



Emma and Tom's Australian finca

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Photo - Alicia Taylor





Above: living room created in collaboration with Sarah Ellison, shelves made from the original house's beams.

Left-hand page: chairs and table, Island Luxe.

— This Spanish architecture-inspired property on the coast of Australia is the fruit of one couple's long-standing project, their dream of one day building a sanctuary for their family. Both stylish and sustainable, "The Range" invites its occupants to commune with nature in a tranquil and sublime setting. —

When Emma was a child growing up in England, the family would fly off every year to holiday in the Canary Islands. It was there that her love for Spanish architecture first began. Years later and now living on the other side of the planet, Emma and Australian husband Tom decided to take a sabbatical and escape with their first child to the Spanish coast. The couple explored Barcelona, Cadaqués and the Balearic Islands and made themselves the promise that they'd build their own finca one day. The couple returned to Australia and started looking for the ideal location. Ten years later in December 2017, Emma and Tom stumbled across a 48-hectare plot of land in the Byron Bay hinterland, 800 kilometres north of Sydney and 200 kilometres south of Brisbane. The only constructions were an old homestead and a few outbuildings. "We took one look at each

other and knew we had found the foundations of our future sanctuary", says Emma.

A few months later, the project was really beginning to come to life thanks to the couple's collaboration with architect Dominic Finlay-Jones from DFJ architects (a friend who travelled to Spain with Emma and Tom to get a feel for Spanish architecture and the traditional fincas) and Jakob Murphy from Forty Four Constructions. For the landscaping, the couple worked with Dan from Plummer and Smith and Shayne from Booyong Rainforest Creation. "We set out to create what we believe is a perfect fusion of an Australian farmhouse with Spanish Finca influences. We wanted to ensure that we honoured Australian design while paying homage to both cultures," Emma underlines.



Corten steel and copper kitchen designed by Emma and Tom. Cast concrete bench, chairs and table, Island Luxe. Tiles, Jatana Interiors. Lamps, Lighting Collective.



Around the pool:
sun loungers, Eco
Outdoor and others
designed by the
Lanes.

Today “*The Range*” is home to the couple and their four children. Every day, the family feels grateful for being able to live in harmony with nature. Thanks to the additional guest accommodation, a small number of lucky travellers can come and stay in this peaceful environment and relax in warm and harmonious interiors, whose earthy colours evoke the surrounding landscape. There is a choice of three: “*The Range Homestead*” (three bedrooms, an open plan living room and kitchen, an outdoor dining area and a pool); “*The Cabin Inn*” (two bedrooms, an open living room and kitchenette and a covered deck area); and “*The Barn Studio*” (one bedroom and kitchenette). Only natural or recycled materials were used for the building work and thanks to the solar panels that generate electricity, a rainwater collection system, and the large openings that encourage cross ventilation, “*The Range*” is sustainable and predominantly off-grid.

“We decided it was better for the environ-

ment to use and build around what we had and recycle where we could.” For the floor, the couple’s friend Sonya (Jatana Interiors) sourced 300-year-old terracotta tiles from an old house in Croatia. The main house’s wooden roof was built with beams taken from an old bridge and the fireplace and some of the walls were built from basalt rocks foraged in the old rainforest, which had been moved there in the past when the land was originally cleared. However, Emma and Tom’s commitment to the environment doesn’t stop there. The couple is currently implementing a regeneration project, which will continue gradually over the next 10 years. Amongst other actions, they will be planting 50,000 indigenous trees, creating walking tracks to enjoy nature, as well as becoming both more energy efficient and as organic as possible in their farming practices.

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Below: in the girls’ bedroom, rug, Tigmi Trading. Bedside tables, Island Luxe. Lamps, Lighting Collective. Throw, Pampa.

Right-hand page: outdoor bath made from an old wine barrel, Fossil Vintage. The decking is made from old railway sleepers.





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