

Bringing home a sense of adventure

We have seen Maurice Del Vecchio on our TV screens working on Shannon and Simon's apartment on *The Block: Glasshouse*. Now SUZIE COFFEY pays a visit to find out more about the Torquay builder's personal style

VARIOUS artworks adorn the walls throughout Maurice Del Vecchio's Torquay home.

Each piece is an insight into the builder's personality, capturing his love of adventure and telling of life experiences.

There are prints collected from the time Maurice spent living in Paris and snowboarding through France and Italy. A framed poster of a medieval Italian village is a nod to his ancestry. Hand-painted pieces from Indonesia are reminders of surfing trips to remote locations.

And it is the newest addition to his living room wall which tells of his most recent noteworthy experience – the months he spent working on reality renovation show *The Block: Glasshouse*.

A print reading "Choose Your Own Adventure" was a gift given to Maurice from contestants Shannon and Simon, the team he worked alongside on the current season of the hit Channel Nine series.

"We went into *The Block* pop up shop and the guys wanted to buy me something," Maurice explains.

"We saw the picture and they were insisting 'oh you've got to have this one' because we really were on a bit of an adventure at the time.

"I didn't know where I was going to hang it, but I got it back here and I also had another picture just floating around from a surfing trip to the Mentawai Islands where I almost died.

"They work perfectly together. And they both have a bit of a story to tell so they're good reminders of events in my life."

The print has pride of place in Maurice's favourite area of his home, a second living area he describes as his "chill room" – a space he can unwind in or which can be opened up from an adjoining north-facing courtyard.

"It's great because we can open it up from the courtyard and be sitting outside but still be watching the footy," he says.

"In summer it's almost like a sun room in the afternoons. It's where I do a lot of relaxing."

It's also a space for friends to stay in his self-confessed "bachelor pad", an ottoman specially designed to link up with his Dare Gallery sofa to form a double bed for extra sleeping space.

Maurice built the three-bedroom home, which was designed by architect Gus Gumina, with the intention of selling it upon completion.

But his hard work and attention to detail throughout the home – characteristics also displayed on *The Block: Glasshouse* – meant the finished project was one he didn't want to part with.

A split level design was created due to the fall of the block, but also adds interest to the space.

"I just thought it was a really nice location, it's got the backdrop of a row of pine trees, it's got north-facing courtyards," Maurice says.

"It was designed to offer everything that people need."

A hallway running the length of the house is a stunning feature in itself, creating interest from the moment the front door is opened.

A ceiling height which reaches four metres in the hallway is complemented with a trio of statement pendant lights. The design not only allows for natural light to penetrate, but also continues the clean lines Maurice has achieved through the use of full height, seamless doors without architraves.

Spanish tiles add to the understated style and maintain the fresh feel of the home.

"I wanted to keep everything pretty minimal," Maurice says.

"I was going to use terrazzo flooring but I wasn't sure as they can create a cold feel.

"I found these tiles and I loved them. They're not too over the top but still give a bit of a terrazzo look when you look closely at them and you can see the texture in them."

Well-thought-out features are also continued in the main living and kitchen area where a raked ceiling is a striking design characteristic.

A custom-made rangehood was built to accommodate the angled ceiling, while stone benchtops throughout and in-built features such as a wine fridge and coffee zone continue the luxe feel.

A mirboo decked alfresco area is accessed through stacker doors from both the living area and the adjoining dining room.

"I love that the dining room is its own space," Maurice says. "It looks down over the courtyard and through to the second living room and it creates a continuous flow between the courtyard and living areas.

"Everything works together well. It's really pretty functional."