

PART 1

TOP 50 HOMES

INNOVATIVE • BOLD • UNRIVALLED

*Great
divide*

This year, sustainable
builds go head-to-head
with beloved heritage and
iconic designs

Mini to mega mansions

YOU'LL BE SURPRISED BY WHAT'S ON THE LIST

What makes a great home in 2022? While the mega mansions that sit prominently on billionaires' row in affluent suburbs certainly capture our attention with their record breaking real estate sales, how do they favour against environmentally friendly homes or even tiny homes at the very extreme end of that spectrum?

Of course, we will always be in awe of the architectural grandeur of residential estates that represent vast wealth and a life so foreign to most of us, but is that reason enough to give them top billing in our



CATHERINE NIKAS-BOULOS

Top 50 Homes in NSW guide for 2022?

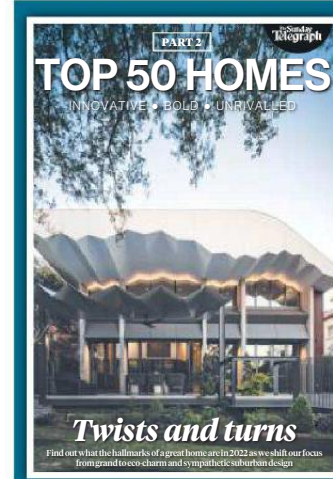
Our state also has a plethora of historic homes and architecturally significant homes, making the decision of which homes to keep in the Top 50 list all the more complicated. Ultimately, while our team of experts discussed the merits of each home endlessly, we came to the realisation that, as a society, our definition of what makes a great home has changed

significantly in the past couple of years.

Covid has put the spotlight on our homes in respect to creating spaces where we can live, work and even feel like we're on holiday when the option to travel is temporarily suspended. Architects have largely embraced this new direction, delivering homes with oversized bedrooms and ensuites, large indoor/outdoor entertaining areas and hotel-inspired styling to meet the resort brief. Sustainable homes have also come a long way, both in terms of design and homeowners' resolve to build a home that does not cost the earth. Low-impact and high-

performance building materials are key to an eco-design, and you'll be amazed by how some of the homes included in our top 50 have met this criteria. Today we showcase our top 50-to-26 homes. Check out The Sunday Telegraph tomorrow as we count down to the winning home on our list.

In our office, there was fierce debate about which homes qualified to be on this list and of course this is such a subjective topic. Inevitably you may agree or completely disagree with the experts on our panel, but either way we welcome your discussion at: top50homes.com.au



TOP 50 HOMES PART 2 IN TOMORROW'S PAPER

HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE TOP 50

VISIT TOP50HOMES.COM.AU

50 Show me the money! Or at least the empty cash safe box

Name: Melissa Caddick's 'Ponzi' House
Address: Wallangra Rd, Dover Heights

Why we love it: \$10m for \$30m views is a bargain in anyone's language, even if most of us don't have that kind of cash.

Liquidators have just sold fraudster Melissa Caddick's ex-Dover Heights home and despite some level of notoriety, the home comes with Harbour Bridge and Opera House views, fantastic multi-generational living across four levels, perfect NYE



entertaining space, two safes and a very private, self-contained pool area to while away the summer days.



49 European glamour meets Sydney high-society

Name: Boomerang
Address: Billyard Ave, Elizabeth Bay
Value: Sold for \$20m in 2005

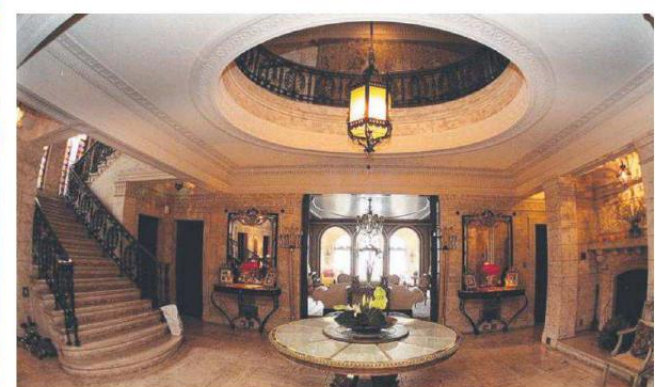
Why we love it: Designed by English architect Neville Hampson in 1926 for music publisher Frank Albert, this world famous Spanish Mission home starred in the Hollywood blockbuster Mission: Impossible 2.

