

08 Japandi

Design Handbook 2026

Japandi is evolving, moving beyond serene minimalism to become a style of quiet intelligence. Japandi prioritises smart layout and intuitive design, creating minimal, nature-integrated spaces that can help restore energy.



Meet your team of experts

Guided by leading experts in architecture, design, lifestyle and global trend forecasting, this handbook draws on deep experience and distinct perspectives in creating homes that are thoughtful, relevant and future-focused.



Neale Whitaker
Interior Design Expert

Neale is a renowned Australian design expert recognised for his thoughtful approach to residential architecture and interior home design.



Justin Logan
Architect/Founder, OBI Office

Justin's residential architecture is recognised for creating connection, wellbeing and a strong relationship between interior and exterior spaces.



Rebecca Caratti
Editor-in-Chief, VOGUE Living

Rebecca leads Vogue Living, recognised globally for its design authority, creative and cultural reach and rigorous curation.



Jenny Li
Trend Specialist, WGSN

Jenny analyses global data and trends shaping design, lifestyle and consumer behaviour and contributes as a researcher and writer for WGSN content.



Matt Leacy
Creative Director, Landart

Through Landart, Matt designs landscapes connecting nature and architecture, creating outdoor spaces that restore and inspire.



Cover
The Japandi home's moody Axon™ Cladding 133mm Smooth facade grounds the home in its surrounding greenery, while a simple roof line and recessed entry convey a sense of privacy and retreat.

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Lifestyle themes

Guided by thoughtful simplicity and quiet intelligence, the Japandi home responds to the evolving rhythms of modern life—supporting daily rituals, human connection and independence through intuitive design, natural integration and enduring adaptability.

01—Evolved Living

Japandi prioritises thoughtful simplicity and long-term adaptability, where intuitive flow and passive design help deliver high performance with quiet elegance.



02—Creative Living

Japandi celebrates subtle mastery and personal care. Through crafted details, calming interiors and nature-driven design, it invites emotional connection and creative reflection in everyday rituals.



Milan Design Week photography by Paul Barbera.

03—Multigenerational living

With intuitive zoning, soft separations and private retreats for grandparents, adult children and evolving household combinations, Japandi fosters connection, independence and harmonious living across generations.



04—Autonomous Living

With deep eaves, natural ventilation and low-maintenance materials, Japandi is a style that quietly supports wellbeing, independence and energy-efficiency.



Intelligent, calm & restrained



Simplicity is now underpinned by thoughtful design choices and materials, with a focus on durability and adaptability. The style now emphasises clarity, flow and care, blending natural warmth with architectural precision to foster restorative, intelligent homes that seamlessly connect daily rituals with nature.

Japandi is a style of quiet intelligence where simplicity meets precision and every design choice is intentional. Evolving beyond calm minimalism, this look restores balance through simplicity, ease and intention. Embodying creative living principles, Japandi allows spaces to truly reflect who their residents are—inviting imagination through flexible layouts, natural textures and sensory materials. The result is a tactile, uplifting environment for rest and creative reset—a sanctuary that nurtures mindfulness, expression and renewal.

Nature is thoughtfully integrated to support wellbeing, while intuitive layouts respond to daily rhythms with ease.

Multi-use zones and open circulation promote flexibility, while architectural elements regulate light, comfort and privacy. Smart spatial planning and passive design principles, like deep eaves, natural ventilation and strategic shading, help enhance energy efficiency.

The palette is serene and earthy, with greys, greens and warm tones reflecting a symbiotic relationship with nature. Materials are chosen for their durability and tactile simplicity, creating a crafted harmony that feels both tranquil and enduring.

- 1 The home's moody, Axon™ Cladding 133mm Smooth grounds the home in its surrounding greenery, while a simple roof line and recessed entry convey a sense of privacy and retreat.
- 2 A central wellness courtyard lined with Hardie™ Fine Texture Cladding brings light and air into the heart of the home, connecting dual wings via a TimberTech® deck, and supporting restorative indoor-outdoor living.



