

spring critters



Step-by-step to a small pond



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

## 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.



'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

the year, suppresses weeds and contributes to holding moisture in the ground." Nearer the house and along the fence, hardy epimedium 'Orange Queen' provides plenty of shady groundcover.

STEEL EDGING

n place, lengths of

to the curving path.

split slate add texture

Make room

for beneficial

bugs in your

plot too, p26

## **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

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

Amelanchier

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

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

A JOYFUL JOURNEY

from house to garden end

with plenty to pique the

interest on the way

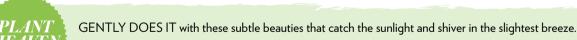
Inviting and full of natural charm, the garden now effortlessly combines practical outdoor living areas with rich seasonal detail that appeals to both the owners and wildlife Filled with birdsong, insects, butterflies, plus occasional foxes and a hedgehog, it's a far cry from the empty plot it once was.

**GARDEN MAKEOVER** 











Autumn moor grass





Planter, POA,

ateliervierkant.com







Honesty 'Chedglow Wood melick

24 MODERN GARDENS MARCH 2024