The 25-room property, with four kitchens, sits on more than 4000 sq m. Owned by transport magnate Lindsay Fox, Boomerang is a nod to an



opulent era long gone with the bedrooms made from English oak, the bathrooms tiled with gold, one staircase made of marble and the other of bronze.

Rumours had this heritage-listed home "quietly listed" for \$60m in 2016.



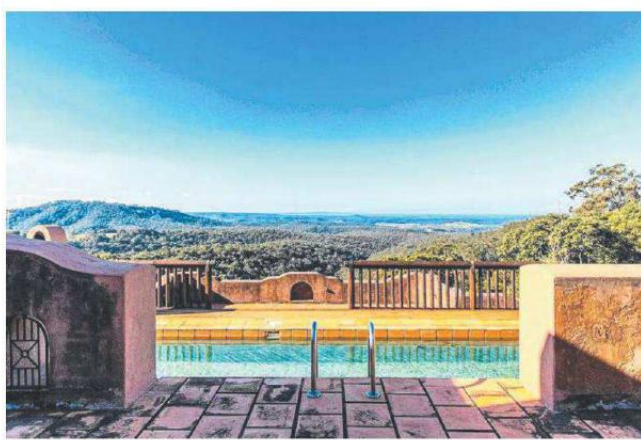


48 Art Deco charm by Sydney's most iconic beach

Name: Art Deco apartment
Address: Brighton Boulevard, North Bondi
Value: \$1.96m to \$2m

Why we love it: One of the best examples of Bondi's Art Deco heritage, this iconic, baby blue Brighton Boulevard apartment complex is one of the suburb's coolest addresses.

Perched on the highly sought-after Ben Buckler peninsula at North Bondi, close to everything but also still a little bit away, these homes have withstood countless Sydney cold winter storms and those blistering summers and still stand out as prime investment or owner-occupied opportunities with some very cool indoor upgrades to suit the uber trendy locale.



Name: The Castle
Address: Little Forest Rd, Milton
Value: Between \$4.1m to \$4.3m

Why we love it: Get lost in this adobe wonder that sits on 12ha among the rainforest hinterland on the south coast and includes a series of subterranean tunnels and hidden rooms and private olive and citrus groves.

Marketed as New Mexico meets Milton in its sale



collateral, this five-year project by British New Age author Stuart Wilde features eight bedrooms, four bathrooms, meditation spaces, a rooftop pool with ocean views, a Japanese bath house with an eight-person spa, sauna and tea room. It's for sale.



46 A grand wonderland in a hidden hillside

Name: Elemental House
Address: Dooralong
Value: \$4m

Why we love it: This magnificent house sits atop a hillside on a 8.5ha property in a hidden valley south of Newcastle.

It set a suburb record when it was sold for \$4m in 2021 and it's not hard to see why.

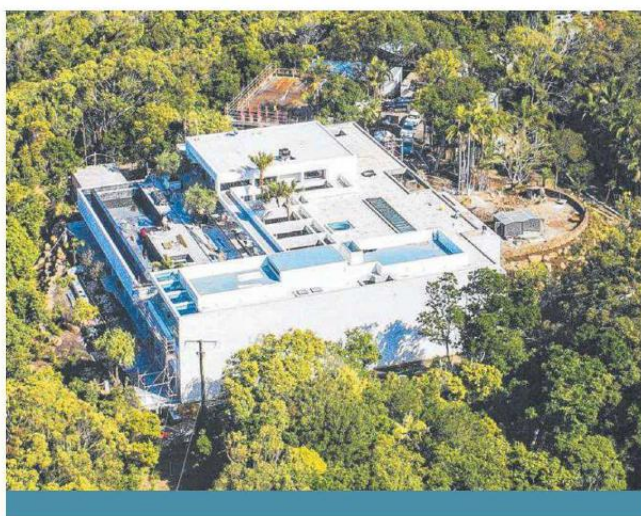
Designed by SSD Studio, concrete, timber, sandstone and glass elements connect to present a grand scale contemporary design that seemingly blends into the natural surrounds. Despite its



size it doesn't look out of form within the picturesque valley and towering trees.

Highlights include an impressive custom fireplace that anchors the open-planned living space, while the 6.5m ceilings and sprawling windows introduce an incredible sense of scale.