Floorplan

This floorplan blends Japanese and Scandinavian principles, with minimal detailing, to create a home that is optimised for multigenerational family life and supports calm, ritual and quiet Japandi living.



From Justin:

‘Japandi is the culmination of Japanese and Scandinavian calm, expressed through architecture. Refined lines, natural materials, biophilic design and quiet spaces that centre your wellbeing and sense of balance.’



The brief

Site & location context

Eltham North, VIC. Melbourne fringe suburb. A cooler, well-ventilated microclimate with warm dry summers and crisp winters.

Homeowner profile

Professional couple, with small children and grandparents who help out with care-giving.

Intended use

Multigenerational living with semi-independent living for grandparents.

The layout

4 bed | 3 bath | 2 car

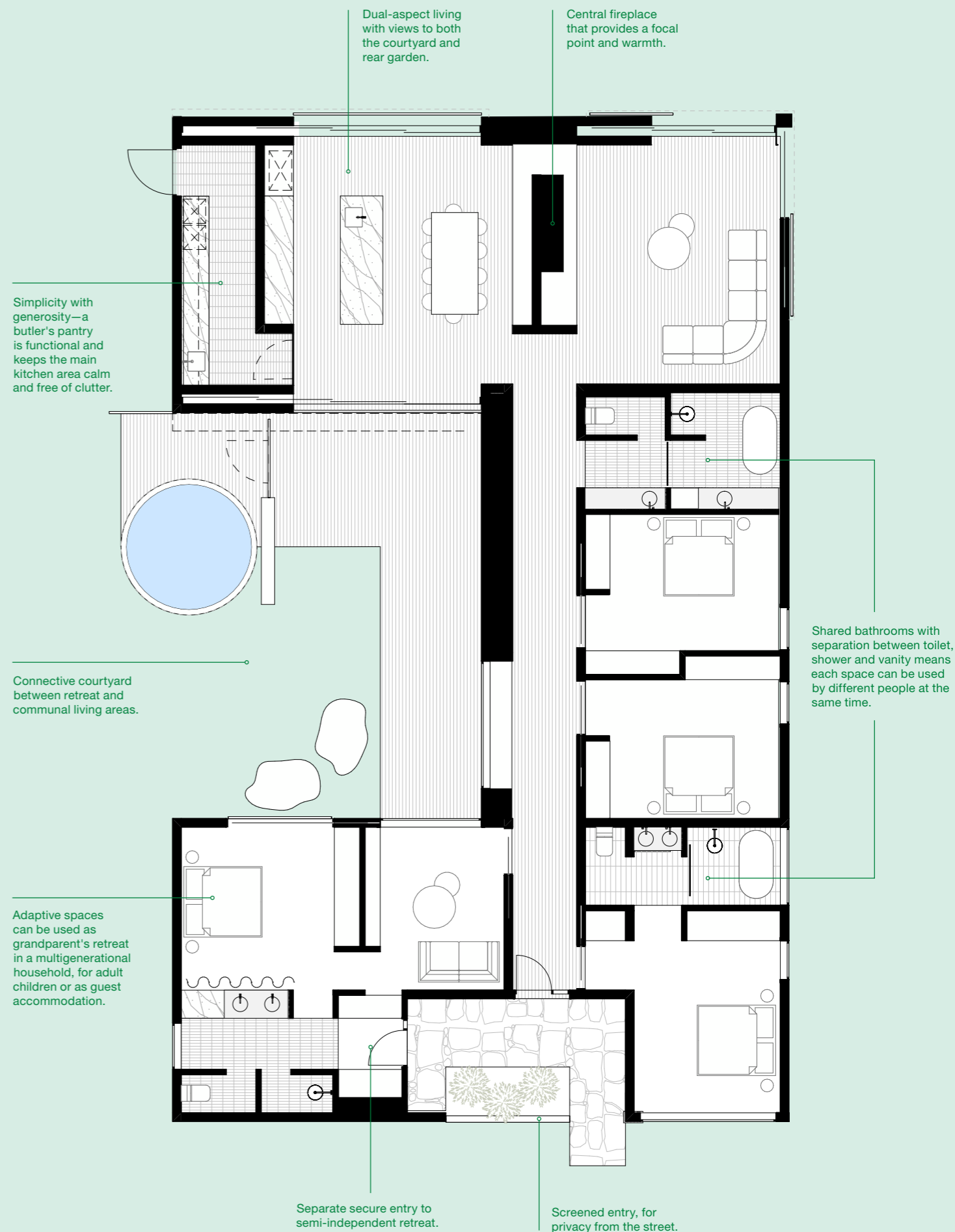
Japandi layouts are known for their calm, functional zoning and this design uses the arrival point to quietly organise the home. Two separate entries define the main house from a retreat for grandparents with its own sitting area, bedroom and bathroom. A central courtyard with plunge pool and sunken garden connects the retreat and the main living area. The dual-aspect kitchen / dining space also links the courtyard through to the rear garden, strengthening prospect and refuge, a key biophilic design pattern.

