

Building blocks for a luxe lifes/file...

> Ingenious young building designer Chris Clout, articulates to Helen Flanagan about success and global aspirations.

awards for insightful innovative designs. His was the youngest ever recipient. 30 year-old are nothing short of outstanding.

Chris had a hammer and nails in his hands at six when he built

his first house. It was only a cubby house and it was followed by tree houses, but it did kick off two decades of building design, beginning with a career as a carpenter, and evolving into something of a phenomenon, whilst transcending the boundaries of conventional carpentry, with one-of-a-kind contemporary architecture.

"I think it really helps knowing how to put things together," says Chris who grew up with his close-knit family including a brother and sister, at Jervis Bay on the south coast of NSW. "My builder dad would let me order timber from the hardware store which I cut and sawed so I could build what I wanted. In my teens I became his apprentice and in my third year I designed and renovated the family home."

Chris worked for his Uncle Paul (Clout), who is well known in Noosa for his avant-garde building design and five years later he decided to go it alone.

At the core of his creations is a humble philosophy centring on the important values of functional family life and living. This obviously resonated with the judges of

hris Clout is well acquainted with the building the Building Design Association of Australia's (BDAA) National industry, boasting an impressive portfolio of Design Excellence Awards in 2009, when Chris not only won but

prodigious talent reflects a profound The award was for Chris parent's home in Castaways Beach." understanding of the built form, as well as a keen They wanted something different so he came up with the idea of passion for design. His achievements thus far for a the Japan House," says a very proud Dani Clout who juggles the management of Chris' business with being an amazing mother to 8 month-old Cayden Christopher.

To create lavish homes akin to the world's most luxurious



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Japan House...

a house with a green heart



holiday resorts, Chris has worked hard to achieve what others in his field are only dreaming about. His design tally so far is over 100 homes in Queensland, NSW, Melbourne, Perth, Bali and Vanuatu and he has won 51 awards at regional, state and national levels.

Outshining some of Australia's biggest designers with his clever ideas and big dreams, plus the notion that there should always be a

strong element of water starting at the front door, flowing through the house to the pool, Chris' striking resort-style pools and water features and seamless indoor/outdoor

living, have come to the attention of several television producers.

"Riverhouse, Saltwater House and Tropical House will feature on Amazing Water Houses which will air

on HGTV, a popular cable channel in America as it mostly features Hollywood and Vegas homes," an excited Chris says adding "they had never filmed outside America before.

"Most recently the Tropical House in Noosa Waters was also chosen for two episodes of Sandcastles on Australia's 7Two. It's an architect-based show and when I told them I wasn't an architect they said they didn't care. They just loved my work especially the house which is like a grand ocean liner from the street, on a triangular block and looks more like an island retreat with its manmade rainforest at the entrance which leads to a circular pavilion area, kitchen, living and dining all jutting over the infinity pool with its perspex spa. The two separate wings wrap around the pool.

"The design can be plonked on an island or by a river anywhere in the world. There were no restrictions on design from the Melbourne clients and they didn't change a thing."

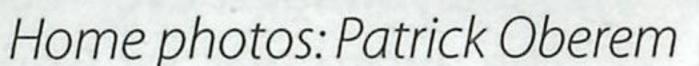
Chris has designed several houses including one currently at Sunshine Beach for his Uncle Glen (Watson); a design in Far North Queensland is centred round a helipad; and amongst other projects on the drawing board is a \$4 million home in Sydney's Cronulla.

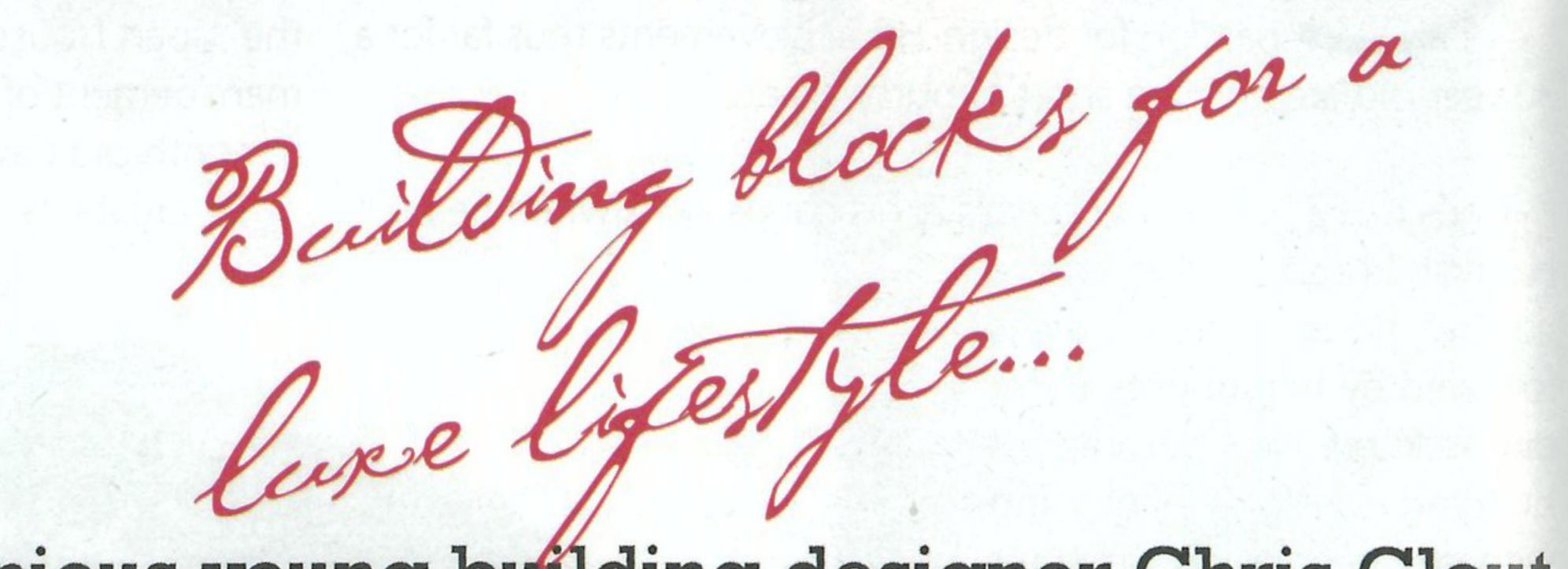
"Chris finds it so difficult to sleep, is at his most creative in bed and can never find the off switch," admits Dani adding "he's has also published his own coffee table book called Resort Houses, a Collection of Chris Clout's Best Designs plus his proposal on the beach at Playa Del Carmen in Mexico is testament to the fact he's so romantic."

Chris has global ambitions but he assures his legion of followers he'll not be leaving Noosa. "I'm designing some of the best houses in the country and I want to build resorts all over the world such as Bali, Fiji and Thailand. My clients love the fact I'm based in Noosa as it gives them the perfect excuse to come here for a holiday. As for me it's a great place to live and bring up a family. We love being parents. Cayden is the best thing that has ever happened to us. Dani wants two kids but I want three so we'll see what happens," concludes Chris almost forgetting about another family member — a Golden Retriever puppy called Indi.

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