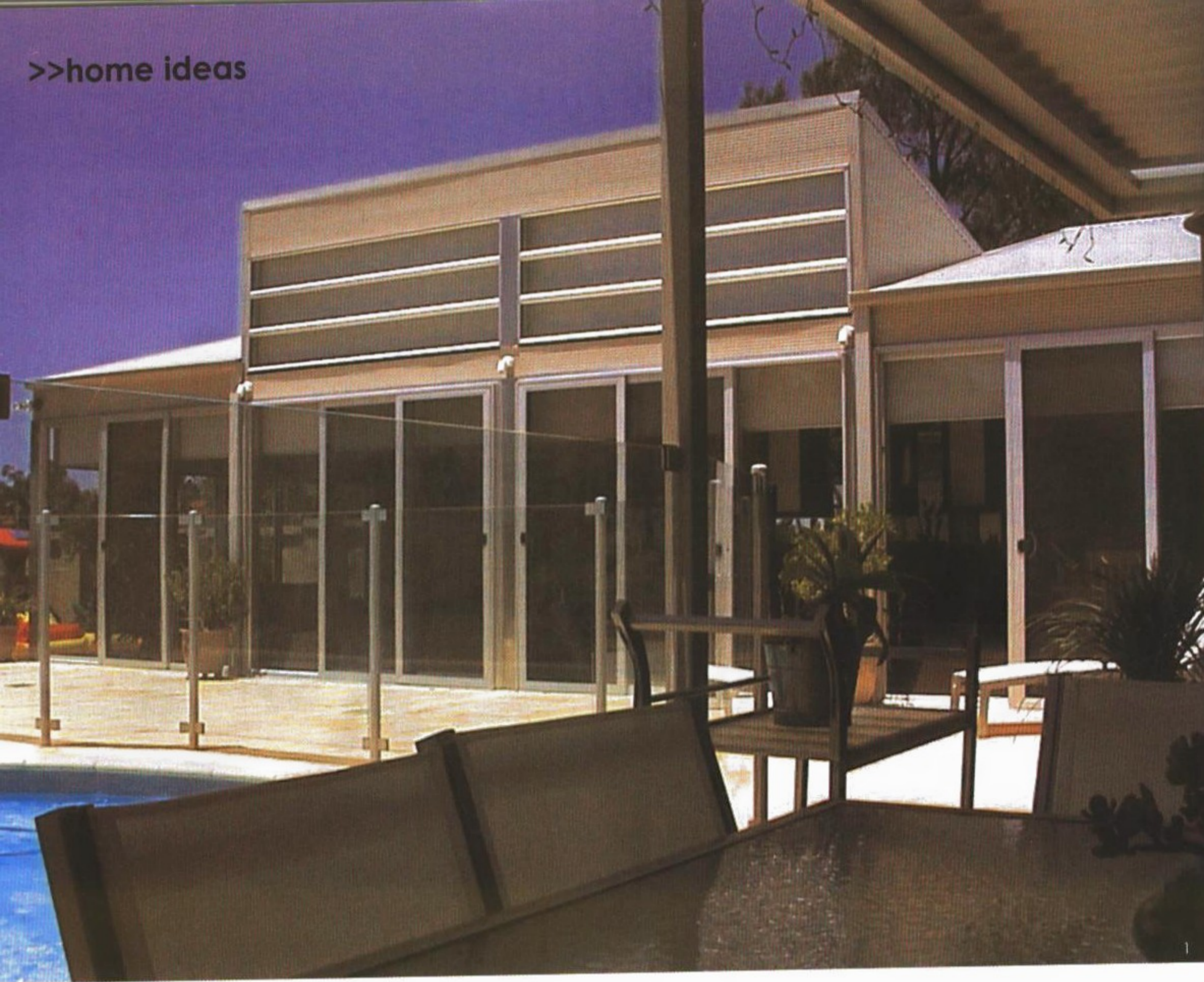
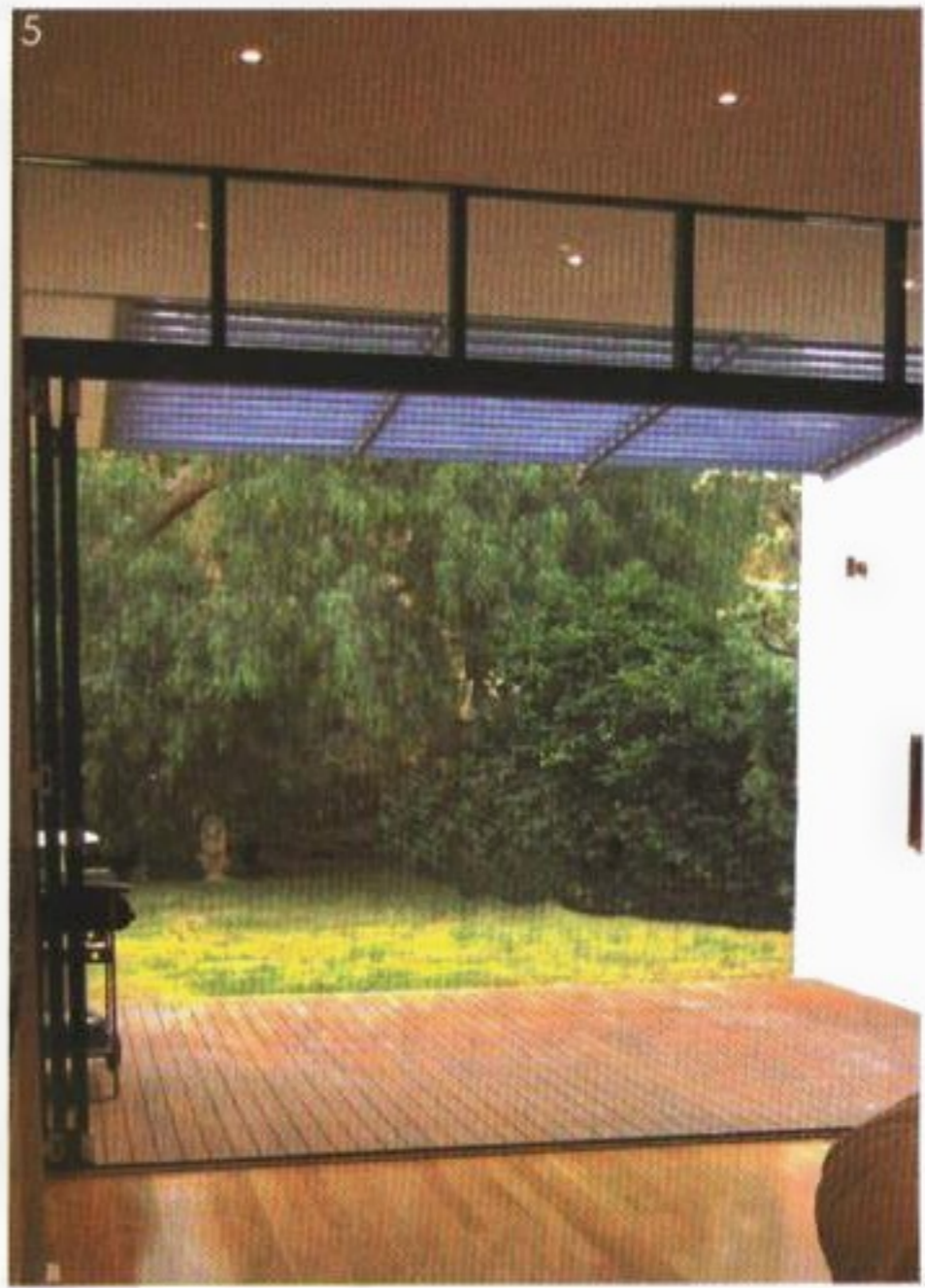