Photos: Yasmin Mund, Sophie Solomon, Shannon Dand



45 Massive coastal hideaway with some serious star power

Name: Thor's Thunderdome
Address: Broken Head
Value: Valued at \$30m. Never traded

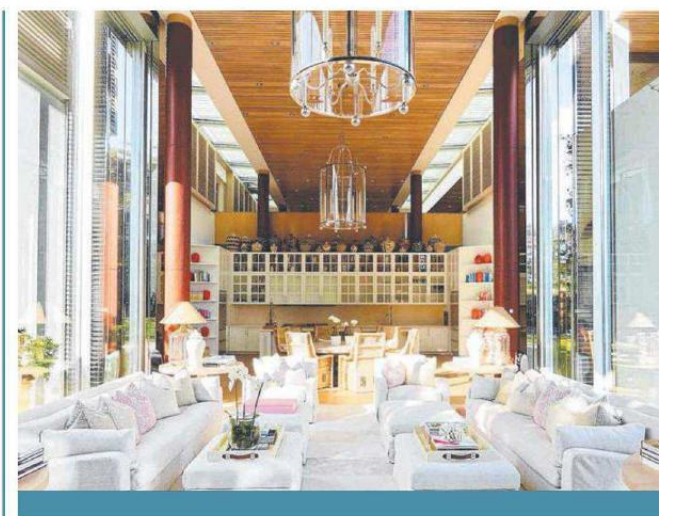
Why we love it: Formerly a sleepy locale, one coastal town has become a firm fixture on the map: Byron Bay, thanks in large part to Chris Hemsworth.

The Hemsworth clan's journey to become Byron's biggest property owners began back in 2014 when Chris relocated to the area from Los Angeles. Paying \$7m for a Broken Head estate that year, he and wife Elsa Pataky proceeded to tear down the



existing eight-bedroom Balinese-style house and built a mega-mansion in its place.

The 4.2ha architecturally-designed estate now boasts six bedrooms, a media room, gym, spa, games area, vast outdoor living and play spaces and a stunning mural by Indigenous artist Otis Hope Carey (pictured with Chris).



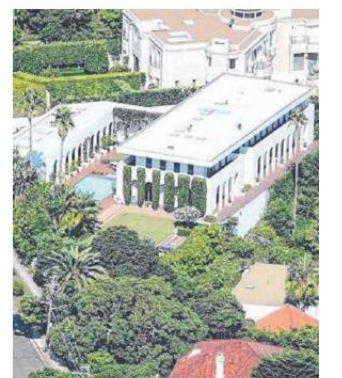
44 Packer's former home with postcard Sydney views

Name: La Mer
Address: Vaucluse
Value: Sold for \$70m in 2015

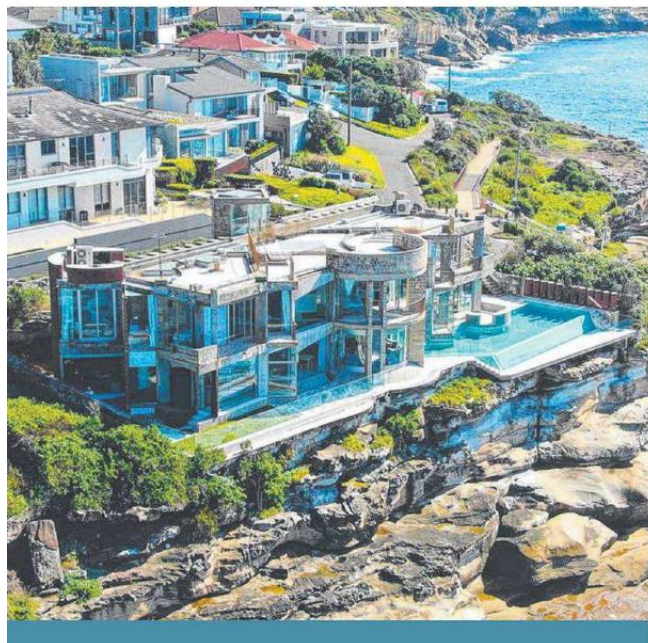
Why we love it: This six-storey mansion recorded the new Australian home price record when James Packer sold it to billionaire Chinese property developer Dr Chau Chak Wing for \$70m in 2015.

Not a bad price for a place Packer's ex Erica Baxter reportedly likened to a shopping centre. Made up of three titles, La Mer boasts postcard Opera House and Harbour Bridge views.

