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100s OF NEW IDEAS



MODERN Gardens

Create your perfect outside space  No green fingers required!

T&CS APPLY, SEE PAGE 102



LET'S GO **wild!**



Nice ideas for a nature-friendly space

Bring your garden to life



Stylish makes to support beneficial bugs



Plant a patio pot for pollinators



25

little ways you can help spring critters

PLUS
Designer tricks to boost biodiversity **p.40**

Flowers that feed birds as well as bees **p.16**

Inspiring still-smart wildlife gardens **p.22**

Step-by-step to a small pond **p.94**



“It immerses you in nature”

Slate paths, stacked logs and naturalistic planting have brought this west London garden **BACK TO LIFE**

GARDEN makeover



BEFORE

EEK, it was so bleak, with a patchy lawn, dull paving and cheerless fencing!



You can see more of designer Stefano's biodiverse beauties on Insta @stefano.marinaz

MY GARDEN PLAN

LOCATION Chiswick, West London
LOOK Naturalistic
SITE Size 15.5m x 6m **Faces** North
Soil London clay

HOW LONG IT TOOK

Site clearance 1 week
 Paths, fences & log piles 2 weeks
 Plant placement 1 week
 Planting 1 week Lighting 1 week
TOTAL: 6 WEEKS

Elba Dining Table, from £879, & chairs, from £120 each, kettler.co.uk

Blue Slate Aggregate, cedstone.co.uk

Having transformed their kitchen and added wall-to-wall glass doors, the owners of this urban plot were keen to tackle the underwhelming view out on to their empty garden. “There was nothing on this Chiswick site but a small lawn and a couple of shrubs,” explains designer Stefano Marinaz (stefanomarinaz.com).

Boundaried by a row of tall conifers at the rear and overlooked by neighbouring houses, the garden felt hemmed in and

exposed. The plot was also north-facing, with dark and shady areas.

Fans of Stefano's naturalistic approach to design and planting, the owners knew his ideas would work with their keen interest in nature, and bring their plot to life. “The owners had just refurbished the rear-facing kitchen and wanted to look at a beautiful garden, even during the colder months when it isn't possible to use the garden,” Stefano remembers. “They wanted to have an outdoor dining and

separate lounge area to entertain family and friends while enjoying a different view of the garden.”

SHAPING THE SPACE

Faced with a blank canvas and a typical long and fairly narrow urban plot, Stefano's challenge was to bring some structure into the space, along with seasonal interest, while creating a haven for its owners as well as wildlife. His design sited the outdoor living areas away from the house,

A STYLISH SNUG

so cosy you can't help but be swept off your feet!



in a spot that enjoyed sunlight from midday till evening. "And it would be immersed among the plants and nature," he adds.

"I wanted to create a sense of discovery," he continues. "A meandering path was key to our new layout, extending the garden's apparent length, linking the house to its far end, and seeming to stop effortlessly by the dining table and seating area on the way."

The path gently varies in width, widening by the dining and lounge areas. Subtly edged with steel and laid with blue slate, the ribbon-like path has an inviting, tactile charm. Including lengths of split slate among the slate chips cleverly helps to highlight nearby planting, while adding variety and a change in rhythm to the surface.

Perfectly placed beds complete the view down the path to the water wall at the far end. "We are always aware of wildlife in the garden, and by using eye-catching log 'waves' to separate the beds from the seating and dining areas, we have created habitats for garden insects," says Stefano.

"We also encourage plants to self-seed, allowing love-in-the-mist, creeping thyme, valerian, cerinthe and striking honesty



BEFORE

With a clear view from indoors and overlooking neighbours, the garden was in desperate need of a polish

'Chedglow' to make themselves at home in cracks and crevices between the paving slabs. These self-seeders will fill empty spaces and suppress weeds, so less maintenance is needed."

VEIL OF LEAVES

Overlooked by neighbouring houses, establishing a sense of privacy was at the heart of creating this restful space. A series of espaliered pear trees were planted at regular intervals along the fence line. Extending the boundary height and providing seasonal drama with their spring blossom and late summer fruit, these deciduous trees with silvery bark gently disperse the light and add to the nature-rich habitat.

Among the three borders, three multi-stem amelanchier trees have been carefully placed to both anchor and frame changing views within the garden. "Standing like exclamation marks in each of the three beds, they fill the garden with their spring blossom, amazing autumn colours, plus provide berries for the birds," Stefano says. "And they filter the views, not block them; present but not dominant."

Beneath the sculptural bare tree trunks is a dense carpet of plants. Deliberately informal and textured, this is a thoughtful mix of rich flowering bulbs and perennials such as snake's head fritillary, salvia 'Dear Anja' and eryngium 'Blue Hobbit' emerging through lush grasses. Stefano explains, "The various layers of plants are held together by a very important matrix of grasses including autumn moor grass. This allows an evergreen feel to the planting throughout

Make room for beneficial bugs in your plot too, p26

Pear trees

Amelanchier

A JOYFUL JOURNEY

from house to garden end with plenty to pique the interest on the way.



STEEL EDGING

in place, lengths of split slate add texture to the curving path.

the year, suppresses weeds and contributes holding moisture in the ground."

Nearer the house and along the fence, hardy epimedium 'Orange Queen' provides plenty of shady groundcover.

THOUGHTFUL DETAILS

As a terraced property, all materials, plants and furniture had to be transported through the house. "The team at Landscape Associates got everything built and planted for us, taking out removed material and bringing in new stuff through the house with the adequate protection," Stefano explains. "The earth closer to the house had been compacted due to a recent extension so it had to be improved with drainage material mixed in the soil."

Positioned halfway down the garden, a neat dining table and Big Green Egg barbecue nestle in the planting, partly hidden by a log pile and multi-stem amelanchier. Wander further past a series of tactile handmade pots and you come to a comfy grey corner sofa bordered by

PLANT HEAVEN

GENTLY DOES IT with these subtle beauties that catch the sunlight and shiver in the slightest breeze.



Autumn moor grass



Snake's head fritillary



Summer snowflake



Honesty 'Chedglow'



Wood melick



A VIEW TO A
blossom-filled thrill in spring.



The plot is dotted with touch-me textures, including these hand-crafted pots



LOADSA LOGS!

Great for zoning and bug beds too.

Planter, POA, ateliervierkant.com

evergreen layer of moor grass (sesleria) from the inside."

a dramatic bronze water wall, where the owners love to while away the hours.

Looking out from the kitchen today, the vista has been completely transformed. "It was important to filter the view of the furniture from the inside," explains Stefano. "Hence the dining area is in the middle of the garden so during cold months when it's not really usable, you are looking at an

Inviting and full of natural charm, the garden now effortlessly combines practical outdoor living areas with rich seasonal detail that appeals to both the owners and wildlife. Filled with birdsong, insects, butterflies, plus occasional foxes and a hedgehog, it's a far cry from the empty plot it once was.

SMART IDEAS TO STEAL

* **ZONE AREAS** with waves of stacked logs.

* **USE A MIX OF SLATE** to create a textured path.

* **ADD SELF-SEEDING BLOOMS** for an informal vibe.