

outdoor living

Timeless showpiece

This beach house was designed to reflect the colour and textures of the South-West coastline.

TRADITIONALLY, a beach house is a place to get away from the madding crowd, unwind and forget about our woes by immersing ourselves in nature. Soaking up the salty ocean air and listening to rustling trees are part and parcel of the holiday experience, so it is important when designing a holiday home to preserve the natural landscape.

With this in mind, Garry Baverstock, of Ecotect

Architects, has created the ideal South-West sanctuary. "We wanted to ensure most of the coastal vegetation was kept intact," Garry says.

ing Margaret River bush granite and western red cedar, to pick up the colouring of the coastline and the surrounding bush," Garry says.

The combination of stone and timber give the house classic appeal, while the curved Colorbond roof and streamlined aesthetics add a modern touch. "We wanted the home to be both rustic and timeless," he says. "We live in such a throwaway society,

The overall feel is stylish, but not pretentious

but that attitude is environmentally irresponsible, so our aim was to build a home that would last and one that people would want to hang on to."

The house also had to be robust to endure the environmental onslaught of its coastal location. "Being near the coast means the home has to withstand corrosion, wind, rain, salt and cyclones," Garry says. "We also set it well back from the building line to combat storm surges or rising sea levels."

Energy efficiency was also a high priority. "We designed a state-of-the-art, passive-solar home

for the client several years ago and she wanted the holiday home to be designed using the same principles," Garry says. "The northern orientation made it very easy to get passive-solar advantages without sacrificing views."

A stone entry wall is the ideal frame for the all-important first glimpse of the ocean.

"The entry was a very important feature," Garry says. "We wanted it to feel like you were on holiday from the moment you step on to the veranda."

Inside, the house has a relaxed feel, with funky Santa Fe-inspired furniture and decor – including a pair of howling coyotes guarding the kitchen, clean open-living spaces and plenty of natural light.

"We used plenty of internal highlight windows and a clerestory to illuminate the ceiling," Garry says. "This creates plenty of light reflection and helps scatter light evenly around the room, cutting out glare."



Stone and timber give the beach house classic appeal. Pictures: Stewart Allen

get the look

- Architect: Garry Baverstock, Ecotect Architects, Swanbourne
- Builder: Down South Building Co, Yallingup
- Structural engineer: Marocchi Engineering Group, Subiaco

This house won the ecologically sustainable development award in the 2005 Architecture Awards of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, WA Chapter.