Why it works

A layout like this feels serene, intuitive and deeply restorative to live in. It supports privacy for all occupants without fragmenting the home. The central courtyard brings light, air and calm into every zone, maintaining a strong sense of connection throughout the home. Sliding screens blur indoors and outdoors, enhancing fluidity and openness so spaces can feel secure and enclosed while opening out to larger views, supporting wellbeing and relaxation.

Adaptations

This floorplan can easily adapt as a household needs change over time. The grandparents' wing can transform to an office, rental suite or teenagers' sanctuary as needed. The plan can also convert to an L-shape for narrower blocks, ensuring adaptability without losing the home's Japandi character.



Design features

1—Refined minimalism

Simple, precise structures with clean lines and deep overhangs help offer weather protection. Roofs can be flat, gabled or hipped, and are designed to regulate light and comfort, supporting Japandi's calm, intelligent aesthetic.

At the rear of the home, Japandi's raked roofline is accentuated by vertical Axon™ Cladding 133mm Smooth, with natural timber accents framing a connection to the outdoors, reinforcing the home's ethos of tranquillity and calm.

2—Natural-look exterior

Facades feature natural-look materials in warm or moody tones, reflecting Japanese and Scandinavian influences. Textured finishes and subtle detailing foster a grounded connection with the surrounding environment.

The Esca Vineyard Retreat by Das Studio features Hardie™ Fine Texture Cladding for the interior walls, delivering the tactility of Venetian plaster, with durability suited to everyday living. Photography by Anthony Basheer.

3—Harmonious colour scheme

A serene palette of greys, greens and warm wood tones creates visual harmony. Colours are chosen for their calming effect and tonal consistency, enhancing the home's sense of balance and longevity.

4—Indoor-outdoor flow

Design features like sliding screens, courtyards and covered walkways blur boundaries between inside and out. These elements support daily rituals and restore wellbeing through gentle transitions and natural light.

5—Interiors

Interiors are minimal yet warm, using natural materials, soft textures and intuitive layouts. Multi-use zones and open circulation foster flow.

