

GARDEN ISSUE

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THREE DESIGN FIRMS OFFER GARDEN VARIETY WITH GORGEOUS RESULTS



when it comes to gardens, design inspiration is never more than a season away. If you're ready to catch spring fever, these stunning landscapes full of life, color and texture are just the cure. And who knows—you might just become the outdoor type (and make your neighbors green with envy). >>



diane devore // *DEVORE ASSOCIATES*

Setting the scene: Our client grew up on this property and has vivid memories of his time there. Over the years, it had become overgrown and lost its luster, so he decided to renovate. It was extremely important that

the property be developed in an ecologically sensitive manner for subsequent generations to enjoy.

Design concept: Working closely with Mac Patterson of Austin Patterson Disston Architects, we





decided to create a sustainable farmstead based on the principles of permaculture. It would produce fruits and vegetables for the family along with capturing the native New England landscape.

APD Architects restored the original farmhouse and barn, and additional structures were added to support the concept of a farmstead. As part of the service court, the garage was designed with a green roof, which we used for the vegetable garden. A gate and lawn ramp planted with herbs leads to the garden, and below, to the west, is a small walled garden for root crops.

Blueberries, raspberries, native meadow grasses and bee hives were installed for pollination and production. To avoid the need for any future pesticide applications, the existing orchard was supplemented with numerous varieties and species of disease-resistant fruit trees. The wetlands were revitalized, and hundreds of

native trees, shrubs and wildflowers were planted along the periphery of the property.

Planting palette: The plantings throughout the property were all carefully chosen to ensure that each season would be highlighted through various floral or foliage displays. Different gardens and different spaces celebrate the changing season. For instance, the orchard is planted with thousands of daffodils to herald in spring, the cutting garden peaks in June and July, and the wetlands have a glorious fall meadow.

Making an impact: Over the years, traffic had increased on the two adjoining roads, so it was imperative to our client that we address the resulting noise. I believe the largest impact to the site was the implementation of a rill and series of spillways. We added these to create “white noise” in the backyard. The water is pumped from the well stone

to a holding tank under the overlook, ensuring that all of the water work features are gravity-fed, resulting in a peaceful sound.

Creating a permaculture environment is a gradual, long-term process. This property will change and evolve over time; however, the basic design elements are now in place. It will remain a positive ecological influence and serve as a model for stewardship of the land while providing organic food for the family.

Resources:

- Landscape architect: Devore Associates, Fairfield; 203-256-8950; devoreassoc.com
- Residence architect: Austin Patterson Disston Architects, Southport; 203-255-4031; apdarchitects.com
- Interior designer: Paul Stuart Rankin, New York City; 212-727-3869





john r. conte III, john r. conte + cleo abrams-horsburgh // CONTE + CONTE, LLC

Setting the scene: The landscape was a complete blank slate—an expanse of grass abutting a dramatic cliff—and a new pool house was under construction.

Design concept: The house is a “castle-style” home built around the turn of the century, so we proposed formal gardens with a traditional layout that would complement the architecture. Our design concept arose from

French and English classical layouts, with a succession of “rooms,” strong axes and focal features. Central to the garden layout is the formal boxwood garden. All four paths converge on a central fountain feature, which is an antique flower-filled urn floating over water. The clipped boxwood border of the quadrants is punctuated at the corners with taller conical boxwoods.

Planting palette: The large, open lawn is framed with pea gravel paths and traditional perennial bed borders. These beds are filled with an abundance of species providing color and seasonal interest. This style of planting corresponds with the turn-of-the-century English garden. At the rear of the new pool house, in a sunken area that hadn’t been considered as a potential garden space, is a rose garden enclosed

with new wrought-iron arches, and it features a romantic period-style cupid statue.

Making an impact: Deciding to establish a formal geometry and creating framed views and sequences of spaces were crucial to defining the previously untamed landscape. The more architectural clipped boxwood parterre plantings were located closest to the home, and as the



design draws away from the house, it becomes less formal with more bountiful colors and textures in the perennial gardens.

Resources:

Landscape designers: Conte & Conte, LLC, Greenwich; 203-869-1400; contestandconte.com

Landscape construction: Fairfield House & Garden Company, Greenwich; 203-661-8900; fairfieldhouseandgarden.com

Pool house: Murphy Brothers Contracting, Mamaroneck, NY; 203-629-1291; murphybrothers.com





cheryl russ + brandon jones // GLENGATE

Setting the scene: The existing yard sloped and was an open, undefined lawn space. Since the slope consumed the majority of the lawn, it was an expansive and unusable piece of the property.

Design concept: We wanted the pool space and landscape to look and feel serene. We sited the pool and pool house to have a strong architectural relationship with the main house, and we regraded the site to create two distinct levels. A lawn area extending from a gravel rock terrace bordered with bluestone banding creates the upper level, and it connects to the lower pool area by a set of bluestone slab steps that lead down an architectural slope through a mass of Little Lime hydrangea and a line of Rutgers hybrid Kousa dogwoods. We defined the pool space within a simple oval privet hedge

that surrounds both the pool and the pool house.

The pool house’s architecture takes its cues from the home. Masonry stonework found on the home’s three chimneys was replicated in the fireplace and masonry counters within the pool house itself. A delicate panel detail that sits between columns was inspired by the side lights on the home’s front door, creating an airy yet grounded base for the pool house’s dramatic roofline to rest on. The interior furnishings and décor create a comfortable space to spend long summer days and extended evenings in.

Planting palette: A restrained planting palette was a purposeful choice to ensure that the overall effect of the space would be tranquil. A simple color palette

of green and white throughout builds on the home’s white architecture and creates a subdued yet sophisticated feel. A privet hedge defines the pool space, and a mass of Little Lime hydrangea sit under a line of Rutgers hybrid Kousa dogwood trees. A perennial garden with a mix of gaura, white phlox, Calamintha nepeta and Artemisia ‘Snow Queen’ terminate the views from the pool house across the pool and spa and up the stone steps punctuated by simple American boxwood globes.

Making an impact: The decision to define the two levels through distinctive grading linked by a simple planting palette, hedge and stone staircase creates a nice separation and frames each area cohesively. The deliberate nod to the home’s architectural features

replicated in the pool house also adds to the property’s calming vibe, while the detail in the pool house’s corner panels adds a subtle yet noticeable level of refinement to the space.

Resources:

Landscape designer/contractor; pool designer/builder; and pool house designer/contractor: Glengate, Wilton; 203-762-2200; glengatecompany.com
Interior designer for outdoor furnishings and pool house décor: Lisa Hilderbrand, Hilderbrand Interiors, New Canaan; 203-722-9642; hilderbrandinteriors.com

PROJECT PHOTOGRAPHY: BILL MILNE; PORTRAITS: NEIL LANDINGO



