardie.com.au)  
**Vegetable garden** The Little Veggie Patch Co, [littleveggiepatchco.com.au](http://littleveggiepatchco.com.au)

## BEFORE



## AFTER



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## A new take on a classic fibro

This beach house focuses on both sea and garden, writes Catherine Nikas-Boulos

Yes, this home is grand, rich in design and material, with million-dollar views in picturesque Avoca Beach.

But beyond that is a story of a homeowner who simply wanted to connect with the sea and the natural surrounds.

What originally existed on this Central Coast block was a beach shack, which according to True North Architects' Angus Crowe, was "beyond redemption". Its owner had lived in the cottage for a couple of years, lamenting the loss of the fibro cottages disappearing along the coast, before deciding the time was right to stop living in the past and proceed with something a little more lavish.

"It was not a great example of a classic beach shack, so she was pretty keen for us to produce a design that was a contemporary nod to the classic beach shack," says Angus. The land, which is about 8,00sq m, is wide at the front but tapers towards the back. The owner had very specific ideas about what she wanted in the new design, specifically about how the space was arranged.

Aside from a large main bedroom with ensuite, and a guest room and study, she was insistent about maintaining a view from her rear garden.

"This is an unusual request," says Angus.

"Usually, you try to maximise exposure from the house to the view and make the living spaces as wide as possible across the frontage to take in that view, completely disconnecting the garden. It made for an interesting arrangement — there are now great views from the back garden to the ocean and this home has lovely outdoor spaces."

A large proportion of the site has been left free for gardens, terraces and decks that provide a considerable amount of usable outdoor space for such a sloping site.

## Let the sun shine in

Angus didn't stray from the coastal-inspired brief, creating a house that has a pre-weathered beach look.

The combination of weatherboard and hardwood timbers left to silver in the sun and a pre-weathered palette of colours allow the building to age gracefully.

"Being an avid gardener and keen cook, the owner enjoys the proximity of her lush veggie planter-beds on the main terrace that both feed her kitchen and form part of the windbreak that shields a fire pit and forms a comfortable afternoon sun trap."

A "subtle crank" in the cathedral roof allows excellent winter sun penetration.

"Sun is captured on to a suspended and polished concrete slab which is insulated below to ensure heat is radiated back into the living spaces during winter," he says. A solar hot-water system with gas instantaneous boost has been installed and stormwater is harvested to a large above-ground tank.

## Living, tasty sculpture

The build took about 10 months to complete and largely went to plan. The property has three large bedrooms with ensuites and a combined open living/dining and kitchen. On the lower level is a double garage, laundry and cellar.

The upper living space is a major drawcard with a fire pit in the middle of the timber deck, central to the design.

But it is the greenery around the terrace area that sets the home apart. "There are no flowers, just vegetables that can be used by the great cook of this home and all the veggie sculptural foliage makes for an interesting garden."

"The owner has had corn, cauliflower,

spinach and artichoke growing, whatever is in season," he says. "She's fairly adventurous in her cooking."

He says the most difficult aspect of this project was designing within the height constraints that were set out in a covenant when the property was bought.

"They wanted to keep us down to less than seven metres (from the pitch of the roof), which is not very high but great for the owner of the block behind and the neighbours on either side."

**Catherine Nikas-Boulos**, [catherine.nikasboulos.com.au](http://catherine.nikasboulos.com.au)  
Pictures: Bright Ansett  
More: The house was an entrant in the NSW Architecture Awards, Residential Architecture, New House category.

