



AZURIS, Hamilton Island, Australia

Idyllically located on the western side of Hamilton Island, the aptly named Azuris overlooking the Coral Sea, is one of two holiday homes nestled side-by-side that architect Renato D’Ettorre designed for the same client.

The three bedroom design spectacularly responds to three key elements of its location—light, air and water.

Indoor and outdoor effortlessly blend and spaces fuse, making the most of ocean breezes and light. The sea is not just the focus of the view but also wraps around the main pavilion in the form of a spacious infinity pool, blending seamlessly into the horizon and the ocean vista.

Airflow is optimized and adjusted with walls and shading devices easily opened, creating comfort, reducing the need for airconditioning and artificial lighting.

Although stunning, the design brief included instruction for a low-maintenance house that is all about easy living.

Opposite page: The surface of the luxurious infinity pool transfers seamlessly into the horizon with its unique ocean panorama.

Above: The swimming pool’s proximity to the living area and master bedroom never fails to impress.



Above: The open upper living area embraces an outdoor/indoor lifestyle.

Right: Azuris' design responds to three key elements of its island location—light, air and water.



Above: Walls and shading devices are easily opened and adjusted to optimize air flow and moderate sunlight creating a comfortable environment that reduces the need for air-conditioning or artificial lighting.



Left: "The bedroom and its relation to the swimming pool is the easiest feature to fall in love with," says D'Etorre. "The distance from bed to pool is only meters away which beckons you to take a dip the moment you awake."

Far left: Shower with a view—naturally.





Situated on a site that falls steeply away to the water's edge, on approach, the only part of the house visible is a green roof planted with native species, which further draw the eye out towards the horizon and the spectacular view.

The contemporary design adopts a pavilion form, with floor to ceiling sliding glass doors, bedrooms and living areas spread over three levels. Internal courtyards are tranquil spaces of pools and ponds.

Construction materials are concrete, stone and glass—chosen for their rawness and transparency respectively. The house spans between two dominant walls. The living area, main bedroom and pool are on the top level for privacy, with guest rooms and an undercover sheltered terrace on the lower level. The western façade opens up entirely to the view whilst the two side walls and natural stone wall anchor the home into the earth.

The site, abundant with wildlife and covered in eucalypts and a mangrove swamp, needed to respect the flora and fauna. With water scarce on the island, 40,000 liters (8,800 gallons) of rainwater is collected in tanks within the basement. Water is also recycled, treated and used to water the landscape.

Opposite page: The entry courtyard is shielded from the road by high stone walls. The courtyard is a quiet contemplative place with a cooling reflection pond with waterlilies. The entrance courtyard opens directly onto the main living floor. A steel barbecue has been integrated into the massive stone wall, creating a casual outdoor cooking zone not far from the kitchen and dining area.

Above: The house sits inconspicuously into the landscape so that is difficult to imagine what lies beyond the unobtrusive external walls.



LINK HOUSE, Sydney, Australia

Located on the Sydney Harbour foreshore in Chiswick, the home's owner built his vision on the original site of his childhood home.

The design brief for Renato D'Etorre Architects was to separate the living and sleeping quarters for this busy, young family who love to entertain.

Completed in 2012, the design attempts to blur the edges between indoors and outdoors whilst maintaining privacy as well as openness and maximizing the spectacular water views across Five Dock Bay.

The public space of the living area is housed in a glass pavilion with large glass folding doors which can be opened to bring the outside in. The pavilion, surrounded by gardens, terraces and breezeways, emphasizes the bay environment, the sun, the breezes and the views.

Opposite page: The feeling of lightness and openness strikes you immediately as you enter Link House—blurring the edges between indoors and outdoors.

Above: The parents of the home's owner had built the original house in the 1970s. It was a tough decision to knock it down and rebuild—but the results are spectacular.



The pavilion space also houses the kitchen, dining and sitting areas, fireplace, and a rooftop terrace to showcase the spectacular water views.

The sleeping quarters pavilion is over three levels. The children's bedrooms and bathrooms are on the entry level, a lounge area, utility spaces, commercial kitchen and steam room occupy the second and third levels with the parent's master bedroom on the top level which also includes a rooftop courtyard, vegetable garden and orchard.

The owners had seen one of architect Renato D'Ettore's earlier concrete houses and wanted a similar construction utilizing low-maintenance materials.

The two pavilions are joined at ground level by a glass link spanning a large fish pond, surrounded by an internal garden and courtyard. Featuring a fixed glass floor and roof, its retractable glass walls open to the south-facing courtyard and north-facing garden.

The internal courtyard is the heart of the family home. It's the perfect space for gathering family and friends for a barbecue or pizza from the home's pizza oven.

The owner, a passionate foodie who works within the food industry, wanted a concrete bench in the kitchen, a walk-in fridge and separate domestic and industrial kitchens.

The architect says: "We've created a robust house with durability without making it look industrial."

Above and opposite page: The courtyard, the garden and fish pond unfold as you enter. The quality of the glass link is impressive immediately on entering.



Above: Because the owners had built a new swimming pool only a year before deciding to build their new house, it was designed around the existing pool.

Opposite page: The owner, a passionate foodie, wanted a concrete bench in the kitchen, a walk-in fridge and separate domestic and industrial kitchens.

Page 178–79: “The roof terrace is my favorite space,” says architect, Renato D’Ettorre. “It is where the sun can be enjoyed throughout most of the day in summer and winter. It beckons the visitor upon entering the house to explore the terrace and the panoramic view of the surrounding bay and gardens.”



