

# Haven on EARTH

Yearning for a quiet retirement, this WA couple built a beautiful Japanese-inspired home that delivers serenity in spades.

STORY & STYLING ANNA FLANDERS / PHOTOGRAPHY ANGELITA BONETTI

## *This is the life*

Owners Terry and Tena now have all they need to enjoy their retirement. "The house has everything a modern home should have," says Tena. "It feels warm and inviting and everywhere you look is pleasing." Set on a 50ha block, there is plenty of room for the couple, their children and grandchildren to spend time together, either hanging out in the beautiful house, splashing in the pool or roaming the grounds.



**LIVING** / Terry settles into his favourite chair for a spot of reading. The Japanese ceramics form part of the couple's treasured collection. Armchairs, ottomans and coffee table, all Dedece. Rug, Jenny Jones Rugs. The wall is constructed from basalt.

**GARDEN** / Every part of this property, including this pathway from the pool to the gallery, is designed to encourage quiet contemplation. FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 188.



This cluster of wood, stone and rammed-earth pavilions, about an hour's drive south-east of Perth, is a sight for sore eyes. Home to Terry and Tena, it is designed to celebrate their love of Japanese design yet sit lightly in its West Australian bush surroundings. "We wanted a home that was tranquil, beautiful and spacious," says Tena. "Most of all, it had to be comfortable for us, our children and our grandchildren."

Enter architect Suzie Hunt, who harnessed the couple's ideas to create a two-bedroom home with separate, but connected, two-bedroom guest quarters. "'Sanctuary' was an important word, one that was always top of mind during the design process," she says. "Terry and Tena wanted a home that had a peaceful ambience, so it needed to feel like a private retreat. It also needed to be robust and grounded and to connect with nature. We were very lucky that Terry and Tena commissioned us to do both the architecture and interior design, as it was important to us that the interior reflect the strength of the external aesthetic."

Entry to the home is via a boardwalk that runs between a pond and a rammed-earth wall with circular cut-outs that frame views of the *karesansui* (dry landscape) garden beyond. Leading off the foyer are the main bedroom pavilion to the east; the living pavilion to the north; and the contemplation courtyard and pool (via a gallery) to the south.

Basalt, slate and rammed earth lend weight to the exterior; inside, there's wood and stone in warm, natural hues. Earth-toned travertine flooring runs throughout and rather than paint, select surfaces are clad in Victorian ash, in both vertical and horizontal lines, contributing ►

*"'Sanctuary' was an important word, one that was always top of mind during the design process." Suzie Hunt, architect*

**LIVING/DINING** / Bonnie the labrador relaxes in the cool of the living room. The ceiling features Victorian ash. Rug, Jenny Jones Rugs. Custom-made dining table. Dining chairs, Dedece. Sofa, Poliform. Travertine flooring, Bernini Stone & Tile (throughout). Joinery and bifolds by Abbott'solutely Timber (throughout). **Smart buy:** Godfrey pendant lights, \$170/each (small) and \$225/each (medium), Lightly. **KITCHEN** / "The house is so efficient and comfortable to live in," says Tena. Benchtops in honed Marron Serrat granite, Bernini. Island bench facing in Evener Evenraven, Elton Group. Stools, Great Dane. Cabinetry in Queensland walnut veneer, Laminex. Fruit bowl, Accento. Jug, Georg Jensen. **FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 188.**

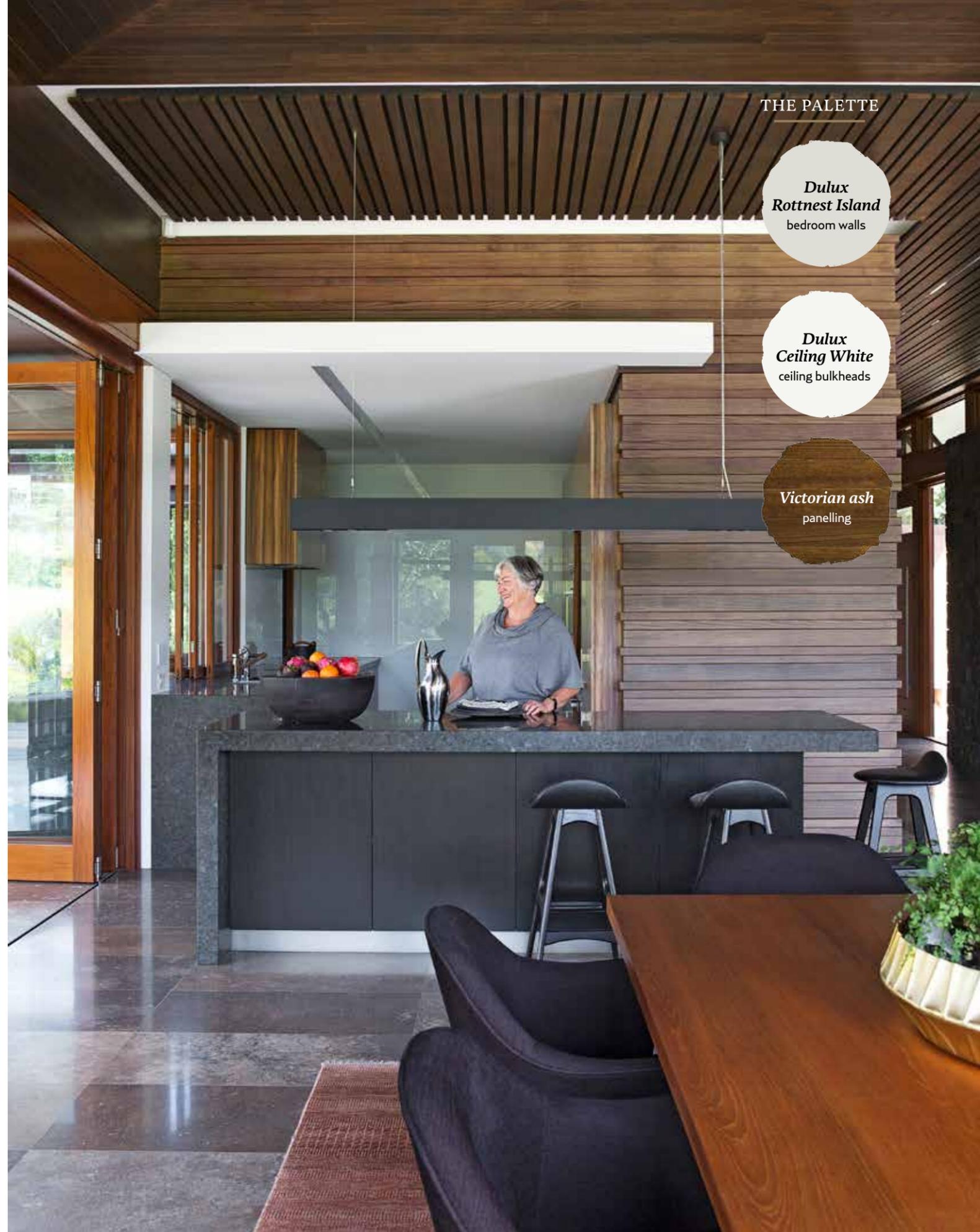
Paint colours are reproduced as accurately as printing processes allow.

