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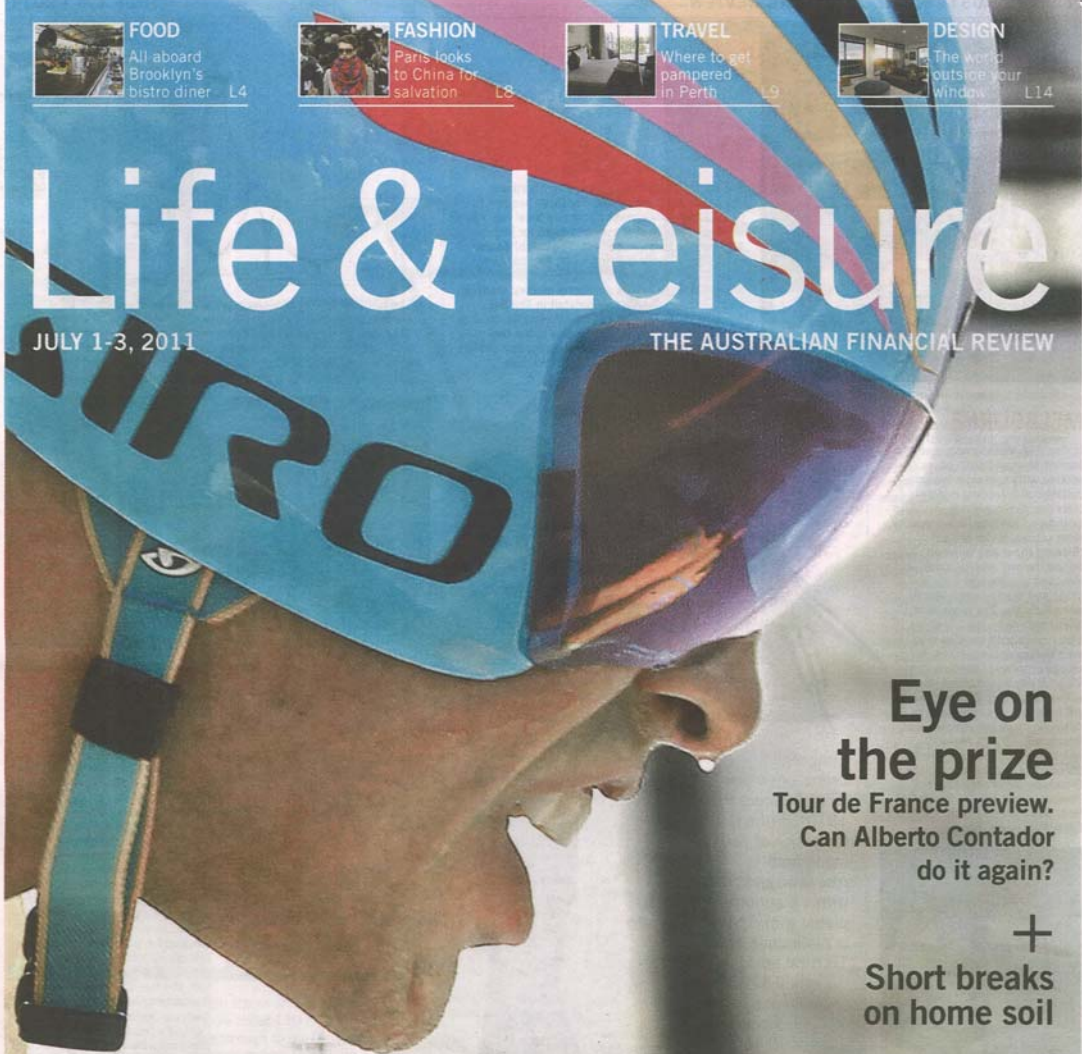
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PROPERTY DESIGN



Main and bottom left: Albert Road Building; the Norman Park apartment (middle), and Seasons Heritage Melbourne, bottom. Photos courtesy Jolson architects; Tom Evangelidis, courtesy RLD; Michael Kai, courtesy Hayball architects.

A world outside your window

Good views can bring a sense of space to even the smallest apartments, writes **Stephen Crafti**.

Leaving a large house in the suburbs for an inner-city apartment can be difficult for those used to a verdant outlook. But the transition is considerably smoother when an apartment comes with its own spectacular views, whether of a skyline, a park or a river.

"You need to ensure that windows make the most of these views, whether from a living room or bedroom. Framing landmarks is part of that process," says Cox Rayner Architects principal Michael Rayner.

Cox Rayner Architects took advantage of views from a multi-residential development at Norman Park in Brisbane.

Comprising three apartments, the low rise-development named Norman Reach enjoys views over the Brisbane River and New Farm Park beyond. The Brisbane Powerhouse, now an arts precinct, is incorporated into the view.

Two penthouses in Norman Reach, each approximately 350 square metres in area, include floor to ceiling glazed window walls that lead to generous outdoor terraces.

Each of the kitchens and open-plan living areas enjoys views of New Farm Park. There are also impressive outlooks from the four bedrooms in each penthouse.

And to take advantage of the views, as well as the topography of the site, Cox Rayner Architects stepped the apartments across the relatively steep property.

"When you're designing around a view, it's not simply a matter of capturing the obvious landmarks. There should also be that element of surprise when you arrive," says Rayner.

"You need to continually see

something new on the horizon, whether it's people strolling through the park or something intriguing in the landscape."

Rayner considers the configuration within these apartments as crucial in maximising the aspect.

"Spaces have to be quite fluid and allow one view to merge with the next," he says.

"It's slightly different when you're designing a detached house in the suburbs."

Spectacular views are also integral to an apartment in what was formerly BP House in Melbourne. Designed by Demaine Russell Trundle Armstrong & Orton in the early 1960s, the high-rise office block was transformed into apartments in the early '90s.

Overlooking the Shrine of Remembrance and the Botanical Gardens, most of the apartments enjoy panoramic views of the city skyline in one direction and Albert Park lake in the other.

Recently one of the apartments in the Albert Road Building was reworked by architect Stephen Jolson.

He removed two circular partition-like walls dividing the kitchen from living areas to allow unimpeded views across the apartment, both towards the city and Albert Park lake.

To delineate the spaces, Jolson designed a buffet, made from oak. "It was important that views from the kitchen and dining area weren't impeded," says Jolson.

He even clad one of the balcony walls with a mirror to magnify the city aspect from the dining table.

"At night, the city lights animate the place," says Jolson.

Architects from Hayball were also mindful of the views over Albert Park Lake when designing



Generally the price is 10 to 20 per cent higher if there's a memorable view.

Tom Jordan, Hayball

Seasons Heritage Melbourne. The high-rise apartment building, located behind a heritage building in St Kilda Road, balances the view with a western orientation.

Deep eaves, approximately two metres in depth, diffuse sunlight while allowing for generous floor to ceiling glazing.

The penthouses in this high-rise building, approximately 250 square metres in area, have impressive views from their kitchens and open plan living areas, as well as from bedrooms.

"We've controlled the views rather than glazing entire walls," says architect Tom Jordan, managing director of Hayball.

"We wanted to create a sense of depth in each apartment, rather than provide wall to wall views," Jordan says apartments' prices are often dictated by the views they offer.

"Views are reflected in the prices. Generally it's 10 to 20 per cent higher per square metre if there's a memorable view. It's something that changes the ambience of an entire space."