

**SIGHT  
TO  
BEHOLD**

Encircled by water, this open, airy home treats its occupants to magnificent views from a space that's equally splendid to look at.

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These pages Partially hidden behind oleanders and eucalyptus trees, the side view of the house is dominated by an anthracite-grey wall. The colour is more suited to the surrounding nature than white, which is banned for the exteriors of homes on the island, as it would stand out too much. The gills in the side of the building are at the top of the pool house.

CORAL REEFS, WHITE BEACHES, azure-blue water and exotic flora and fauna. It's hardly surprising that the much-travelled owner of this house fell in love with Hamilton Island in the Whitsundays. "After spending my holidays at the island's resorts for years, I decided to build my own house here," he says, and engaged Sydney-based architect Renato D'Ettore to build and furnish this award-winning holiday home.

The land on this site drops steeply down the west coast and thus determined the underlying concept for the design. The architect spanned the staggered volume between two dominant side walls with the living area, main bedroom and pool at the top, and the guestrooms and a sheltered terrace on the lower storey. "The western facade opens up entirely to ocean views, whereas the two anthracite-grey side walls and a natural stone wall anchor the building into the slope," says Renato.

Heaviness and mass versus transparency and lightness: it is these contrasts that characterise the villa. The walls' dark-grey paint and exposed concrete blend in wonderfully with the volcanic rock of the island and the eucalyptus trees. As a foil to the dark walls, a sand-coloured poured-cement floor extends throughout both levels. To complement the glass facades, concrete walls and cement floors, the architect used natural stone from the nearby mainland to build a high retaining wall in the entrance and courtyard area. "I didn't want to compete with the wonderful natural surroundings and view," explains Renato. "The simplicity of this house is a tribute to the beauty of its location."

The entrance courtyard opens directly onto the main living floor, and a steel barbecue has been integrated in the massive stone wall, creating a casual outdoor zone. The house aims to trigger curiosity and create suspense by contrasting confinement with vastness.

"I wanted to create sublime surprises rather than grand gestures. Besides the view, water plays a special role as well," says Renato. Both in the entrance courtyard and on the intimate patio behind the owner's sleeping area, there are steel ponds full of water lilies, and the most impressive water feature is the one surrounding the living area: a luxurious swimming pool. Different-sized platforms lead across it to the pool house, whose airy 4.5-metre ceilings provide a shady retreat. The surface of the luxurious pool transfers seamlessly into the horizon with its ocean panorama, with other islands and Australia's mainland to the west.

In the evenings, the owner often walks down through the tropical garden to the mangrove forest and rocky cliff below. Looking back, he can experience the full transparency of the house, illuminated by pinpoints of light. "The architecture and furnishings correspond exactly to my ideal of a holiday home," he says.

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This page The owner's favourite place to savour his morning coffee is in a Paola Lenti armchair from De De Ce in the sun-filled entrance courtyard. B&B Italia table from Space. Opposite page Platforms lead between the house and the pool house. The view captures a panorama of the ocean with other islands and Australia's mainland to the west. Sun loungers by Paola Lenti from De De Ce.





*“I wanted to create sublime surprises rather than grand gestures. Besides the view, water plays a special role as well.”*

These pages A steel barbecue has been integrated into the massive stone wall that lines the entrance courtyard next to the living area. Corian kitchen by Boffi. Dining table, chairs, sofa and carpet by Paola Lenti from De De Ce. B&B Italia armchair and stool both from Space. Wall mosaic by French painter Fernand Léger.



This page The main bedroom opens straight out to the pool. On the table is a collection of flotsam collected from beaches. **Opposite page** The pool house (shown with blinds down) provides an airy, shady retreat from the heat. Its ceiling height is four and a half metres.

