Advertorial





THINKBRICK LIVEBRICK

Bonus feature

INSIDE Creating the

designer touch – brick by brick

Best laid plans

Challenged by his most demanding client yet (himself), an architect fashioned his family's home from bricks, mortar and zinc.





Lower costs

Brick walls, combined with insulation, will cut your energy bills by 25% each year.



Once it's built, brick remains weatherproof and age proof, with minimal upkeep

"What I love about brick is that it's an honest and very durable material... It's also really low maintenance and has a lot of longevity."

> rchitect Damian Parras' own home is his canvas. As both designer and client, the possibilities before the Max Architects partner were infinite.

Damian and his wife Tina spent five years on the block in their old Moonee Ponds home before taking on the rebuild. They studied their family's lifestyle, the site and the spirit of the area as they weighed up the many paths to a sustainable, stylish and flowing family home.

One choice, says Damian, was forever at the heart of the design. "It was always going to be brick,"

he says. "What I love about brick

Worthy materials Damian is known for designing from the outside in and the inside out, and his signature is clean lines and voluminous forms. His own home follows suit. The ground floor is constructed

on a reinforced slab with a suspended cube at the upper level. Around the back, the scale reduces right down to a single brick box, which frames the built-in barbecue and outdoor entertaining area.



Brick, naturally

Natural clay bricks maintain their good looks and durability without the need for painting or other maintenance treatments.

Climate control Brick is blessed with a high thermal mass and superior insulation to keep you warmer in winter and cooler in summer.

is that it's an honest and very durable material, especially at the highly-trafficked ground level of the home. It's also really low maintenance and has longevity."

The innovative form of the house is particularly striking and the materials had to be worthy. The dark veneer of Austral Bricks on the lower ground beautifully anchors the shining zinc cladding on the top level.

"We like to keep exteriors limited to one or two materials to keep them uncluttered, but one of the risks of a minimalist approach to materials is you can become tired of your choices," says the architect.

Damian found his solution when he discovered Austral Brick's Elements Zinc semi-glazed range. Not only did this choice have the depth of colour he was looking for, it also had an element of surprise.



Why brick is best

Brick is the best building material for levelling out temperature swings during summer and winter, reducing the need for artifical heating and cooling.*

Get the edge

chly-glazed colou nmers and glows

"The metallic sheen has so much dimension to it. The bricks change their character in response to the weather conditions. On a clear day the bricks capture the sun and really come to life," he says.

This level of engagement extends to the mortar, where Damian specified a complementary charcoal colour.

"At large scale, the face of the brickwork looks quite monotone but it becomes incredibly detailed and textural as you move closer."

Inside, the two-level, four-bedroom house perfectly caters to Damian, Tina and their two young children. Light flows through the house from the

semi-enclosed front garden all the way to the back courtyard, while a central courtyard separates the living spaces.

Comfortably greener

Meanwhile, the eco measures in place are making family life comfortably greener.

A 25,000-litre water tank under the driveway services the toilets and the garden, while solar panels on the roof fuel the house and the grid with clean energy, cutting back the power bill. The combination of brick, concrete and insulation is also proving successful. "The thermal mass qualities of brick

and concrete are incredible. We don't

have much use at all for artificial heating and cooling."

Having laid a foundation of impeccable planning, Damian looked to bricklayers David and John Albi to bring his design into three dimensions.

"The bricklayers were fantastic. They took a lot of pride in their work," he says. He also assigned builders Jag Homes Developments to oversee the construction.

"A good builder makes the difference between an ordinary result and one that - in our view - is close to perfect," says Damian of his home and his magnum opus.



"The thermal mass qualities of brick and concrete are incredible. We don't have much use at all for artificial heating and cooling."

Keep the peace

Turn your home into a peaceful retreat. Brick provides superior sound insulation for a long and happy future without your neighbour's noise.



^{*}A Study of the Thermal Performance of Australian Housing was conducted by Think Brick Australia in conjunction with the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment at the University of Newcastle.



. Perfect match Charcoal mortar and shallow-ironed joints ensures the natural beauty of brick shines through.



Safe and secure A brick fence not only looks good but also provides hard to beat home security. Top a stretcher bond with a rowlock bond to add a geometric flourish.



Q&A

How important was a green design? Sustainable design is the responsible approach in combating our impact on the environment. It is no longer considered an option, but a necessary mindset for both designers and clients throughout the design and construction process.

What's your favourite feature?

The fully glazed central courtyard is the highlight of the ground floor experience. It draws in the rich northern light and provides a strong visual connection not only to its feature landscaping, but between the rear and front living spaces and the public street interface beyond.

Why a stretcher bond?

Stretcher bond was chosen for the inherent strong horizontal lines as it lends to the brickwork pattern, reinforcing the linear proportion of the ground floor walls which anchor and compliment the vertically expressed upper storey zinc cladding.

Any tips for building in brick?

Select an architect/designer with the skill to utilise and detail brick as part of an overall design. Brick selection, bond and mortar design should be carefully determined as part of this early design process. The right builder and contractor will transform these ideas to reality on site.

Architect: Damian Parras maxarchitects.com.au

Builder: Jag Homes Developments Bricks: Austral Bricks Elements Zinc semiglazed Mortar: Charcoal, shallow-ironed joints Flashings: Colorbond Ironstone

Visit **thinkbrick.com.au** to download our interactive iPad version and more! "The metallic sheen has so much dimension to it. The bricks change their character in response to the weather conditions."



Invest in your future Even after 50 years in the extreme Australian climate, brick requires virtually no upkeep or repair expenses.



visit us at www.thinkbrick.com.au to learn more



energy efficiency sustainable design

n 2002, Think Brick embarked on a 10-year thermal research program to understand how clay masonry can best achieve sustainable design.

Key findings from the first phase of research were:

- Insulated cavity brick ranked highest in producing energy efficient housing;
- Thermal mass in floors alone is not sufficient to reduce extremes in temperature;
- Lightweight buildings perform the worst in all seasons; and
- Brick veneer performs better than lightweight building materials.



The research project has now proven what builders have guessed for thousands of years – **clay brick combined with insulation delivers a superior building material**.

That means clay brick housing does not need the same level of artificial cooling during peak electricity demands in summer as other forms of construction.

To see the report, visit www.thinkbrick.com.au

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