



Above Vince Squillace's living room, with the chocolate lounge, dark timber ceiling and light floor, was inspired by the work of American architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

Right Eco-savvy features include recycled timber, cross-ventilation and solar panels.

Styling  
Emma-Charlotte Bengay  
Photography  
Richard Birch  
Interview Natalie Reilly

# Nature & nurture

Careful planning has yielded a lavishly detailed, eco-sustainable family home.

**Who lives here?** Architect Vince Squillace with his wife, Georgina, a psychologist, and their children, Alexia, 7, and Franco, 4.

**Describe your home's style.** "The design of our home [in Sydney's Balgowlah Heights] incorporates ecologically sustainable design principles such as cross-ventilation, solar shading, efficient glazing and insulation. We've used recycled floorboards, timber windows, honed marble and wool carpet to reflect our love of natural materials. These are juxtaposed with the stainless-steel kitchen, the mirrors and exposed steel structure to create a warm and contemporary feel."

**How long has it taken to pull your home together?** "We lived here for six years prior to construction, then it took three years of planning and about 20 months to complete the majority of the construction."

**Where do you find inspiration?** "I love South-East Asian design – the use of natural materials, the way they design for the immediate environment, the detail and workmanship. And I have an affinity with my Italian heritage; I absolutely love Rome."

**What were your priorities?** "To create a space that reflected the personality of our family and catered for our large gatherings as well as being environmentally sensitive."

**Did you enlist professional help?** "That would be me, with input from structural, landscaping and environmental consultants."

**What's your favourite room?** "The living room – it's rich in texture and materials and it has high ceilings. The entire north wall opens onto a level garden and it includes my equally favourite room – the kitchen."

**Any decorating advice?** "I don't use the word 'decorating' ... to me, it is all design. I would recommend seeking professional advice, ensuring you divulge your tastes, travels, likes and dislikes. Keep an open mind but don't proceed with decisions that make you uncomfortable."