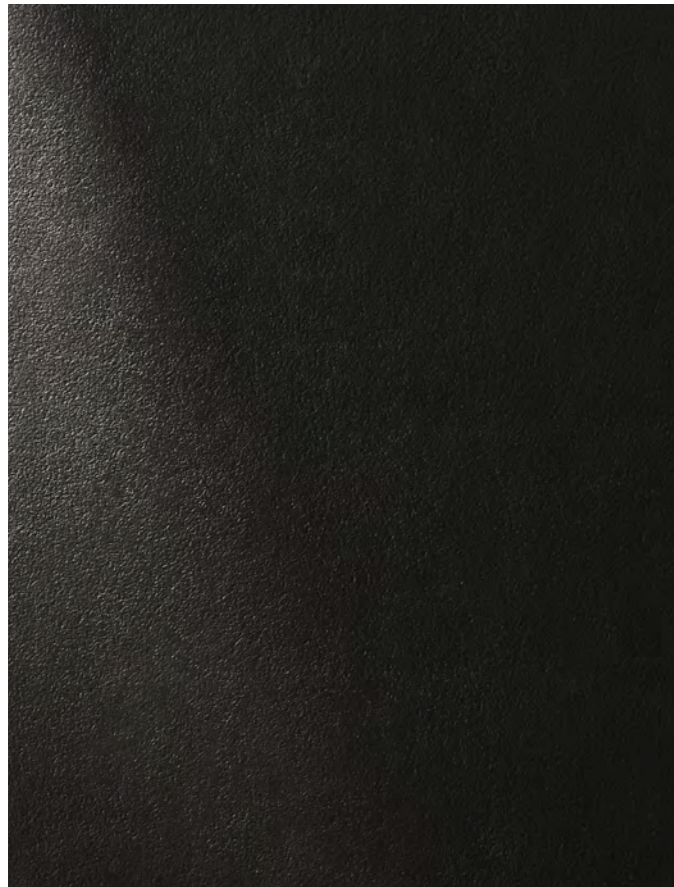


Cladding solutions

Japandi's refined structure supports a range of considered cladding treatments, allowing personalised expression while maintaining calm, cohesive aesthetics suited to different contexts.

Hardie™ Fine Texture Cladding

Hardie™ Fine Texture Cladding offers a matte, rendered finish that complements Japandi's minimalist aesthetic. Its subtle texture adds warmth and depth, pairing beautifully with natural materials and serene colour palettes.



Axon™ Cladding 133mm Smooth

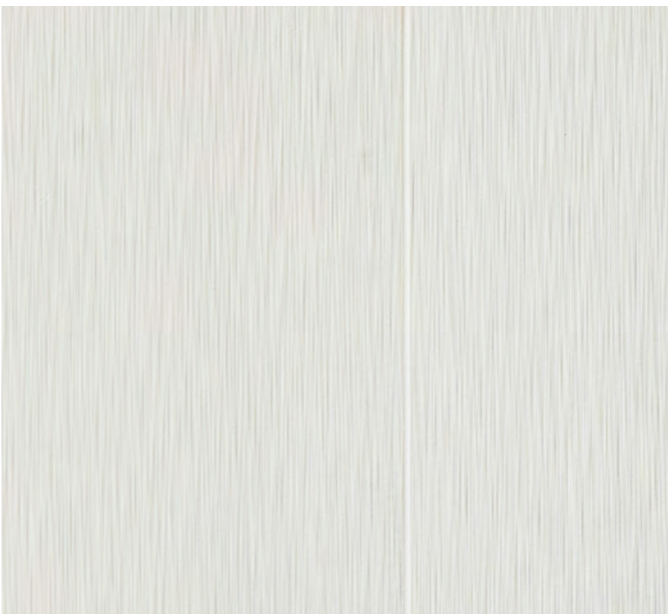
Axon™ Cladding delivers clean, vertical lines that support Japandi's emphasis on refined geometry and flow. The smooth surface helps create calm, uncluttered exteriors with enduring appeal.



With its vertical grooves, Axon™ Cladding 133mm Smooth echos the vertical lines created by accent timber screening at the front entry.

Hardie™ Brushed Concrete Cladding

The embedded brushed concrete finish adds warmth and depth to the facade, delivering a look ideal for Japandi homes. Also perfect for creating a visually dynamic twist on the board and batten look with Hardie™ Axent™ Trim, the 1200mm panel width makes it easy to adopt consistent yet unique spacings to apply the battens, typically at 300mm or 400mm apart.



James Hardie has provided Australian-made building products for over 100 years, with a wide range of our fibre cement products being GreenRate™ Level A certified including Hardie™ Oblique™ Cladding, Linea™ Weatherboard and Stria™ Cladding Fine Texture. All Hardie™ residential exterior cladding has a standard 25-year warranty period.



Introducing **NEW** Hardie™ Gravis™ Panel (AAC)

Build modern mixed-material homes with one trusted brand.

