



Inspired by
design

Life is full of surprises - and for Canadian interior designer Dara Wyton, being commissioned to fit out the newly renovated apartment of a Canadian couple coming home after 20 years in Australia entailed a whole series of surprises.



Working long distance by email, and dealing with the time difference were just two of the challenges to be overcome – dealing with an interior style which is totally different from the prevailing norm on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia was another. "Our style on the Sunshine Coast of BC is a more rustic, post and beam style", said Dara "I saw from the Australian clippings we were in desperate need of a retractable glass wall." The apartment had wonderful water views from the rear and the side, across a picturesque bay to a heavily wooded hillside – a wall of glass doors would bring in the soft, limpid light, while the boats moored in the calm waters of the bay provided a peaceful outlook.

The clippings Dara referred to were from Australian magazines, showing her what her client had in mind. Among them was *Queensland Homes*. "I was astounded and amazed by the magazine and all the wonderful designs. I instantly knew what my client was looking for and set out to find the appropriate finishes."

Bamboo floors are pure Queensland, and look just fine in British Columbia, but they are certainly not the norm – however they did deliver the look that Dara and her clients were seeking. They also created a linear geometry which was emphasised by the layout of the unit after it had been completely gutted. Kitchen and dining area flow one from the other, and the galley style layout

maximises available space, and allows a through view from the living room to the gorgeous vista.

Reflective surfaces bounce light and increase the illumination in the apartment – white high gloss cabinetry, stainless steel fridge and cabinet hardware, and mirrored splashbacks all contribute to the light, bright, welcoming atmosphere.

Towards the rear of the apartment, light (or lack of it) was a major issue – Dara's solution was to open up the hallway, and by relocating the laundry from a larger room to a smaller one, created a media room where lack of light was in fact, an advantage. The ensuite and bathroom also benefited from a rearrangement of light sources, and are now light filled, modern and wonderfully inviting.



As you would imagine, although the Sunshine Coast in British Columbia has a high daily average of sunshine hours in comparison with the rest of Canada, it definitely doesn't rate against the Sunshine Coast in sunny Queensland, so it was necessary to provide warmth. Dara's clients were keen on acquiring a gas fire, but as gas was not connected to the apartment, the logistics became complicated and in the end, Dara sourced a modern electric fireplace to create a focal point in the sitting room and deliver warmth when needed.

Dara's clients are now ensconced in their new home, settling into life in Canada – after 20 years the adjustment is not likely to happen overnight.

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