

theage (melbourne) magazine



**Virginia Trioli on
the biggest gamble
of her career**

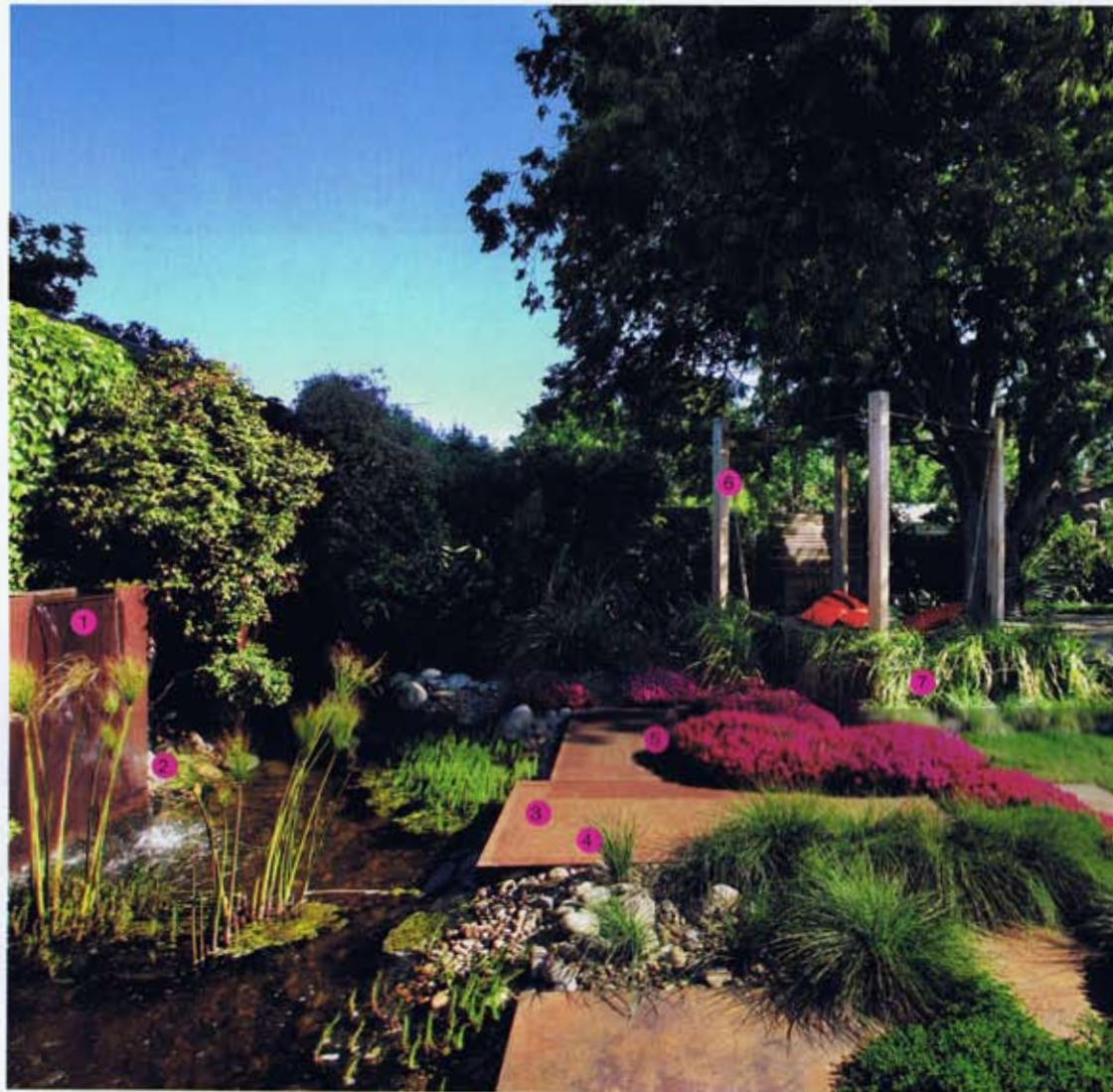
Bible bashing: one man's crusade

Fine dining? No thanks

My life as Shane Warne

Fashion: after dark with
Rebecca Twigley

Plus our Christmas survival guide



create the garden

- 1 The water feature is made from welded weathering steel plates and fed by overflow from two 5000-litre rainwater tanks. A bio-filter helps control "bad" pond bacteria, algae and mosquito larvae. A FiltoClear 15000 bio-filter caters for an 8000-litre pond, available for \$1095 from McCracken's Water Services in Bayswater.
- 2 The tall, reedy papyrus sedge (*Cyperus papyrus*) filters out nutrients from the water and the green water milfoil (*Myriophyllum crispatum*) is a fish-friendly oxygenating plant. Both need an aquatic fertilising tablet annually. Papyrus comes in 20-centimetre pots for \$26.95, water milfoil for \$13.95 in 14-centimetre pots from Poynton's.
- 3 Weathering or Corten steel plates make a visually interesting alternative to paving. For plates larger than 600 x 600 millimetres, lay a 40-millimetre thick bed mortar, level and knock it down with a rubber mallet. Anything smaller should be secured with products such as Sulfitec or Liquid Nails. Available in 2440- x 1220-millimetre plates for \$185.90 each from Metalcorp in Westall.
- 4 The spiky-looking lomandra (*Lomandra confertifolia* ssp. *rubiginosa* Seascape) needs no maintenance and in summer has an aromatic yellow flower (20-centimetre pots cost \$22.95 from Poynton's). The drought-tolerant and adaptable glow wattle (*Acacia lasiocarpa prostrate*) makes an excellent groundcover companion.

- 5 For a burst of colour in spring, try planting red pigface (*Lampranthus*), a coastal plant you might have seen on the cliffs around Phillip Island. The fast-growing succulent needs a hard pruning once a year. Available in 14-centimetre pots for \$10.95 from Poynton's in Essendon.

- 6 The swinging daybed is made from steel plates that have been custom-bent and finished with Jarrah garden edging. It is suspended from four Blackbutt posts with hessian ropes (from Buntings). For Blackbutt posts, try Hazelwood and Hill in Burwood.

