

Considering creations with **CONCRETE** IDEAS

By Robin Harper

You've made the momentous decision to install a pool in your yard, but how do you know what type of pool is the best for you? As an informed and intelligent reader, I'm sure you've come to know the differences in certain pools such as fibreglass. However, if you're looking elsewhere for pool design and installation, might I suggest an alternative that you may not have considered before: concrete. For some, the word "concrete" evokes certain imagery that may be less than flattering. Not many would want to emulate industrial tones when the original vision was beachside getaway after all. In this article, these pre-conceived ideas of concrete will be challenged in the hopes that you may consider options that could elevate your pool area to greater heights. Western Australia Pool + Outdoor Design's Robin Harper seeks to reveal the benefits of concrete pools by sitting down with Kai Linke, director of Graziani Pools.

The stresses that come hand in hand with designing and building a pool can make you wonder if it's really worth all the effort. A pool's function should be, first and foremost, the exact opposite of stressful. The best way to mitigate these stresses is to firstly approach the project with a clear plan in mind. And to do that, you must first ask yourself: 'What kind of pool I want?' Unlike other pools, the beauty of concrete is its flexibility and adaptability. Its tones can be cool and gentle to match many modern accents found in outdoor areas, or warm and earthy tones to give that sense of paradise. Whatever your preference, the magic of a concrete pool may be just what you're looking for.

AS FLEXIBLE AS CONCRETE

Graziani Pools has been delivering sensational pools since 1969. Once helmed by industry legend, Don Graziani, the company is now in the capable hands

of his son, Anthony Graziani, and Linke. Believing in delivering maximum functionality and flexibility in concrete design and application, Linke is incredibly passionate about "creating a space for families to have fun and make memories".

Specialising in the construction of concrete pools, Linke knows a thing or two about the benefits of having one for your outdoor space. "Concrete pools are customised, handmade and built on site to any specification," he says, and asserts that "concrete has unmatched durability and strength." To explore the possibilities of what a concrete pool can offer you, and how it can be integrated seamlessly into the surrounding landscape, Linke says, "Landscaping with a concrete pool is only limited by your imagination. Anything is possible. Such is the beauty of using concrete."

A PRACTICED PROCESS

Building a pool can be a big decision, especially as it will alter the very layout of how you interact with your outdoor space on a daily basis. To ease you into the process so that you aren't overwhelmed, Linke offers up sound advice on the steps Graziani Pools takes long before excavation even occurs. He says, "In creating pool and landscape designs, we use a 3D rendering design program to give customers realistic illustrations and video of their pool project." This way, all parties involved in the project can be on the same page and avoid any costly returns. In this step, any issues that may arise are "ironed out early", giving the client "confidence and trust that their vision is being brought to life".

For Graziani Pools, Linke asserts that their works are "incredibly fluid and fast moving", with the construction progress a "cooperative collaboration with builders and



other trades." This ensures that there is a functionally stream-lined process that avoids those pesky snags that can delay projects. "People often have a simplified understanding of what is involved in building a swimming pool," says Linke. Being transparent with his clients, he ensures that they are well informed on the multi-stage process and sets timeframes for each stage so that they feel that they are in capable hands. "We also set expectations for progress payments so that they can budget for their project accordingly," says Linke.

As someone who has overseen many projects in his professional career, Linke breaks down the concrete pool installation process into a compact 13 stages. It begins with site preparation, excavation, formwork and steel fixing, pre-plumbing, all the way to interiors, fill and balance, and then finally – the handover. According to Linke, ultimately, "the application of a concrete pool is endless. It can be built as part of the house structure, part of the home on the second floor or suspended over a sloping block, complete with infinite edge taking in the view." Whatever you're looking for, concrete pools are the way to go.

NOW WHAT?

If you're reading this and already have a concrete pool, Linke also has nifty advice on how to maintain it so that you can keep it clean and sparkling all year round. His main tip to ensure adequate filtration time and pool chemistry maintenance is to install sanitation and PH controllers, in-floor cleaning systems and robotic cleaners. "In addition to automatic cleaning, our advice is to regularly backwash, clean the filter and manually brush the internal pool surface," he advises. Linke also recommends to "super chlorinate" your pool twice a year to avoid any chances of algae build up. A pool cover and skimmer sock are also recommended "to limit organic matter entering the pool" and pool filter.



Being a trade qualified mechanical plumber for more than 20 years, Linke's skilled background in concreting, complex hydraulics, plumbing and many other aspects essential to pool installation makes his advice on pools invaluable. His parting words for those with pools or people looking to install pools, he says: "Treat your pool like your car – clean, service and regular maintenance is key to longevity (and a happy pool builder)."

Images provided by Graziani Pools + Landscape

