

STEPHANIE'S GARDEN

# March

*Stephanie Alexander* gets ready to farewell her garden, potting citrus trees for removal and harvesting capsicums, pole beans, quince and a final crop of tomatoes.



**What a momentous** year 2014 is going to be. I can't recall when I first thought of moving. There was a flyer in the newspaper that mentioned "riverside living". Moving from my much-loved Hawthorn home had occurred to me over the past year or so. It was usually in a low moment when I was faced with maintenance problems or significant bills. Or a sore back after lumping heavy hoses to faraway corners of the garden. Or being frustrated by lorikeets in the crab-apples or cockatoos in the almonds, possums in the peaches or white cabbage butterfly in the broccoli.

Perhaps something new and secure, maintained by others, might be good? Until now, picking salad leaves from the garden, producing tomato sauce each summer, looking at the sunset through my west windows, the quiet yet intense pleasure of appreciating familiar spaces sent the idea to the back of my mind. And yet I found myself setting out to have a look at the display suite.

It was a brilliant late spring day. Sunshine lit up the gums and acacia lining the river. There was good-humoured traffic along the public pathway, cyclists, walkers, mothers with prams. And on the river were kayakers and rowers, their oars and paddles kicking up droplets of water that sparkled. The far bank was green, trees dipped their leaves in the water's edge.