

# Safe haven

A barn-like home with mountain and forest views is toasty warm in winter and naturally cool in summer

Michelle Bailey

Fewer things are more enticing in winter than mountain views and a roaring fireplace. The Samford Valley home of Lee and Lee-Anne Stevens offers both, with a forested setting and a home perfectly tuned to winter.

The barn-like structure, designed by architect Shaun Lockyer, is oriented to maximise sunshine as well as views of Mt Nebo, with a double-sided fireplace providing the comforting hearth and backdrop to family life.

"It's earthy and homely, and when you're inside there is a feeling of being hugged," Lee-Anne says. "We wanted it to feel like it's been here forever."

Exposed timber rafters, recycled bricks, timber cabinetry and timber floors make up a tactile material palette enriched by the natural fibres of linen and leather upholstery and handwoven hemp lights. Combined, they deliver a comforting warmth that complements Lee and Lee-Anne's

commitment to creating an environmentally friendly home that uses sustainable materials and low-toxic finishes. All of which aligns with the virtues of their consulting and project management business, Healthy Abode.

**"When you're inside there is a feeling of being hugged"**

Sun-drenched rooms and proximity to nature were also key to achieving a healthy home, executed with smart design and modest space planning.

"Common to a lot of projects is establishing a north-south orientation," Shaun says. "We've designed this plan to be slender, only



**SUN-DRENCHED ...** The Samford Valley home features recycled and low-toxic materials. ARCHITECTURE: Shaun Lockyer, lockyerarchitects.com.au PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND INTERIORS: Healthy Abode, healthyabode.com.au BUILDER: vlconstructions.com.au PHOTOGRAPHY: Scott Burrows

a single room deep, so you have absolutely perfect natural light on both sides of the house. A manicured landscape close to the home gives us the sense of dimension, extending the perceived space of the room."

From every room, views of nature abound, with large stackable glass

doors managing the level engagement with outside but also framing long views and inviting exploration into the natural world.

The combined spaces of the kitchen, dining and living room are designed to operate effectively in both summer and winter modes.

In warm months, the house operates like an open barn, so that breeze opportunities are maximised.

In cooler months, sliding glass doors remain closed, allowing the morning sun to penetrate deep inside to warm the interior.

As the sun sets, the double-sided

fireplace gently warms both the lounge and dining rooms.

"We wanted an open plan but I also wanted to sit in the lounge room and not look at dishes," Lee-Anne says.

"The fireplace provides that visual separation."

In the bedrooms, timber barn doors are used for different reasons.

"We wanted the kids to be able to run out on to the lawn, but if we were to leave bedroom doors open, snakes and other creatures could come inside, so the barn doors give you the sense of being outside with the

protection you need for living out here," Shaun says.

Bathrooms further extend opportunities to connect with nature.

The shower opens to a courtyard garden, and a window by the bath tub offers views to the garden from the warm and protected interior.



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