The introduction of Hardie™ Gravis™ Panel marks an important evolution in how modern Australian homes can be built with Hardie™ products. By bringing autoclaved aerated concrete (AAC) and fibre cement exterior wall solutions together under one trusted brand, James Hardie offers a complete exterior wall solution for builders, installers, designers and architects delivering modern mixed-material homes.

James Hardie provides an integrated exterior approach to deliver speed, efficiency and contemporary design. Hardie™ Gravis™ Panel works seamlessly with Hardie™ fibre cement cladding to enable modern, mixed-material designs, delivering energy-efficient performance, design versatility and streamlined installation backed by a 25-year warranty.



Dulux Acratex® Coventry®
Coarse Steel Trowel Applied

Dulux Acratex® Mediterranean
Classique Coarse



Dulux Acratex®
Super Trowel 2mm

Dulux Acratex® Contempo
Advance® Coarse



Featuring Hardie™ Gravis™ Panel (AAC) finished in Dulux Acratex® Super Trowel 2mm and Axon™ Cladding 133mm Smooth.



Colour palettes

The colour palette draws on serene Nordic and Japanese influences, grounded in soft neutrals and warm natural tones to create a calm, balanced interior. These considered hues enhance architectural precision, allowing light, shadow and material texture to define the space with quiet clarity.



From Jenny:

'This Japandi palette is defined by serene, tonal layers where soft neutrals and grounded earth hues create refined, restorative sanctuaries.'

Scheme 1

Scheme 2

Scheme 3

Roof

Colorbond® steel Night Sky®

Colorbond® steel Classic Cream™

Colorbond® steel Surfmist®

Main Walls

Dulux® Colorbond® Night Sky®
Wattyl Solagard® Colorbond® steel
Night Sky®
Taubmans® Colorbond® Night Sky®

Dulux® Spanish Cream Half
Wattyl® Cream Stone
Taubmans® Damascus Cream

Dulux® Colorbond® Surfmist®
Wattyl Solagard® Colorbond® steel
Surfmist®
Taubmans® Colorbond® Surfmist®

Porter's Paints
Base in Himalayan Salt +
French Wash in Darjeeling

Trim

Natural Timber

Natural Timber

Natural Timber

Front Door

Natural Timber

Natural Timber

Dulux® Banksia Leaf
Taubmans® Sinbad Olive

Style variations

While the refined, low-profile roof anchors Japandi, variations respond to lifestyle, site conditions and climate. Material palettes, openings and detailing evolve to suit context, enabling calm, high-performing homes that balance restraint, comfort, efficiency and long-term adaptability.



Minimal Contemporary
 An ultra-simplified, understated form nestled into the landscape. A simple floorplan with wings separates communal and private spaces.
 Featuring Stria™ Cladding Smooth 405mm in horizontal application.



Summer House

Light-coloured cladding suited to warm climates, extended eaves for shade and heat protection, natural ventilation and drought-tolerant landscaping.

Featuring Hardie™ Fine Texture Cladding with Hardie™ Axent™ Trim in board and batten application.



Winter Retreat

Dark cladding suited to cooler climates, with a private inward-facing courtyard, cosy spaces, raked ceilings and windows oriented to capture winter sun.

Featuring Axon™ Cladding 133mm Smooth with Hardie™ Fine Texture Cladding.

Medium Density Townhouse

Featuring clear zoning, repeatable forms and efficient, space-smart planning, with many features shared with the Barn style.

Featuring Linea™ Weatherboard, Hardie™ Brushed Concrete Cladding and EasyLap™ Panel with Hardie™ Axent™ Trim.



Get the Look

Materials & textures

A palette grounded in soft neutrals is layered with warm timber and subtle earthy tones to create an organic, calming foundation. Tactile, matte finishes and natural-look surfaces add gentle depth, while considered material contrasts bring quiet visual interest. Filtered light animates these textures, shaping a space that feels restorative, balanced and sensorially refined.



