



BEAUTIFUL *gardens*

PHOTOGRAPHY BRIGID ARNOTT

MORE THAN
A FEELING
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IDEAS AND INSPIRATION FOR STYLISH OUTDOOR LIVING

HEAVEN SCENT The restored barn, surrounded by hydrangeas, serves as an event and workshop hosting space for owner Mickey, who lives at Glenmore House with her husband Larry, their border terrier Hector and tabby cat Sibyl. Mickey (below) picks roses in Glenmore's field of flowers, filled with lavender and other aromatic plants, which are distilled for the botanical water Mickey makes to capture the ephemeral and alluring scent of the garden. >



More than a feeling

IT TOOK AN INTERIOR DESIGNER
EMBRACING THE GREAT OUTDOORS
TO TRANSFORM THIS HISTORIC FARM
IN SOUTH-WEST GREATER SYDNEY

Story BRITTANY SMITH Photography BRIGID ARNOTT



Beautiful GARDENS

A single frangipani tree is what won Mickey Robertson over when her husband, Larry, showed her the dilapidated 12-hectare property he'd just purchased in the late 1980s. "He bought it without me knowing," Mickey recalls. "My first impression was, 'What are we going to do with this?'" But that one frangipani tree, growing beside an historic sandstone cottage, planted a seed of inspiration in her mind. "The property, surrounded by beautiful hills, is quite enchanting," she says. "I was very young and I had soil to put my hands into, which was unbelievably exciting. I had never had the opportunity to garden before." And so the labour of love that was restoring Glenmore House and surrounds began.

At the time, Mickey was an interior designer with her own company, Mickey Robertson Design. But her fascination with the world of gardening went all the way back to her childhood. Although she grew up in Sydney, she spent a lot of time at public parks, which nurtured her love for the outdoors and even informed her approach to interiors. "There's no interior without an exterior," Mickey explains. "They are part and parcel of the whole." This mentality helped her build Glenmore's garden from a blank canvas to a cohesive property.

The land came with a barn, stables, hayshed and dairy, while a potting shed was later built by Larry and Mickey using salvaged materials. "The initial concept was to link the buildings together," Mickey explains. "They'd clearly been placed with utilitarian reasons in mind. Now they all look as if they are part of what was meant to be." This sense of effortless flow throughout the grounds was achieved by the ornamental garden that Mickey planted. It links the buildings, creating a sort of casual layout and a sense of cohesion.

Nearly 35 years after her husband's not-so-pleasant surprise, Mickey struggles to imagine life without Glenmore. "We've done everything here from babies to the school run," says Mickey, whose two adult daughters loved their idyllic countryside upbringing. "We're in a new chapter of our lives and it's filled with people. I'm always running workshops and events so it's become a place of conversation and ideas." It's these visitors that make Mickey's hard work feel all the more worthwhile. Whether they're attending a workshop on vegetable gardening or flower harvesting, they always seem to leave with a smile. "The garden seems to bring people joy," she says. "Hopefully we've taken something that might have fallen apart and given it new life."



PURPLE RAIN The sun sets over cardoons and Buddleja shrubs (opposite). **TICKLED PINK** Mickey collecting some of her beautiful scented roses (top left). **LAVENDER HAZE** The row of lavender stems (right) offer a sensory experience. Their sweet aroma fills the air and look so inviting. **OLD CHARM** Glenmore's historic sandstone home (bottom right), with bullrushes and a clump of *Agave americana*. **SAGE WISDOM** A border planting of Russian sage and New Zealand flax. >



“THE WHOLE GARDEN IS
ABOUT AN AUTHENTIC
way of life, UNDERPINNED BY
SUSTAINABILITY, IN AN
aesthetically pleasing WAY”

MICKEY



LAY OF THE LAND (Previous page)
The old stables are now decorated by a pair of garden borders, which connect that building to the adjacent dairy. The path between them in turn connects that area to the hayshed, barn and the house beyond, evoking a sense of effortless flow.

APPLES AND ORANGES Mickey walks through the kitchen garden with a basket of just-picked flowers from the field. In the kitchen garden, she's able to grow enough vegetables to feed herself, Larry and their daughters when they visit. She also hosts workshops, teaching other avid gardeners how to create a self-sustaining plot.

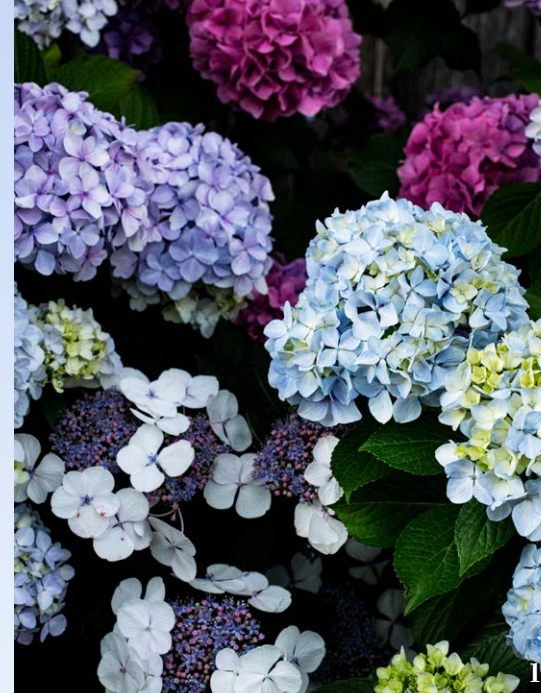
Source book

Design: Mickey Robertson

Design, mickeyrobertson.com.au.

Garden and workshop information:

Glenmore House, glenmorehouse.com.au,
[instagram.com/glenmorehouse](https://www.instagram.com/glenmorehouse). 📍



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SWEETLY scented fields

1. Jewel-like hydrangeas grow near the barn, a favourite among Australians.

2. Ready for a new batch of chickens, a fence encloses the chook run.

3. Purple rambling roses elegantly drape over a paddock fence.

4. Cardoon flowers add contrast with their sharp spikes and soft hues.

5. Canna lilies, also known as 'Apricot Dream', stand tall within a border.

6. A Valencia Orange tree grows outside the old dairy, providing sweet citrus.

7. Carrot flowers in the kitchen garden add beauty to the practical area.

8. One of the garden borders in all its fully bloomed glory. 📍



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