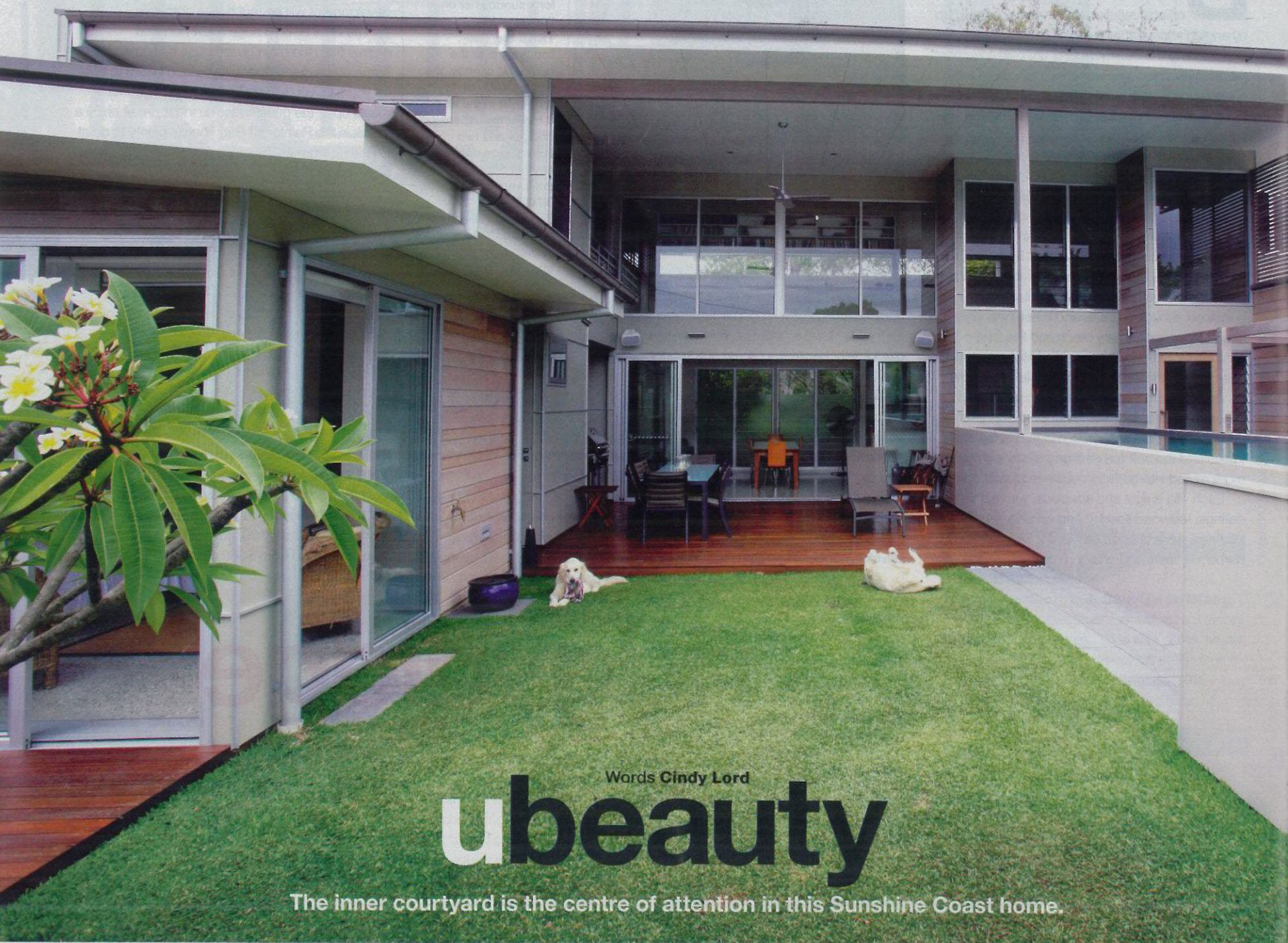




Words Cindy Lord

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The inner courtyard is the centre of attention in this Sunshine Coast home.

Tewantin, historically a sleepier part of the Noosa Shire, is not the kind of place usually associated with innovative architecture.

But hidden away in a street of brick veneer houses in the Sunshine Coast hamlet is this very different coastal residence. Completed six months ago, it was created by Bark Design's Stephen Guthrie and Lindy Atkin for a couple of retired Sydneysiders who were migrating north to be near family. "Our inspiration was the mid-last century timber and fibro fishing shacks and 'wedgies' which dotted the coast," says Guthrie. "They were, and still are, very particular to a river community like Tewantin."

Drawing on the local vernacular of fibro, bleached timber and concrete, the house brings to mind the knockabout functionality of rudimentary beach dwellings. However, there's nothing backwaterish about the sophisticated courtyard design, which draws on the best aspects of traditional South-East Asian houses.

After nine trips to Bali, the owners had fallen in love with the architecture of the Indonesian island and asked Bark to design them a Bali-style compound "that wasn't Bali". Guthrie says they get a lot of requests for Balinese look-alikes, but their approach is "more about capturing the essence".

Fortunately the owners, Bark, and builder Mike Back had similar ideas, and the project was

"It was about creating an oasis within the walls of the property."

completed in ten months with the owners moving from Sydney's Palm Beach during construction.

The key is the courtyard, which turns the traditional Western house plan inside out. Shaped like a "u" rather than a rectangle, the house has the garden in the middle, with internal spaces and the lap pool making up the three sides.

The largest section of the house runs along the southern perimeter with the north-facing living pavilion spilling into the outdoor room, which comprises the deck, raised pool and frangipani-scented garden.

The entire house is shielded from the street by a block wall. "There was no beach view so it was about creating an oasis within the walls of