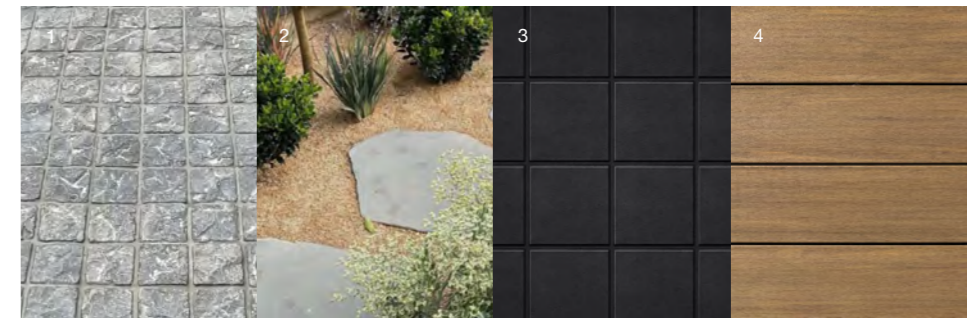
From Rebecca:

'When selecting Japandi materials, focus on balancing natural textures with refined, precise finishes. Layer subtle contrasts to create quiet sophistication, so everyday spaces feel grounded, restorative and timeless.'



Exterior

- 1 [Bordeaux Bluestone Cobblestones](#), **RMS Traders**
- 2 [Premium Bluestone Stepping Stone](#), **RMS Traders**
- 3 [Haddon Matte Black Medium Square Tile](#), **Tilecloud**
- 4 [PVC Decking, Vintage Collection®](#), **Weathered Teak, TimberTech®**



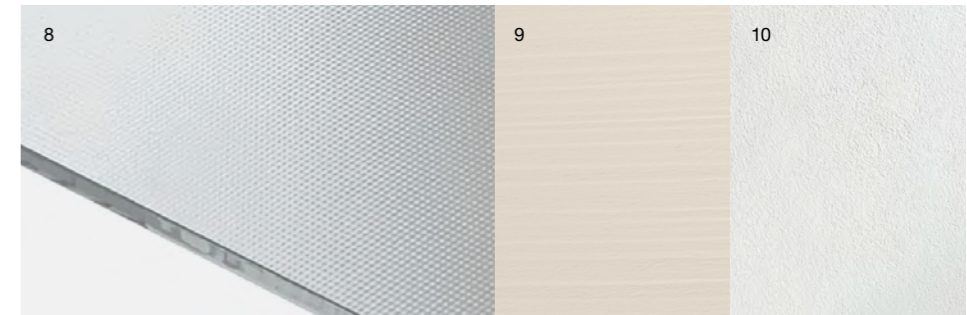
Flooring

- 5 [Chablis PurePlank 2.0 Floorboards](#), **Havwoods**
- 6 [Aspen Raw 13 Character Floorboards](#), **Havwoods**
- 7 [Habit Range, Canvas Floorboards](#), **Kustom Timber**



Windows & Walls

- 8 [Satinlite Decorative Glass](#), **Veridian Glass**
- 9 [Double White Sand Paint](#), **Porter's Paints**
- 10 [Hardie™ Fine Texture Cladding](#), **James Hardie**



Cabinetry

- 11 [Blackened Oak Laminate](#), **Polytech**
- 12 [American Walnut Costato Veneer](#), **Havwoods**
- 13 [Avorio Natural Stone](#), **Artemdomus**