The main dwelling was



designed by renowned architect Guildford Bell. Its lack of water frontage is probably its only downside.



43 Brutalist construction on the Coogee shoreline

Name: Coogee Castle
Address: Coogee
Value: Sold for \$16.85m in 2021

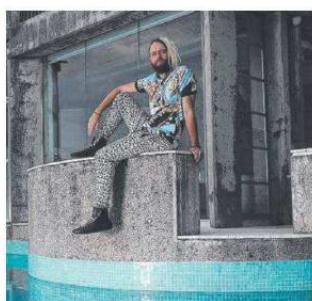
Why we love it: Finder co-founder Fred Schbesta (pictured right) snapped up this modern medieval marvel last year.

The castle has five bedrooms and five bathrooms, jaw-dropping ocean views, an infinity pool, sandstone battlements, a gym, rooftop terrace and a wine cellar.

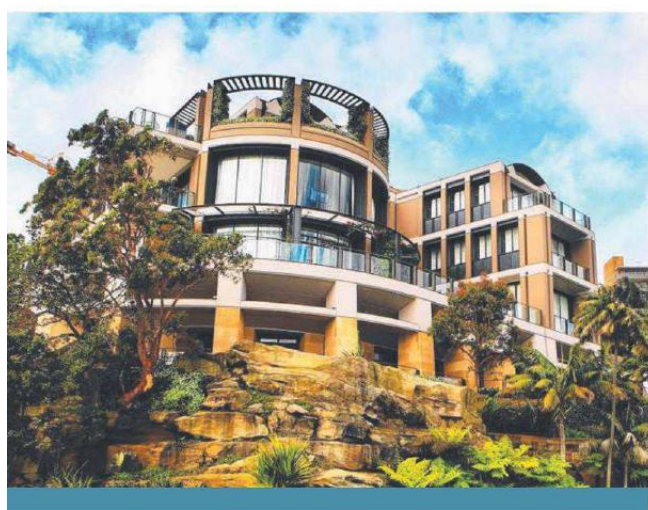
It also featured in Foxtel's hit show Mr Inbetween.

The Bunya Parade residence is built from sandstone, concrete, steel and plenty of glass, and boasts jaw-dropping ocean views.

Described as one of the most private oceanfront



properties in the eastern suburbs, all the rooms face away from the street towards the ocean.



42 Not even a \$110m offer could get Aussie John to sell

Name: Aussie John's Home
Address: Point Piper
Value: Turned down an offer of \$100m in 2017

Why we love it: Entrepreneur and Aussie Home Loans founder "Aussie" John Symond's (pictured right) Point Piper mega mansion had initially been slated to sell in 2017, but he knocked back an offer of \$110m.

At the time, Mr Symond was confident that trophy homes in Sydney would crack into the nine-digit range as values at the top end "moved to a whole new level".



The multi-level sandstone, cement and glass pile mansion sprawls across 2685 sq m. Symond has lived in it since 2007, with the property including six bedrooms all with ensuites, two swimming pools and over 75m of absolute water frontage.



41 This tiny pad has everything you need in 3.2m x 3.8m

Name: Tiny House
Address: Earlwood
Value: \$65,000 to build

Why we love it: We all know real estate in Sydney is stupidly expensive in any direction near the city, but what if a tiny footprint of 3.2m x 3.8m is all you needed to get started?

Chris Kreis, director at Kreis Grennan Architecture built a small pod in his own back yard with an internal floor area of just 8sq m.

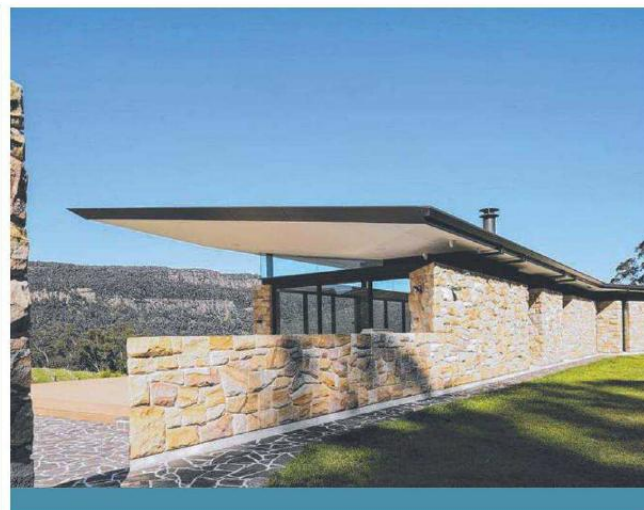
Sitting on a solid concrete base, the lightweight corrugated steel design with



plywood finishes includes a bedroom/living space, kitchenette, bathroom and storage.

