

garden gallery



Garden designer: Alex Haskey,
Green Rooms Gardens & Landscapes
Garden location: Waterloo, New South Wales
Photographer: Peter Brennan





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URBAN LIVING

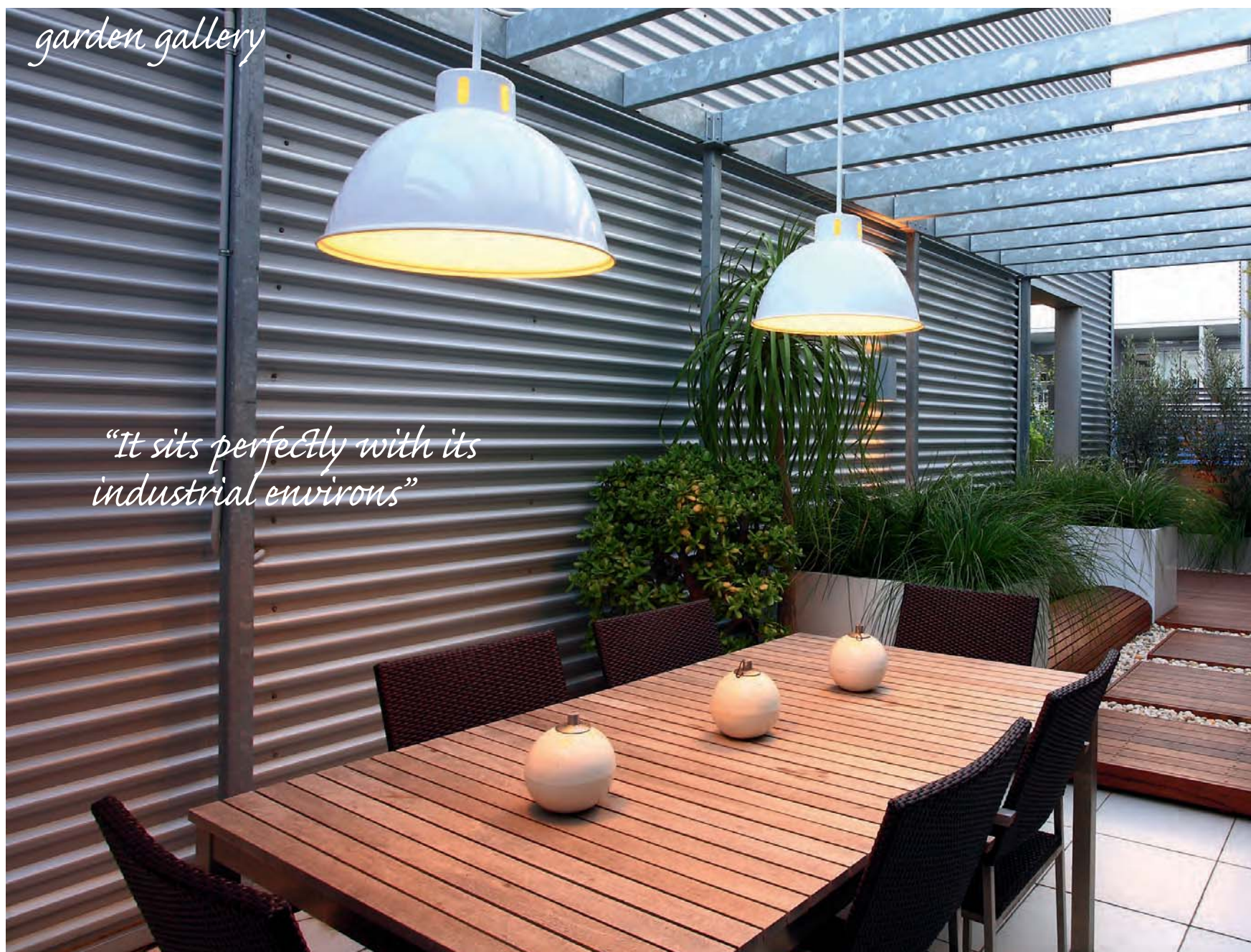
Drawing on its industrial setting, this rooftop garden is a marvel of modern design

The design for this inner-city roof garden was inspired by its location and immediate surroundings. Many parts of the Waterloo area of Sydney are still highly industrial and this was very much the case with the new apartment building into which this roof garden was being installed. As with any roof garden, although the sky's the limit in terms of style and aesthetics, there were practical issues and constraints that needed to be carefully considered when drawing up a design.

Obviously, the roof's waterproofing must not be interfered with — and, in some cases, waterproofing must be improved or added. Also, the structure of the roof must be strong enough to support the additional weight of decking, paving, plants and the like. As with this design, the main planting, and any other heavy weight, is best supported around the perimeter, close to the structural walls. A critical consideration was plant choice. They needed to be hardy enough to survive being grown in containers as well as tough enough to withstand the stronger winds and harsher sunlight.

The existing garden was barely used but →





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"It sits perfectly with its industrial environs"



thanks to its large size it offered plenty of potential. The key to making the most of this formerly neglected space was to produce a confident, contemporary design to satisfy the owners' needs and the constraints imposed by the garden's rooftop location. To achieve this, a number of key elements were installed, each complementing the other.

The pergola is a vital part of the design as it provides a more intimate feel for the main dining area and reduces the view into the garden from those apartments situated on upper floors. The pergola also made it possible to hang feature lights above the table, creating a real feeling of an outdoor room. Galvanised steel was chosen for the construction of the pergola as the modern metal look blends seamlessly with the industrial-style surroundings.

Storage was installed using a sliding door system with a roof and extensive shelving, all of which was painted to match the building. This really helped to clear the apartment of the inevitable overflow of bits and pieces that never seem to have a home and has become a feature rather than a distraction.





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Custom-made troughs were incorporated, primarily around the edge of the garden areas, and house a wealth of architectural foliage plantings. These provide screening and interest in equal measure. Three troughs were set aside for the owners to plant up as a kitchen garden, thereby creating a further link between the apartment and the garden. The troughs themselves were also used to bring a splash of colour into the scheme with orange providing a dramatic, unifying focal element to the contemporary outdoor space. All troughs and pots have been installed with a drip irrigation system for ease of maintenance.

One of the most delightful features is the built-in day bed. Of undulating shape, it is clad in hardwood and when flooded with

cushions becomes the owners' favourite place to spend a lazy afternoon. As the day bed is situated between two large planters, this is also a private space away from neighbouring windows.

Lightweight hardwood decking was laid to update the existing tired tiling, giving the garden a look of natural warmth.

The overall space works on a number of levels and is one that the owners are thrilled with. It sits perfectly with its industrial environs and is now the most used room in the apartment. For me, it was an immensely satisfying project. I enjoyed balancing all the elements and working within a framework of constraints to deliver an outdoor space that is functional, aesthetically appealing and has a true sense of place. ■