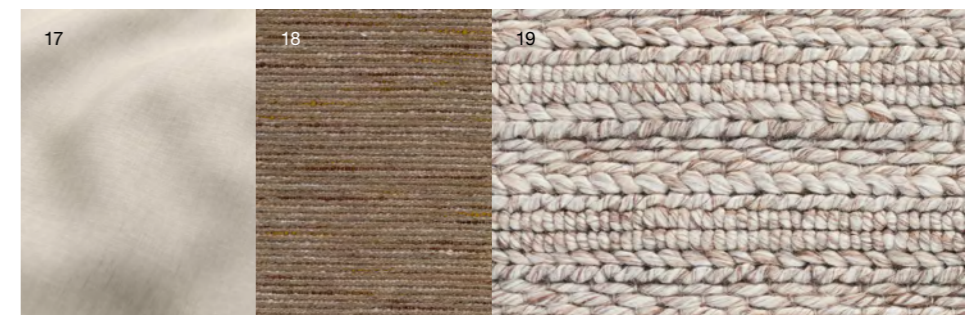
Tiles

- 14 [Northbridge Peach Terracotta Look Subway Tile](#), **Tilecloud**
- 15 [Coogee Antique Brown Matte Kit Kat Mosaic Tile](#), **Tilecloud**
- 16 [Travertine Tuscan Cobblestones](#), **RMS Traders**



Textiles

- 17 [Kyoto Linen Curtains](#), **James Dunlop Textiles**
- 18 [Dicaprio Cinamon, Upholstery](#), **Warwick**
- 19 [Natural Astrid Hand Woven Rug](#), **Temple & Webster**



Landscaping

Landscaping in Japandi extends the home’s quiet, nature-led character into its surroundings, using native planting, natural textures and layered greenery to soften architectural lines. Outdoor spaces become restorative and sheltering, supporting passive performance while strengthening indoor-outdoor flow and the daily connection between home, landscape and ritual.

This central wellness courtyard lined with Hardie™ Fine Texture Cladding brings light and air into the heart of the home, connecting dual wings and supporting restorative indoor-outdoor living.



From Matt:

‘At its essence, landscaping Japandi homes is about shaping calm, nature-led outdoor rooms with native planting, natural textures and filtered shade, softening architecture and strengthening the quiet flow between home, landscape and daily ritual.’

All Climates

- 1 Limestone stepping stones—use to create a calm, guided path through the landscape and outdoor living areas, surrounded by gravel, ground cover or lawn.
- 2 River Pebbles—natural, smooth and rounded stones are often used to define borders and create organic paths or in place of lawn.
- 3 Forest Pansy—a small ornamental tree valued for its deep purple, heart-shaped leaves and soft pink spring flowers, performing well in both cool and warm climates.



Warm Climates

- 4 Walking Iris—a low, spreading plant commonly used as groundcover or edging, with strappy foliage and seasonal flowers that suit borders, courtyards and underplanting in lightly shaded areas.
- 5 Dichondra—a low-growing, creeping groundcover often used to fill gaps between paving, soften edges, or create a lush, green carpet in lawns, rockeries and garden beds.



Cool Climates

- 6 Renga Lily—a hardy, clump-forming plant often used as a border or mass planting, adding bold foliage and bright flower spikes.
- 7 Lilly Turf—a versatile, low-growing evergreen commonly used as edging along paths and garden beds, or as a dense groundcover beneath trees and around hard landscaping.

