



Black slate-like stone at the side of the pool, which features glass safety fencing, abuts the veranda. Pictures: Angelita Bonetti



# Raffles reborn in distinctive design

■ Sally-Ann Jones

Bringing the architectural and building phases under one roof with one company has real financial and time-frame benefits for homeowners, according to Dean Humphrey, director of Humphrey Homes.

And in the first home completed under that business model, it has proved true, with the project coming in three months ahead of schedule and on budget — and the delighted owners unexpectedly planning their first Christmas in their new home.

Mr Humphrey said he had been operating as a boutique builder since 1999 but it was only in 2012 that he steered his company to become a registered architectural firm.

The stunning black-and-white timber home that is the result of this decision has already drawn a number of fans, with passers-by stopping to inquire about the design and materials and

expressing their admiration.

Owners Cameron and Tania McMurtrie wanted a design that had the relaxed ambience of the Hamptons and Queenslander styles of homes, plus the nostalgic sophistication of the iconic Raffles hotels in Asia.

To meet the brief, the architects and builders worked together from the start to identify the level of craftsmanship and materials needed to produce the design. They even resurrected skills used in creating the best homes a century ago, with time-consuming and demanding arts such as tongue-and-groove timber joinery.

“The architect understood exactly what we wanted,” the owners said. “It was like she was in our heads. The workmanship is also amazing thanks to Dean’s great craftsmen.”

“We’ve stayed at the Raffles in Cambodia, the Metropole in Hanoi and safari lodges in Africa where we fell in love with an elegant but relaxed way of living. That style has been translated perfectly here for our family life and the Cottesloe location.”

Built over two levels on a sloping block on the east side of the railway, the home comes with ocean views.

A conversation between black and white goes on in every corner: black ceiling fans in the alfresco area contrast with the sloping white weatherboard ceiling; black jarrah floors in the interior balance pure white walls; black French doors, plantation shutters and old-fashioned double-hung windows open to a timber-decked veranda with handmade white timber balustrading.

Even in the landscaping, the black-and-white interplay continues, where black slate-like stone comes up against a white timber staircase that leads from the pool up to the alfresco deck.

And in the stairs, each black step has a white background. The door handles are black with white marble knobs; and in the kitchen, the benchtop is black stone, while in the main suite the benchtop is black-and-white marble.



Dean Humphrey

Entry to the home is up the hill, so the first floor on the ocean-facing side becomes a second storey to the bedrooms underneath.

The first floor is mostly a big open-plan kitchen/meals/family room which opens to the alfresco area. A guest suite and library with a double-sided fireplace also occupy this level.

The four family bedrooms and three bathrooms are on the ground level with a home theatre — the only room in the house that is not floored with either stained black jarrah or tiles. Each room opens to the veranda.

Linking the two levels is a full-height New York-style frosted-glass window made in Melbourne. Glass inserts in the floor allow glimpses to the level below.

The house has hydronic underfloor heating, is fully automated and has a dedicated coolroom in the restaurant-quality scullery.

The house is at 86 Railway Street, Cottesloe. It is open from 11am-3pm on December 13, 14 and 20.

CONTACT: Humphrey Homes Architects and Builders, 9284 5444