- 7 The tufted perennial grass *Imperata cylindrica* provides a lush sea on which the daybed appears to "float", especially on a windy day. It's invasive, so be sure to install a root barrier at least 500 millimetres deep to contain it. Available in 14-centimetre pots for \$13.95 from Poynton's.

backyardbliss

Waterfalls, a swinging daybed and gently swaying grasses turn a suburban yard into a Balinese resort.

Words Peter Barrett
Photography Sharyn Cairns

It's not what you'd expect for leafy Balwyn: a Balinese-inspired tropical-style oasis. "It's like a resort," says owner Cheryl Chin, a retired Hong Kong corporate relocation consultant who, with her investment banker husband F. Y. Wong and teenage son, settled here last year. Richard Bellemo designed the space, which recently won a Landscape Industries Association Victoria award for best garden in the \$50,000 to \$150,000 category. The brief was for colour, relaxation and space to entertain. From a timber dining area inspired by Balinese architecture, guests can gaze across at the weathering steel water feature. The torrent comes from two rainwater tanks, hidden by a screen of recycled timber, which also feed the garden. The pond's biofilter and ecosystem (there are fish, too) ensure that further runoff entering the stormwater system is clean. A huge, possibly century-old Japanese lime (*Tilia japonica*, one of the biggest in Melbourne, according to one arborist) provides shade for the deck that is built around it and a swinging daybed has room for up to six loungers.

ourtip

If you want a drought-resistant plant that also looks lush, nothing beats bird of paradise (*Strelitzia reginae*). Make sure to plant in well-drained soil (\$29.95 for a 20-centimetre pot, available from Poynton's).



Stockists

McCracken's Water Services,
Shop 1, 208 Canterbury Road,
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Phone 8727 7400,
www.mccrackens.com.au
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Phone 9337 8111,
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