

Classical elements

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A small space with little room for error commands a bold design with eye-catching focal elements

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he main outdoor living space of this month's feature is delineated by the U-shape of the home, and virtually all rooms of the house

look onto this space. The design challenge was both multifaceted and uncompromising because of the unique panorama of its focal area – seen from many angles at any given time, the design had to be flawless.

the CHALLENGE

- Create dramatic impact without sacrificing tranquility.
- Ensure timeless appeal by choosing design details that will not date easily.
- Keep the area uncluttered.
- Cool down the area physically and visually.

the SOLUTION

The relatively small space called for visual drama, the success of which is ensured by one principle: go bold and keep it simple! Going bold with the focal points ensures impact, and keeping design details simple preserves tranquility and timeless appeal.



CENTRE STAGE

We opted for a long slim line reflection pool as the centrepiece in the main garden, finished in smooth plaster with a rounded top edge. Water lilies dot the surface of the water and indicate the passing of the seasons in concert with the wisteria shading the veranda area. An overhead pergola provides much needed shade in summer and the deciduous wisteria permits full enjoyment of the winter sun.

POOLSIDE PLANTING

Stout pillars form part of the pond structure and provide elegant podiums for pots filled with lipstick-red geraniums. The planting surrounding the reflection pool is simple, and contrasting ornamental grasses simultaneously provide subtle surface interest and a lush carpet.





STYLISTED PLANTING
 The driveway entrance to the house is framed with a formal abelia hedge, behind which sweeps of yellow day lilies and blue agapanthus create a stylised yet free-flowing feel, in keeping with the naturalistic setting.



TOP TIP OF THE MONTH:
 The greatest visual impact is borne of simplicity. More often than not, less is more!

FUNCTIONAL FEATURES

A raised patio at the far end of the reflection pool hosts a bistro table and chairs, perfect for intimate outdoor enjoyment. The rose garden can be enjoyed from this vantage point. It hugs a small gravel circle with a sundial birdbath in its centre. The gravel circle provides functional access to the roses as well as adding textural detail.

A lane of conifers, lavender and yellow day lilies direct the eye to a classical fountain against the perimeter wall. This focal point provides the soothing sound of running water; retains the attention within the garden and cleverly diverts it away from the view of the adjoining property.

NATURAL INTIMACY

The raised patio serves as a viewing platform from which to enjoy the reverse angle of the pond, the rose garden and the water feature.

As there is a height restriction on perimeter walls in this estate, the use of well-spaced trees in the nature zone outside the perimeter walls enclosed the garden. As a result, intimacy in the garden is retained without creating visual barriers to the nature zone. Abundant birdlife

inhabits the trees and is a source of great enjoyment to the family.

GROUND PATTERN

The side garden adjoining the entrance garden contains an explosion of perennial colour within a formal ground pattern. The ground pattern is created around a series of focal points – this fusion allows this portion of the garden to sit comfortably in the overall design, while the formal ground pattern links the garden and the architecture of the house.

A wrought iron obelisk draped in fragrant jasmine and a beautiful Japanese maple constitute the focal points in this part of the garden.

SUMMER RESPITE

A pergola-covered courtyard leads off the kitchen, framing a gurgling urn water feature within a small stylish pond. A wall of *Syzygium paniculatum* shaped into a formal square hedge ensures privacy from the neighbours. This corner is a wonderful respite from the summer heat or from marathon cooking in the adjoining kitchen.

The garden appropriately mirrors the temperament of the lady of the house – sunny and colourful, yet simultaneously a truly timeless classic.





PLANT LIST

1. *Duranta erecta* 'Sheena's Gold'
2. *Olea europaea* subsp. *africana*
3. *Agapanthus praecox*
4. *Hemerocallis* sp.
5. *Felicia amelloides*
6. *Murraya exotica*
7. Rosemary
8. *Zantedeschia aethiopica*
9. Pansy and viola
10. *Gazania hybrid* 'Day Break Mix'
11. *Diets bicolor*
12. *Limonium perezii*
13. *Plectranthus* 'Mona Lavender'
14. *Carex comans* 'Frosted Curls'
15. *Scabiosa africana*
16. *Diascia* sp.
17. *Strelitzia reginae*
18. *Rosa* sp.
19. *Ophiopogon japonicus*
20. Water lily
21. *Acorus gramineus* 'Aurea'
22. *Juniperus scopulorum* 'Skyrocket'
23. *Lavandula dentata*
24. *Chondropetalum tectorum*

