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PERSPECTIVES
ON DESIGN, CULTURE,
AND BEING PERTH.

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The Point House

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Sprawling across six unique levels on a challenging hillside plot, each space in this coastal family home reveals a carefully considered design that is inherently connected to nature.

Overlooking the reliable waves of Trigg Point, a favourite amongst the surfers of Perth for decades, a family home crafted by architect Matilda Brealey redefines coastal living. The challenge? A sandy, 557sqm battleaxe block perched on the edge of a hillside with breathtaking views of the Indian Ocean. For Brealey, however, this was more than just another project. It was a labour of love, designed for her sister and brother-in-law — the latter being a passionate surfer — and deeply rooted in a connection to nature.

The build began as Brealey was welcoming her second child into the world, a balancing act between her personal and professional life. While now living and leading her practice, Bare Architects, in a small town three hours south of Perth, her familiarity with the area of Trigg and what it means to live on the coast in Perth stems from a childhood growing up in Scarborough, just five minutes down the road.

“I come up to Perth quite regularly anyway, so I would visit the site, which was really valuable,” she recalls. Her presence throughout the project was crucial, catching potential issues before they escalated, steering the project through its rough patches and, ultimately, shaping a house that feels deeply personal.

The project is notable not only for its impressive size — larger than the architect's typical preference for more compact family homes — but for the thoughtful design choices that reflect both the clients' lifestyle and the coastal context.

At the heart of this architectural journey is Brealey's enthusiasm for split-level living, avoiding the disconnect often experienced when living areas are located upstairs. “I love split levels and how they connect you to the natural lay of the land, rather than standard cut-and-fill design,” she says. It's a philosophy that defies the ordinary — a refusal to flatten the landscape for convenience, choosing instead to embrace the contours of the earth. In this case,

the layers of the home rise and fall in sync with the natural terrain, providing not only practical spatial flow but also a direct relationship between the home's interior and the surrounding natural landscape.

Brealey also took the clients' future family life into account. “They didn't have kids at the time but knew they would. At the time of design, I had a son, so I was familiar with family life and the fact it's actually a big pain in the arse to have a kitchen upstairs and the play area downstairs!” As a result, the design blended the client's current needs with long-term functionality, ensuring that their home would grow with them.

One of the most striking elements is the way Brealey responded to the coastal winds that sweep through the area, notorious for making outdoor spaces nearly unusable. “You see so many houses in the area with balconies that never get used because they're completely wind-blown,” she says. The solution? A garden bed, ingeniously placed where a west-facing balcony might have been. This subtle





shift turned a potential design flaw into a feature that feels alive – lush, green, and protective. “It also blocks the view if the house in front gets built up,” Brealey adds. “When you’re in that space, all you see is the greenery of the garden bed, and then the ocean beyond.”

But the home is not just about views; it’s also about light. Another hallmark of the design is the curved wall – a feature that allows natural light to flood the home despite the site’s tight block. “The curved wall was our north light funnel,” Brealey explains. “To create the curves was another way to bring light into as much space as possible.” This soft, sculptural element feeds light into multiple zones of the house, balancing functionality with artistic expression.

The interior styling reflects the home’s relaxed yet refined vibe, each detail feeling curated yet effortless. As for Brealey’s favourite space in the home, the upstairs living area—with the full force of Trigg Point’s coastal beauty—

is a clear winner. “Getting those vistas of landscape in an upside-down house is incredible.” From here, the house feels like an observatory, perched on the edge of the ocean, soaking in the landscape.

Connecting the land with the people who live on it, the ocean with the home, and family with a sense of place, this property is more than just a house. As the final rays of light filter through the curved walls, and the garden bed sways gently in the ocean breeze, Brealey’s vision is clear: a house that is not only lived in, but truly alive.