

THE CHAD

The Chad has been our family home for 27 years, and over time, we've nurtured the garden into the lush, vibrant space it is today. Seven years ago, we embarked on a renovation of our Art Deco house, and we were fortunate to work with Peta Donaldson of Studio Blac, who designed a landscape plan that would lay the foundation for the garden. Since then, our passion for gardening has flourished, and we've expanded on her original vision by introducing various shades of green and silver, creating a garden full of texture and life.

The front garden, with its large ficus hedge, offers us privacy and a peaceful buffer from the street. The lawn is surrounded by a border of plectranthus, while several established camellias frame the house's front leadlight window. Beneath these trees, we've planted shade-loving varieties such as white lace-cap hydrangeas, daphne, and elephant ears, adding a soft, serene atmosphere.

The garden's scent is often enhanced in spring when the jasmine, which covers both side fences, bursts into bloom.

Throughout the garden, you'll discover a mix of euphorbia, English buxus, hellebores, silver spurflower, asparagus ferns and lomandra, blending harmoniously with the surrounding greenery.

The back garden is anchored by a stunning Japanese ample and a honey locust tree, with the striking black steel pergola at the heart of the space. This feature was awarded for its innovative use of steel in the 2018 BDAV awards, and its canopy of Virginia creeper offers beautiful shade in the summer.

A glass sculpture from Kitengela Glass Blowers in Kenya hangs down from the centre of the pergola, adding a unique artistic touch to the garden. We love watching the Virginia creeper transform, its vibrant green summer leaves slowly turning to rich reds in autumn, while the honey locust turns a bright yellow. On the side wall of the garage, another Virginia creeper grows, adding to the seasonal beauty.

The veranda, which has become one of our favourite spaces, has hosted many meals with loved ones and was even the setting for our son and his partner's wedding in 2024.

A curved cement seat sits at the rear of the garden, a perfect spot to enjoy the view of our small orchard, which includes loquat, orange, lemon, mandarin, lime, apple, avocado, pomegranate and fig trees. Birds often visit the rusty birdbath in the orchard, adding life and sound to the space.

More recently, we've added an above-ground vegetable garden behind the garage, where an abundance of vegetables and herbs flourish, completing the sense of self-sufficiency and joy that the garden brings.

Through dedication, care, and an ever-deepening love of gardening, we've created an oasis that reflects our family's spirit - a space of beauty, relaxation, and celebration.

The Chad is located on the lands of the Bunurong People. Open Gardens Victoria wishes to acknowledge the Traditional custodians of this land and we pay respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

These notes can be downloaded from the Open Gardens Victoria website:
www.opengardensvictoria.org.au