The house is designed to use passive solar, capturing cooling breezes and cross ventilating through full height louvred windows.

Pictures: Douglas Frost



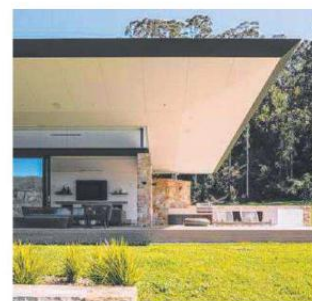
40 How to create a Highlands home with a small footprint

Name: Highlands House
Address: Barrengarry
Value: New build

Why we love it: This rural retreat is a prime example of only take what you need - on a massive 200,000sq m parcel of land, this 400sq m home is relatively minuscule by comparison.

The Design Studio created a Highlands house that allows the escarpment to be viewed from each room in the one-storey property.

In a simple but effective design, all the internal spaces are arranged along an elongate



stone wall, while the other design feature that is noteworthy is the cantilevered roof that appears to float as a horizontal element along the grassy hill.

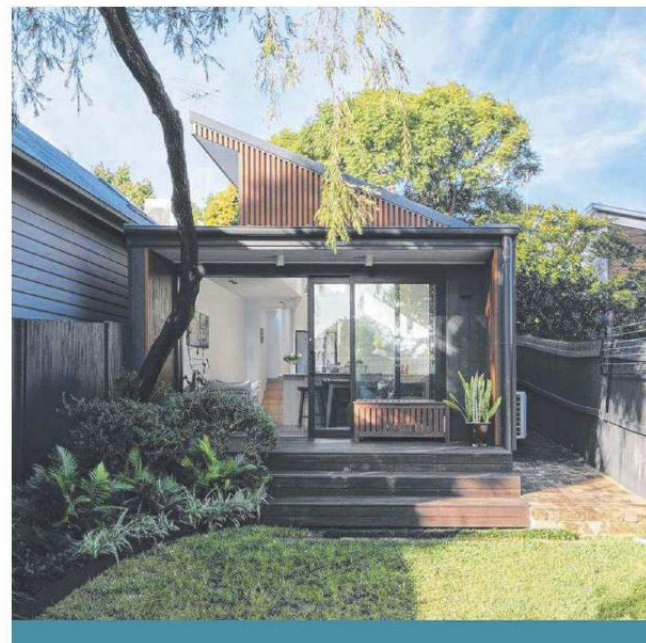
Pictures: Simon Whitbread



36 Round we go

Name: Pangloss
Address: Castlecrag
Value: For sale with a \$4.8m price guide

Why we love it: This natural sandstone beauty has hit the market again, and you can expect it to fetch beyond the \$4.1m it nabbed when it last changed hands in 2018. Pangloss is something of a local star in Castlecrag. It may well be the most famous single storey design in the Lower North Shore. Designed by renowned architects Walter Burley Griffin and Eric Nicholls, the home is defined by two symmetrical wings (a new master suite was later added in a modern renovation by a heritage architect) and a dramatic circular living room with an Art Deco fireplace.



35 Making the most of a narrow block with smart design

Name: Apex
Address: Leichhardt
Value: New build

Why we love it: A modest, semi-detached bungalow, Apex House was completely reinvented by architect Paul Byrne of Panda Studio who demolished the previous lean-to extension containing the original kitchen and wet areas replacing them a curved steel and glass extension. The contemporary rear extension is connected to the original house by a lower link roof, making a clear distinction between old and new. Brick walls are exposed for character, glass is added for outdoor effect yet the building's original era is shown deep respect also. The perfect blend of old and new. Pictures: Andreas Bommert



