

{ OUTDOOR SPACE }

THERE'S ROOM FOR FUN

What can a Montclair family do without a vast lawn? Swim, dine, sunbathe and enjoy floral beauty, a fire and twinkly lights.

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Design by Rich Cording of CLC Landscape Design

Photography by Rich Cording Jr. and Front Door Photography

The design team converted a "blank piece of lawn" in Montclair into an enviable and luxurious backyard with a pool, a dining area and a shaded pergola.

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When you live across the street from one of your town's most beautiful parks, a big backyard play area for the kids doesn't top your wish list. Still, Montclair parents of three wanted to upgrade their "blank" outdoor space with other amenities that would keep their family entertained. So they hired CLC Landscape Design in Ringwood to help bring their vision to fruition and make the most of their outdoor space.

"They have a big house but a small lot, so they didn't need a lot of lawn," CLC owner Rich Cording says. "What they wanted most were a swimming pool, a dining area and some blockage and privacy from their neighbors." After about a month of sketching out the design, Cording and his team, including this project's lead designer, Burns Benson, got to work. "We wanted to put the pool as close to the setback line as we could, so we put plantings there and it worked out nice visually," says Cording. Instead of a patio, two sides of the pool are surrounded by florals, such as pink roses, purple Rozanne geraniums and silver lamb's ear. The team even transplanted some of the homeowners' existing plants—including a Japanese red maple tree—into the back area and integrated them into the new design. Bonus: The placement of these lush plantings

solved the clients' privacy problem too.

Adjacent to the pool, designed by The Pool Boss in Wayne, is a sunbathing spot, and at the opposite end are two separate sections—one right next to the house for grilling and dining, and one for sitting, with a pergola and a natural granite fireplace. "The client wanted a fireplace [instead of a firepit] from day one," Cording says. "This one is an elongated 54 inches and has a sleek, contemporary look." The pergola has a louvered system, so the shades can be opened or closed, depending on the weather (and the company).

Natural quartzite flooring in neutral shades of gray and beige is both pretty and practical—it stays cool to the touch, so the kids don't have to worry about burning their feet when barefoot. Another plus? Once the sun goes down, the yard is quite a spectacle, as the LED lights in the pool can change color. There are also bright, twinkly lights built right into the pergola.

Cording's clients were thrilled with the finished product and recommended the firm to family and friends—and the feeling is mutual. "Montclair is one of our best towns," says Cording. "These people appreciate good design. This is an older home, but the homeowners have a contemporary flair."

This page, top: Privacy was one of the homeowners' biggest requests. It was achieved by planting abundant greenery along two adjacent edges of the pool. This page, bottom: Shade abounds in the relaxation corner of the backyard, where the family of five and their guests can relax beside the fireplace under a louvered pergola. Opposite page: These clients "didn't have a desire for a jacuzzi or an over-the-top outdoor kitchen," designer Rich Cording says. But in this design, less is more.