Architect: Renato D'Ettorre Architects
Year of completion: 2012
No. of rooms: 12
Gross floor area/site area: 371 m²/1,026 m²
Luxury features: outdoor pool, wine cellar, harbor access with private jetty, steam room, cool room, chefs kitchen

LINK HOUSE
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Located in Sydney and with a challenging 30 degree fall to the east down to the water's edge, the house was built on the existing footprint to maximize the spectacular views of the bay. Divided into two separate pavilions, the buildings are joined at ground level by a glass link over a reflective koi pond and surrounded by an internal courtyard and garden. The design blurs the boundary between inside and out, whilst maintaining a strong distinction between privacy and openness. Glass is the key to refining the rawness of the concrete walls and floors throughout.

The pavilions are designed in the true sense of the word: surrounded by gardens, terraces and breezeways emphasizing the bay environment of sun, air and views. The interior courtyard is the pivotal element of the design. It enables natural light to be introduced to all the main living spaces of the house whilst providing privacy from the surrounding houses. A bespoke pizza oven and built-in teppanyaki BBQ serve this pivotal entertaining area. The link between the pavilions acts as a visual and functional connection to the living pavilion with kitchen, dining and sitting areas, completed with fireplace. The sleeping pavilion, spread over three floors, contains the bedrooms, bathrooms, children's room and media lounge. The use of concrete as the main material was for it's extreme resilience, excellent thermal properties and its textural qualities along with its ready-made finish, largely eliminating the use of renders and paint, as well as giving the surface finishes an instant patina.

The design incorporates a number of passive climate control measures such as thermal mass in the concrete slabs and walls; a 10,000-liter rainwater tank; and a garden roof which further insulates the building below and reduces storm water run-off. Deep overhangs and retractable blinds reduce the summer heat gain, while the impact of cross ventilation is amplified by reducing the building depth by the central courtyard and using bodies of water adjacent living spaces as cooling elements.

Cooling down from Sydney's summer heat has never been so easy.