39 Modern makeover in a heritage inner-city home

Name: Layered House
Address: Paddington
Value: New build

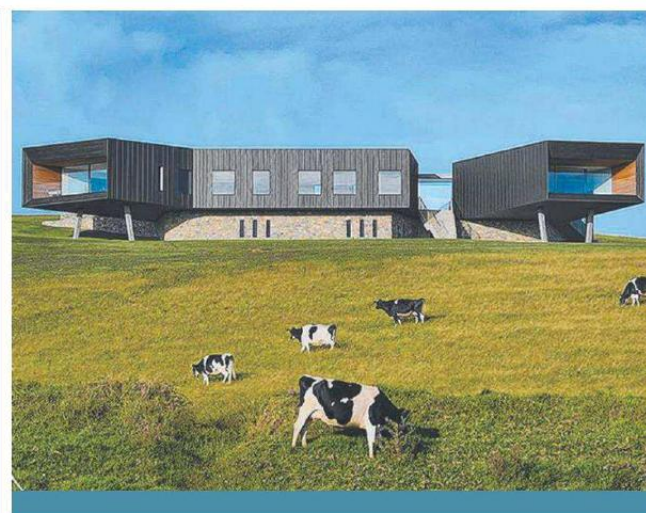
Why we love it: This sweet little cottage has been turned upside down with a full and sympathetic renovation which adhered to an Inner City Heritage Conservation order. Completely transformed through the demolition of a rear addition, Layered House was given a modern look and feel without sacrificing its charm and heritage details thanks to the creative eye of architect Sophie Solomon. Pictures: Simon Whitbread



38 The ultimate downsizer that is all about welcoming family

Name: Garden House
Address: Upper North Shore
Value: New build

Why we love it: As it turns out, this garden-inspired property on the Upper North Shore is the ultimate downsizer. The owners' adult children had left home and they wanted to build a property that would be inviting for visiting family and guests. Located in a leafy suburban area surrounded by simple, post-war cottages, the James Design Studio created a sanctuary with three private courtyards, additional to the surrounding garden. Importantly, as this is a place where grandchildren could stay, the communal areas all face the swimming pool for absolute supervision. Pictures: Simon Whitbread



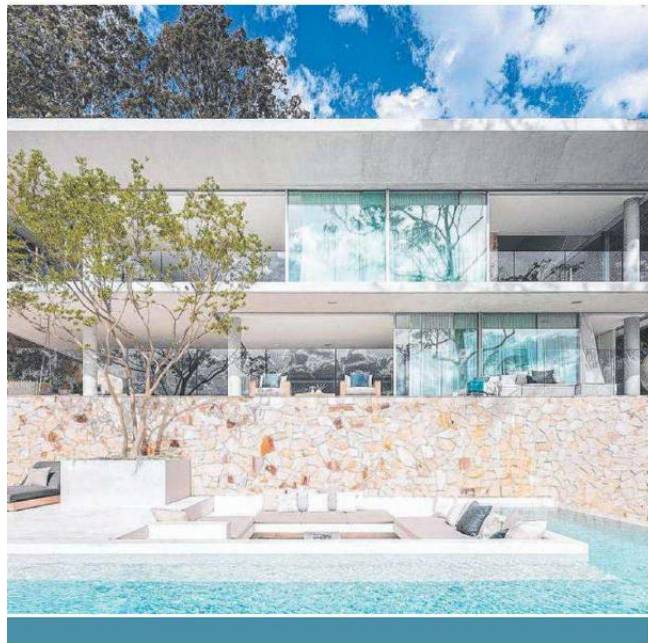
37 Award-winning design with incredible views

Name: Headland House
Address: South Coast
Value: Not traded

Why we love it: Winner of the 2018 House of the Year, this north-facing, open three-pavilion home's highlight is perhaps its storm watching room. All rooms have been designed to take advantage of the spectacular site, with the main living room offering a telescopic view of Warri Beach. An outdoor firepit and heated swimming pool make this the ultimate south coast retreat.



This complex building project, which is a triumph of stone, timber and aluminium, was completed in just 12 months.



34 *A showstopping design worthy of Miss Universe*

Name: Casa Paloma
Address: Prince Alfred Pde, Newport
Value: Sold for \$24.5m in 2020

Why we love it: Formerly the home of Jennifer Hawkins (pictured) and Jake Wall, billionaire Atlassian co-founder Mike Cannon-Brookes and his wife Annie purchased the Newport mansion in August 2020 for \$24.5m.

