

BINGARA GORGE



How to create a wow-factor façade

You have purchased a land lot at Bingara Gorge, now comes the fun part - deciding what your home will look like from the street. We asked two experts Toni White from Straightline Design Studios and Liam Evans of Castlegate Homes who design and build here what makes a façade turn heads and keep its appeal for decades to come.

Start with shape, not decoration

Toni White has designed homes for 20 years and spent the last 10 running her own studio and designing in Bingara Gorge.

"To create a façade that stands out it needs to be balanced and in proportion, have good articulation and a blend of materials," she says

Articulation simply means the front of the home steps in and out instead of sitting in one flat line. "The garage should always sit behind the front building line with the porch or another element stepping forward to give the façade depth. A double-storey home needs the same thought on the upper level, so it never looks as one flat surface," Toni says.

Her other tip is to look up. "A slightly steeper roof pitch is one of the simplest ways to create a wow factor. Anything from 30 to 35 degrees gives a home far greater street presence and a double gable can lift it further."



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The styles that suit Bingara Gorge

Both Toni and Liam name the same two styles when asked what buyers here love - Modern Farmhouse and Hamptons.

"They suit the style of the area with clean lines, a light colour palette, natural materials and strong connections between indoor and outdoor living," Toni says.

The bushland and golf course shape her designs as much as the style does. "I look to maximise natural light, frame views and select materials and colours that complement the surrounding environment," she says.

Toni favours recycled brick in classic red tones or a lighter limewash alongside sandstone-coloured stone and deep timber. Board and batten cladding is a signature of her farmhouse designs and is usually white with black windows and roof.

She has a simple rule to keep it all cohesive - no more than three colours on a façade.



"We collaborate closely with clients, designers and trades from day one, refining every detail before construction begins. A good designer makes a builder's job easier and the finished home is better for it." Liam says.



Craftsmanship makes or breaks it

A beautiful drawing still has to be built. Liam Evans, Managing Director of Castlegate Homes, is a carpenter by trade who has lived and worked in the Macarthur region for 15 years. His job is to work out how to build what the plans promise properly and within budget.

The finish is everything once work starts. "Accurate set-outs, clean brickwork, aligned cladding, quality finishes and consistent detailing all contribute to a premium-looking façade. It is the small details that make the biggest impact," he says. "Craftsmanship is what makes or breaks a façade," he says.

His budget advice is to choose carefully instead of cutting corners. "Focus on a few high-impact features rather than lots of small upgrades. Never skimp by choosing a lower-cost cladding system. Decorative stone is a premium product but you don't need to cover the whole façade. It still delivers the impact for less when used on half a wall," Liam says.

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Look beyond the front wall

Street appeal does not stop at the brickwork. "A great façade is complemented by landscaping, quality paving and well-designed lighting. Together these elements create a polished and cohesive first impression," Liam says.

His checklist for the parts people often forget:

- **Lighting:** Feature wall lighting is often overlooked yet a considered lighting design can lift a simple façade.
- **Trees:** Greenery makes a home pop so keep feature trees and build around them.
- **Driveways:** More than access. Try recycled brick to the front door or cobblestones as a break.
- **Brickwork:** Recycled brick in a mix of browns and reds or painted brickwork adds warmth and texture.
- **The entry:** Liam's favourite feature is the foyer finished with wall paneling, wainscoting, VJ board or wallpaper so the first impression carries on inside.



Mistakes to avoid

Toni sees the same problems come up again and again:

- **Doing too much:** One of the biggest mistakes is trying to include too many different materials, colours or design features, which can make the façade feel busy.
- **Doing too little:** A flat wall of a single brick with nothing else going on looks plain from the street.
- **Shallow windows:** Front windows that are not full height sell the façade short.
- **Bathroom windows facing the street:** They have to be obscured and that never looks good at the front of a home.

One piece of advice before you start

"Start with a design that suits your block, lifestyle and the way you want to live every day. A well-planned home with suitable proportions, good orientation and timeless design choices will always provide greater long-term value than simply following the latest trends," Toni says.

Liam's advice is to back yourself. "Choose one premium feature and do it beautifully. Don't be afraid to take a risk and complete something different," he says.

Toni concludes, "Considered choices in materials, colours, entry features and landscaping can create a unique identity while maintaining a cohesive and visually appealing streetscape."

Check your design against the Bingara Gorge design guidelines before you lock it in and talk to a designer and builder who know the estate.

Explore further - Toni White, Straightline Design Studios: straightlinestudioco.com.au and **Liam Evans, Castlegate Homes:** castlegatehomes.com.au

Land is now selling at Bingara Gorge from \$695,000.
The sales office is open seven days between 10am – 5pm at 31 Pembroke Parade, Wilton.