

sand castles

● The beach house once meant a fibro cottage, filled with bunk beds and cast-off furniture. Anything half decent was whisked back to the city. Like most things, the beach house has changed. Some new homes still have a rustic appearance. But the finishes and fittings are far more sophisticated.

And while a modest 100-square-metre beach house may have been sufficient in the past, the move has been to larger structures, in many instances considerably more spacious than the city apartments or townhouses used by their owners during the week.

However, the finest beach houses cannot be reduced to fixtures and fittings. The pleasure comes from sitting on a canvas chair, on a protected deck, looking out to the sea with a good book in hand.

NESTLED IN THE BUSH OR
PERCHED ON CLIFFS, SIMPLE OR
SUMPTUOUS, THESE RECENTLY
COMPLETED BEACH HOUSES
EXEMPLIFY COASTAL
LIVING AT ITS BEST.
REPORT: STEPHEN CRAFTI





Queensland is home to some of Australia's finest beach houses. With its tropical climate, architects can literally use the outdoors for additional living space. This approach is best exemplified in a house at Marcus Beach, south of Sunshine Beach.

The timber, steel and polycarbonate house is designed around a century-old Moreton Bay ash. Divided into two pavilions, linked by a bridge, this house exemplifies the casualness associated with the beach. While there are indoor dining areas, it's unlikely family and friends would stray too far from eating on the covered outdoor terrace. With its double-height void, the terrace takes on grand proportions.

"Our clients didn't want a beach house that was precious, particularly with two small children," architect Stephen Guthrie says.

The Moreton Bay Ash also allowed Bark Design to create two zones – one for adults, the other for children. While the children have the run of the house, they have nooks to call their own. With their own deck, adjacent to their bedrooms, there's a sense of being in a tree house, only considerably more comfortable. Polycarbonate walls, which feature extensively in the design, also create the fragility of a tree house. "The Moreton Bay ash casts shadows on to the polycarbonate," Guthrie says. "It's a way of bringing the landscape inside."

TREE HOUSE

LOCATION:
MARCUS
BEACH,
QUEENSLAND

DESIGN:
BARK DESIGN