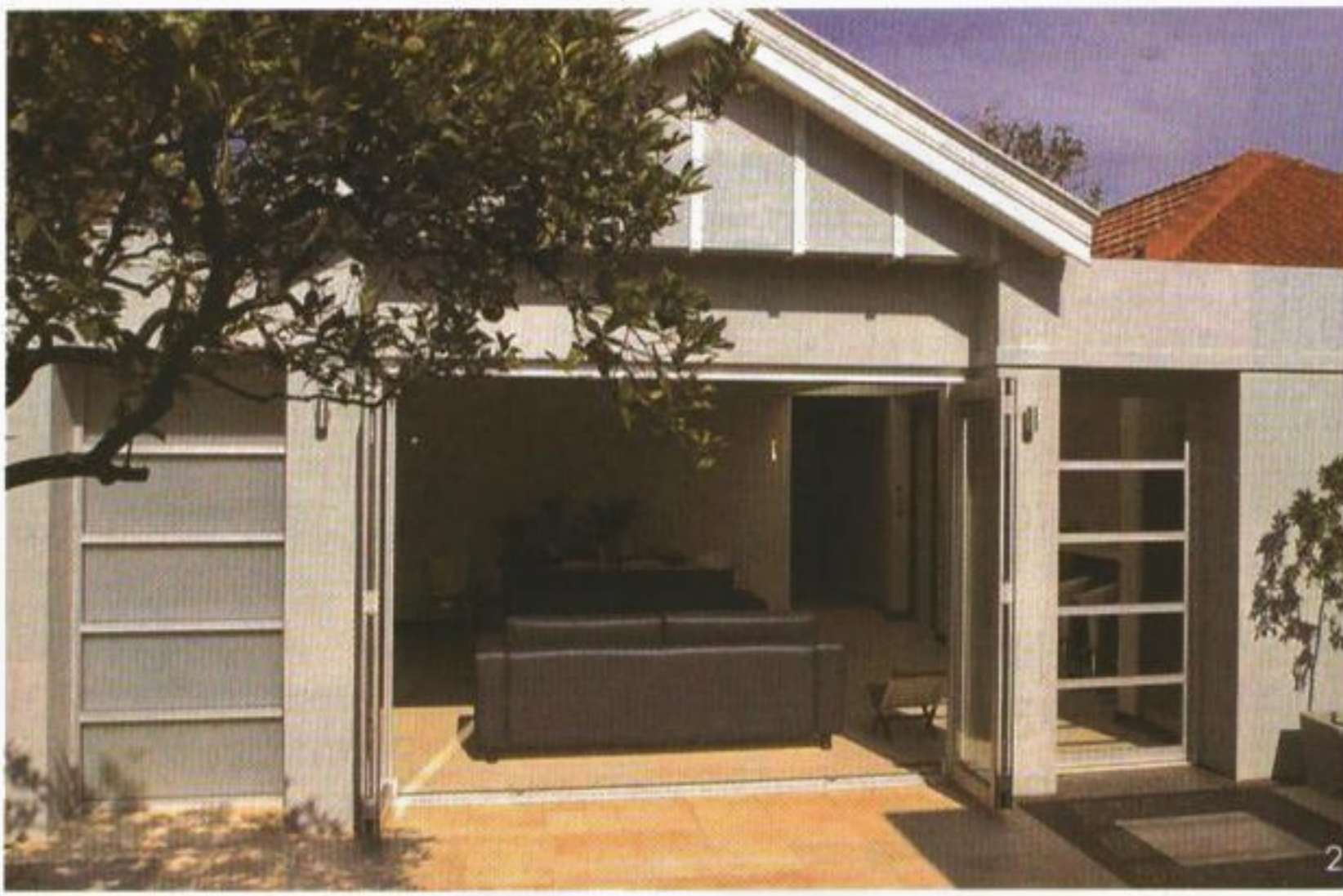