THE PALETTE

*Dulux Rottnest Island*  
bedroom walls

*Dulux Ceiling White*  
ceiling bulkheads

*Victorian ash*  
panelling



**Summer retreat**

Every day feels like a holiday in this house, especially in summer when the days are long and sunny. Despite the WA heat, there is little need for artificial cooling – Terry and Tena simply open up all the bifolds to let the house breathe. Energy-efficient glass is used throughout, the stone flooring has good thermal mass and, since breezes blow across ponds before entering the house, the air is always lovely and cool.



**BEDROOM** / The sliding shoji screen door is a moveable artwork. Bed, Contempo. Bedlinen, Pure Linen. Bedspread, Empire Highgate. Pendant lights, Hub Furniture Lighting Living. Rug, Jenny Jones Rugs. Custom-made chaise. Sunergy energy-efficient glass, Westec Windows & Doors (throughout). Merbau decking.

**ENSUITE** / The luxurious ensuite has direct access to the pool so there's no need to traipse through the house in wet cossies. Bath, Apaiser. Travertine wall and floor tiles, Bernini Stone & Tiles. Tapware, Reece. Towels, Ricarda Fashion Objects.

FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 188.



◀ to the overall texture and warmth. “In Japanese design, it’s the use of honest materials such as timber and stone that create depth and that renowned sense of calm,” says Suzie. “Using the same sort of robust materials inside and out blurs the boundaries between the two and as a result, the home feels very serene.”

The open-plan living/dining room and conservatory, respectively located in the northern and eastern corners of the main pavilion, are glazed on all sides, affording panoramic views of the extensive Japanese-style garden, a masterpiece that this pair of passionate gardeners designed themselves. Decking wraps around these rooms, extending east and west to link this main pavilion with the guest and bedroom pavilions.

The main bedroom is a beautiful expression of Terry and Tena’s desire to be connected to nature. With ponds on two sides, the room appears to float, the effect enhanced by unobstructed views.

The property certainly fulfills Terry and Tena’s brief for tranquillity. And having won 11 architecture, interior design and building awards in the past 12 months, including the Master Builders Association’s Most Liveable Home for 2015, it’s clear that it’s not only the owners who are smitten.

“Our home is truly wonderful to live in,” says Tena. “It’s hard to say which part I love the most. One day I think we have the most beautiful entrance; another day I walk through our bedroom and ensuite and decide that is my dream. There is no part that isn’t special.” ▶

**Architecture/interiors:** *Suzanne Hunt Architect, Subiaco, WA; (08) 6113 3954 or [www.suzannehuntarchitect.com.au](http://www.suzannehuntarchitect.com.au). Builder:* *Gransden Construction, Nedlands, WA; (08) 9389 1350 or [gransden.com.au](http://gransden.com.au).*

## H&G HOUSES



**GARDEN / this page and opposite top right** The 50ha block affords Tena and Terry plenty of room to indulge their passion for gardening. A now-retired landscaper friend helped them bring their ideas to life, a project that took five years.

**CONSERVATORY /** The north-east facing conservatory is perfectly positioned for leisurely breakfasts. Warema remote-controlled conservatory awning, Baywest Blinds & Shutters. Heaven dining table and armchairs, Ke-zu.

**KARESANSUI GARDEN /** The *karesansui* garden is inspired by Zen gardens the couple had seen in Japan. FOR WHERE TO BUY, SEE PAGE 188. **H&G**

## FEATURE PLANTS

*Casuarina glauca*  
‘Cousin It’  
Sago palm  
(*Cycas revoluta*)  
Gardenia  
Ornamental pear  
Crepe myrtle  
(*Lagerstroemia*)  
Bamboo  
Weeping pagoda tree  
(*Saphora japonicum pendula*)

## THE LAYOUT