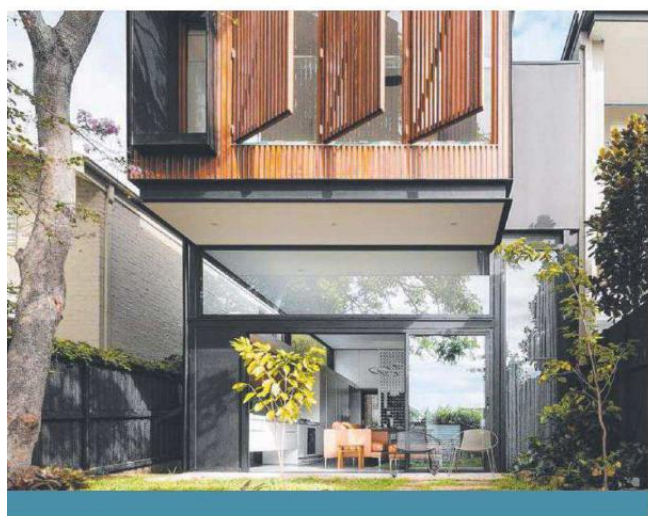


Setting a new suburb price record at the time, Cannon-Brookes also owns Australia's most expensive house at Fairwater which was purchased for \$100m.



Designed by renowned architect Koichi Takada, Casa Paloma is set on the shore of Pittwater on a double block of 3361sq m with a private beach. The five-bedroom home has an indoor

lift, home theatre, heated pool, boathouse and slipway. It has views to Scotland Island from almost every vantage point.



33 *Sweet and petite, much like a doll house*

Name: Doll House
Address: Randwick
Value: New build

Why we love it: This circa 1920 semi-detached brick home has leapt into 2020 and beyond thanks to a thoughtful reinvention by Matt Day of Day Bukh Architects.



and frame, highlighting the gable form against the sky.

The original long, skinny building gained an extra floor and loads of sparkling light thanks to floor-to-ceiling glass at the rear and skylights.

The complete reinvention of this house meant its owners could enjoy indoor/outdoor living in an energy-efficient home without having to move from their much-loved city location. They now have privacy and peace too.

The timber battened screen, complete with pop outs, attached to the rear contrasts perfectly with the black walls

Pictures: Katherine Lu



32 *Beach palace that smashed sales records in the area*

Name: The Point House
Address: Beach Rd, Collaroy
Value: Sold for \$16m in 2021

Why we love it: It took three years for the distinctive residence known as The Point House on the northernmost point of the Collaroy Basin to sell, but it ended up smashing the previous suburb record in March 2021 with \$16m.



The property, located at 51 Beach Rd in Collaroy, had previously been home to oil and gas multi-millionaire Russell Stanley and his wife Jennifer.

Initially built in 2011, the

four bedroom and four bathroom residence features ocean views and private gardens which surround the property.

The home also includes an alfresco courtyard with a pool, media room and home office.



31 *This house made of hemp takes sustainable design to next level*

Name: Hemp House
Address: Curragong
Value: New build

Why we love it: Taking sustainable design back to basics, hempcrete is the hero material in the construction of the walls and ceilings in this small footprint property.

Taking things a step further, D Hage Designs also incorporated greywater and rainwater harvesting solutions, solar power, and passive solar design into this beach house.

The result? It remains well insulated, light, and cool despite the extremes of the



Australian summer. The concrete floor is created using grey ash waste from local factories, and local white pebble aggregate, while the bedrooms have cork floors and hemp render walls.

Pictures: Hepacan



26

Japanese fantasy

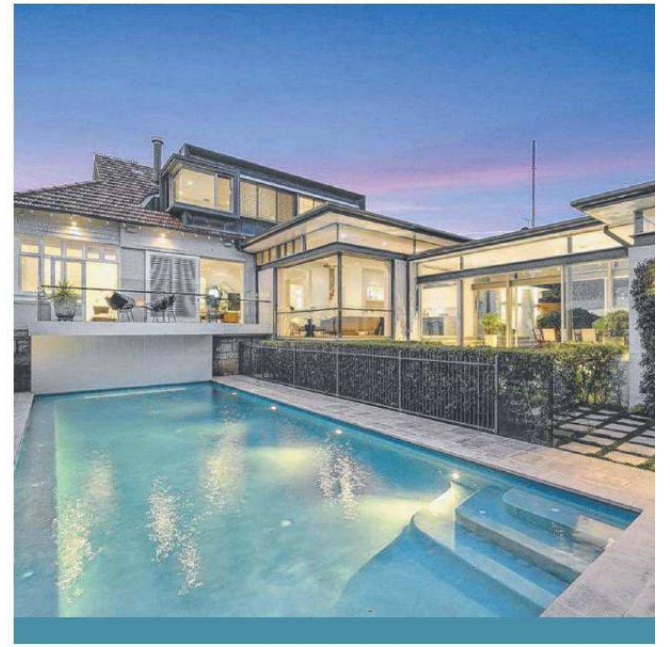
Name: Totoro House
Address: Russell Lea
Value: New build

Why we love it: The owners of this property were inspired by the Japanese animated fantasy film *My Neighbor Totoro*, which highlights the importance of our relationship with family, friends, and nature.