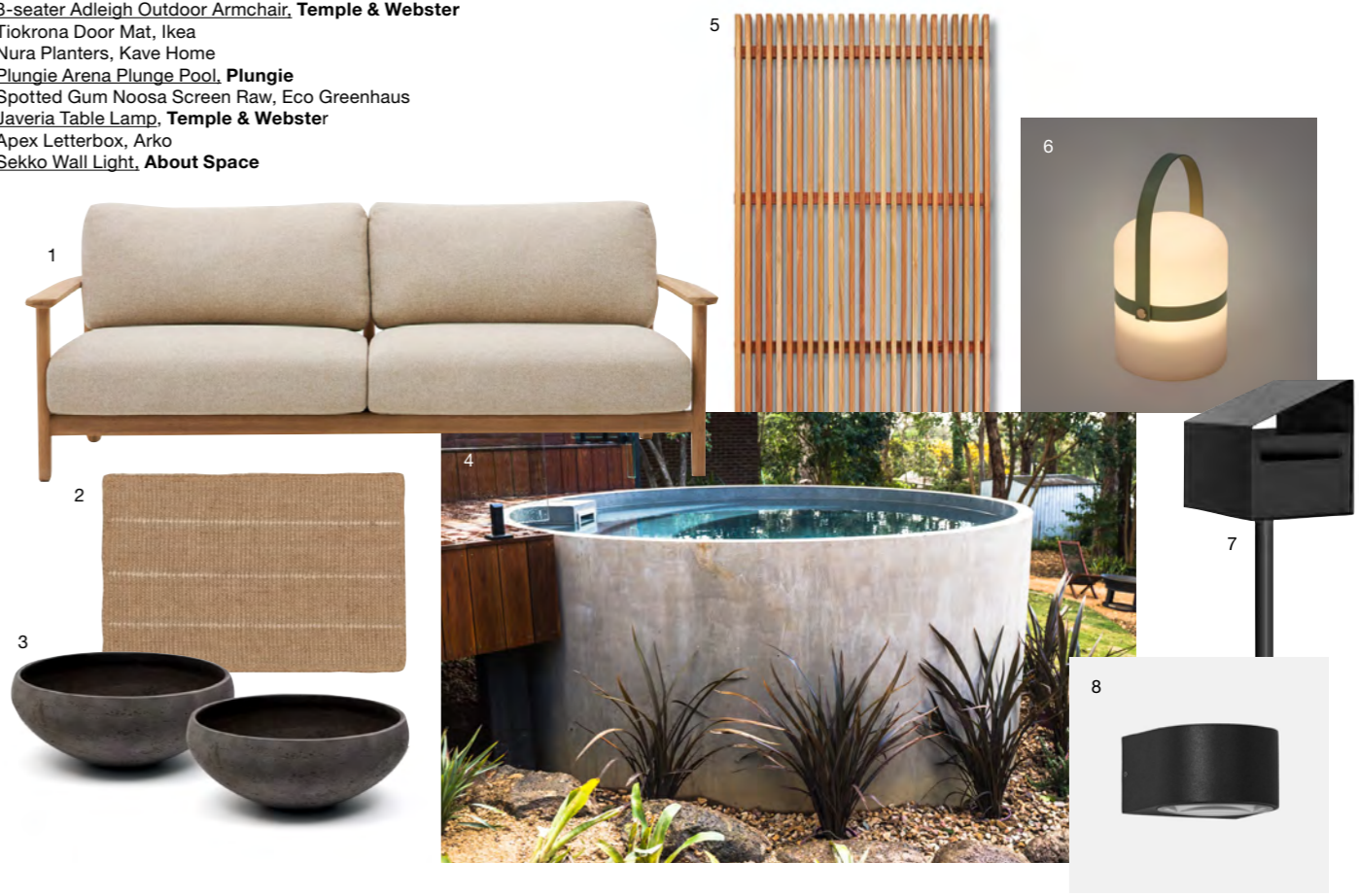


Styling

Styling Japandi centres on a restorative home environment where uncluttered spaces pair soft textures with natural materials and considered detailing. Warm timber, matte finishes and calming, nature-led tones layer with organic forms, balancing practicality with quiet moments of beauty to create immersive, everyday sensory ease.

Outdoor

- 1 3-seater Adleigh Outdoor Armchair, Temple & Webster
- 2 Tiokrona Door Mat, Ikea
- 3 Nura Planters, Kave Home
- 4 Plungie Arena Plunge Pool, Plungie
- 5 Spotted Gum Noosa Screen Raw, Eco Greenhaus
- 6 Javeria Table Lamp, Temple & Webster
- 7 Apex Letterbox, Arko
- 8 Sekko Wall Light, About Space



Interior

- 1 Carmen Side Table, Temple & Webster
- 2 Eiko Linen Cushion, Kave Home
- 3 Lorica Pot, Freedom
- 4 Komo Vases, Ferm Living
- 5 Marie Rug, Temple & Webster
- 6 Arinella Armchair, Kave Home
- 7 Ski-Leg Dining Bench, Temple & Webster
- 8 Lotus Led Flex Pendant, About Space
- 9 Morandi Throw, Citta





Explore the Hardie™ AI Visualiser

Visualise, customise and communicate your design vision with Hardie™ products and the latest modern home styles from the James Hardie Modern Homes Forecast 2026.

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