>>home ideas



BRINGING IN THE OUTSIDE

With our warm, sunny climate and our love of the outdoors, it is no surprise that one of the most common renovations undertaken by Australians involves increasing outdoor living space and improving the indoor-outdoor connection.



TRADITIONALLY, MANY AUSTRALIAN homes were based on English housing styles designed to block out inclement weather. With poor orientation, small windows and box like rooms, most had little to no relationship or flow between the internal and external environments.

However, Australia's climate is much more suited to outdoor living and combined with Australian's casual lifestyle and passion for entertaining, the trend to open up our homes and improve the indoor-outdoor relationship, has emerged.

Changes to the Australian housing market have also affected this renovation trend. As the size of land available for housing is decreasing, many people are looking to the outdoors to maximise space and living opportunities.

Typical renovations may involve simply adding a deck or a balcony with sliding glass doors to rearranging the entire floor plan. A common renovation is to rework the entire rear section of a house to feature an open plan kitchen (often with an island bench) that overlooks a large informal family or living room and flows through glass bi-fold doors to a landscaped area.

When planning outdoor renovations, it is important to assess the orientation of the site to ensure the renovation has the best aspect and is

as energy efficient as possible. For instance, while you may want to maximise the winter sunlight, you may need to provide shading for the summer sun.

Generally the northern side of a house is the warmest and ideal for main living areas, with the south side of the home being the coolest. As the western side will get hot in the afternoon and the eastern side attracts the morning sun, shading is most common on the eastern and western sides.

It is also important to think about the purpose of the outdoor area as this will affect the design, scale, size and choice of materials used in the renovation. For instance, you may want to increase light and ventilation, maximise the impact of a view, create a visual link with the outdoors to improve your outlook or keep an eye on the kids swimming in the pool.

Sliding glass and bi-fold doors are becoming highly popular in outdoor renovations for their ability to get the most from the natural light and views even when closed.

They can create a seamless transition from an internal to external space and can even be hidden away in wall cavities.

However the importance of design and attention to detail no longer stops with the interior, with many outdoor spaces are now becoming another room of the house. Landscaping has

evolved into a sophisticated art, with careful planning and well thought out designs.

While swimming pools are often still the main feature in many outdoor areas, they are now often in the form of lap or plunge pools rather than the traditional figure eight. The lawn mower is often made redundant, with pavers and tiles increasing in popularity for their low maintenance.

Alfresco dining is still very much on the Australian lifestyle agenda and no outdoor area is complete without the barbecue and a stylish outdoor setting.

Archicentre is a division of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. They can arrange renovation design reports and new home reports using qualified architects for fixed fees, as well as pre-purchase building inspections and renovation potential reports. To get your API 10% discount on any of these services contact Archicentre on 1300 13 45 13.

**
Architects

Image 1: Adrian Zenere

Image 2: Noy Santiago

Image 3: Joseph Wyman

Image 4-5: Mark Gerstl