The renovation of the family home was undertaken by CplusC Architectural Workshop, with the view to remove walls and bring together communal living spaces like the kitchen, living and dining into open plan areas.

Parts of the extension are pulled outwards to form the outdoor living, cooking and seating area. The dining and living room window overlooks the rear courtyard incorporating the Japanese concept of *shakkei*, which is to incorporate a far off view into your immediate surrounds.

Pictures: Ryan Ng, Murray Fredericks



27

Modern overhaul of a dated family home

Name: The Breezeway
Address: St Elmo St, Mosman
Value: Sold in September

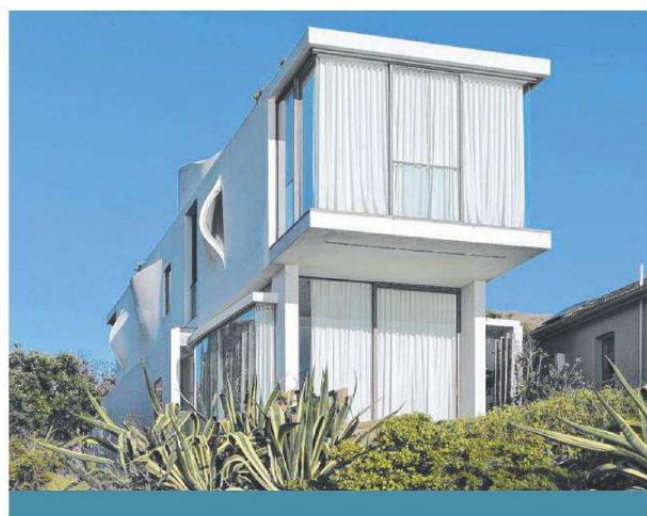
Why we love it: There is no shortage of wow factor once you step inside this c. 1910 Mosman house.

In 2007 the owners engaged architect Howard Tanner of TKD to restore and extend the property and it now

features the best in traditional style and contemporary living.

The entire rear section of the house can be left fully open to make the most of the summer sea breeze or closed off and contained in glass.

Other features include a 13m pool, a Jetmaster gas fireplace, a modern kitchen with a butler's pantry and a 750 bottle wine cellar.



30

Proud, narrow design overlooks heavenly views

Name: Seacliff
Address: Bondi
Value: New build

Why we love it: If you've ever taken the Bondi to Coogee coastal walk, then you'd be familiar with this particular beauty.

Despite only sitting on a narrow sliver of land, Seacliff stands proud with a stark white exterior overlooking the ocean.

Noteworthy features of this Chris Elliott Architects designed property include a ground floor with a transparent platform. The



basement level is a watery grotto with sandstone carved away to create space.

At roof level sits a terrace accessible via a narrow curved stair, a small deck with built-in timber seating and a fireplace, that provides spectacular ocean views.

Pictures: Richard Glover, Chris Elliott



29

A very sweet palatial retreat in the Hunter region

Name: Sweetwater
Address: Pokolbin
Value: About \$30m

Why we love it: Nope, this architectural feast is not in the south of France, but this magnificent country vineyard estate overlooks Sweetwater Valley in the Lower Hunter Valley. Not only does this vineyard produce some of the Hunter region's finest wines, the 10-bedroom mansion in its classic southern European charm features juliet balconies, expansive living and dining spaces, guest wing, entertaining loggia and pool.



28

Space age design that is out of this world

Name: Spaceship house
Address: Beech Lane, Casuarina
Value: Sold for \$3.75m in 2021

Why we love it: Fictional comic strip character George Jetson and his family could comfortably live in this impressive house in Orbit City - or, as it stands, in Casuarina in northern NSW.

There is something quite space age and futuristic about this residence that is defined by geometric shapes and the extensive use of glass, concrete and steel materials.

