

VELUX®

Back to
THE FUTURE



A VELUX case study



THE BARN

reinvented



Could key design ideas from the humble barn point to the future of off-grid living in Australia? If you add a visionary architect, two intrepid home owners and 19 VELUX skylights, the answer seems to be YES...





VELUX SKYLIGHTS MAKE SIMPLE DESIGN LIVEABLE

Home owners Michael and Kristine Hansen looked to the classic barn for inspiration to their new home in the Australian bush. What they came up with could very well point to the future of off-grid living in Australia...and 19 VELUX skylights played an important role.

SMALL BUT SPACIOUS

"We were looking to combine the best from our native Scandinavia with the best of what Australia has to offer," says Michael. "The basic A-frame design is Scandinavian, the building materials are largely Australian. The house is only 175 m² but seems much bigger thanks to the cathedral ceilings and the VELUX skylights."

CAPTURING NATURE

"We took inspiration from a barn. A simple, minimalistic and cost efficient design. We even call the house The Barn. It may not look much from the outside but when people come in, they go "WOW!". The house is built to capture the nature surrounding it."

A VIEW FROM EVERY ROOM

"We're in the middle of beautiful Australian bush", adds Kristine, "and we wanted to make the most of it. With large windows at each end of the house and along the sides, every room has a view. The VELUX skylights in the ceiling take it one step further: we can watch the sky change night and day."



It's cosy inside, no matter what the weather does outside.

Michael and Kristine Hansen built The Barn at Turon Gates, 185 km west of Sydney.

The VELUX skylights bring the outside in.

DESIGNED AROUND VELUX



The Barn is 35 metres long.
All 19 VELUX skylights face due north.

Architect Joe Snell knew that VELUX skylights would be essential for the design. “Without VELUX, The Barn would be little more than, well, a barn. The VELUX skylights capture nature’s drama and theatre...and add all-important functional qualities as well.”

SIMPLE AND ROBUST CONSTRUCTION

“Steel construction, corrugated iron cladding, recycled timber floors...the materials could be used to build a barn. It’s the large windows and the VELUX skylights that lift it to become a home. Hidden behind the corrugated iron are layers of insulation and all windows are double glazed...making the house liveable all year round.”

COMFORTABLE SIZE

“The house is on a steep slope so I decided on a narrow design to save cost. With a width of only five metres, it could easily have become claustrophobic but large window areas and the skylights open it up. Every room has breathtaking views through north facing windows and skylights. And with four bedrooms and two bathrooms, the house is a comfortable size for a family.”

VELUX THE X-FACTOR

“I couldn’t have designed the house without VELUX skylights. They provide an abundance of natural light and make the house seem much bigger than it is. Even more importantly, they ARE the climate control system. With VELUX solar powered skylights and blinds there’s no need for air conditioning – the house is comfortable winter and summer.”



VELUX skylights add drama and theatre.



Architect Joe Snell, Snell Architects, designed The Barn.

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CONTROLLING
THE EXTREMES
WITH VELUX



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At an altitude of 930 metres, winters get cold at Turon Gates. The position on a hilltop further exposes The Barn to the elements with high winds and driving rain commonplace. Come summer, the sun is relentless and temperatures soar. "VELUX handles it all," says Michael.

KEEPING THE COLD OUT

"We're off the grid and our only means of heating are wood stoves. The house is well insulated and all windows and skylights are double glazed. VELUX thermal properties add an extra layer of insulation...even on a cold winter's day it's nice and cosy inside."

LETTING THE HEAT OUT

"Come summer, we can adjust the temperature just by opening some of the skylights. They act like air chimneys, literally sucking the heat out. If the sun through the skylights becomes intrusive, a push on a button on the remote control closes the blinds. The blinds provide extra insulation on a cold winter's night as well."

BUSHFIRE PROTECTION

The architect, Joe Snell, had another concern: "The Barn is in a bushfire zone so all building materials had to be at least BAL-29 tested and approved. VELUX skylights go one better - they have passed the BAL-40 test. They have also passed a cyclone test and the same watertightness test as roof tiles. Essential when building a house so exposed to the elements as The Barn."



On a hot summer's day the skylights act like air chimneys, sucking the heat out.



One remote control handles all skylights and blinds. Everything is solar powered - a must when you're off the grid.



“WHY HAVE A TV WHEN YOU HAVE SKYLIGHTS?”

CARL HANSEN, 15

The Barn has no mobile phone coverage, no internet...not even a tv. Michael and Kristine's son Carl doesn't miss any of it: "I like to watch the sky through the skylights – it's great entertainment, day and night."

ENTERTAINMENT 24/7

"VELUX skylights are much more than the sum of their features," says Kristine. "On a sunny day, the room changes constantly as the sun and the occasional cloud move across the sky. At night you can go stargazing without leaving the house."

CONNECTING WITH NATURE

"VELUX skylights connect you with nature in ways that traditional vertical windows don't. You sense the sun, the wind, the rain – even the time of day – through the skylights. You are completely protected and the skylights are virtually soundproof, still they make you feel like you're part of nature."

THE BARN IS LIKE A HEALTH RETREAT

"Becoming one with nature is exactly what we wanted to achieve with The Barn. Short term it's meant as a weekend getaway from our busy lives in Sydney. Longer term we'd love to live here on a more permanent basis. It's stress free and you just feel more connected to yourself and each other."



Nature puts on a new show every day.



Light changes through the day are captured by the VELUX skylights.

**“EVERY
AUSTRALIAN
HOUSE SHOULD
HAVE VELUX”**

JOE SNELL, ARCHITECT

“There are five key elements that create a better life inside a home: space, light, air, view and sound. Every home should offer all five and with VELUX skylights you can achieve it all in one hit.”

VELUX SKYLIGHTS ADD A LOT MORE THAN LIGHT

“Most people – even architects – see skylights as light providers. But VELUX skylights are much more than that. They make homes feel bigger. They provide air and ventilation. They offer views to the sky day and night. And they are virtually soundproof. There you go...all five key elements in one product.”

WE NEED TO RAISE THE STANDARD OF AUSTRALIAN HOMES

“The Barn shows that we can raise the standard of Australian homes without adding to the cost of building and living in them. It’s not a big home but it seems big. The materials are not expensive but they are high quality and long lasting. Extra layers of insulation combined with solar powered VELUX skylights make air conditioning obsolete.”

I USE VELUX AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY

“Built on these principles, Australian homes could become much more liveable and sustainable. I practice what I preach. At the moment I have three residential projects with VELUX skylights on the go – two in Sydney, one in Byron Bay. All with focus on liveability and sustainability.”



The family dog Mille loves to follow the light patterns created by the VELUX skylights.



A bathroom with a view.



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