

Homescape

INTERIOR DESIGN | HOME IMPROVEMENT



Designed For Living:
Creating two rooms that
work together.

3H

GARDEN GETAWAY



PHOTO COURTESY OF RVBOX/GETTY IMAGES

This country garden is a true hideaway meant for relaxing and enjoying nature with a variety of plantings, flower beds, shrubs and a fruit tree. The umbrella, table and chairs, striped lounge chairs and hammock invite visitors to stay a while.

Find peace and privacy in evergreen garden space

Flowering vines add color, enhance architectural detail

By TERI GATTO
SPECIAL TO HOMESCAPE

April was a dreary month — cold, wet and crammed with grim Covid-19 news. By this time most of us are in serious need of a respite and long for a tranquil place to escape, even for a short while, from the realities of our new normal.

Those fortunate enough to have a bit of green space of their own can take advantage of this quarantine vacation to create a secluded spot in their yard where they can read, enjoy a drink, or just zone out.

PLANNING IS KEY

"A garden, especially during this surreal time we are living in, can be a sanctuary," says Cynthia Corhan-Altken, a landscape designer and owner of Twig and Vine Design in Montclair. "Begin by finding a space that speaks to you and start planning."

According to Corhan-Altken, the first thing one should do when planning a garden is to take a walk around the property and find a spot that lends itself to being transformed. If there is no apparent place, then consider creating one with the use of structures such as a trellis, pergola or gazebo.

"Currently, I am working with a small property that contains a driveway

and a garage next to a strip of lawn that ends at a fenced-in playground," she explains. "What I suggested to my clients was to build a pergola up and off the fence, and then plant some shrubs around it, creating a private space at the end of the grass strip."

Once completed, the pergola and surrounding greenery not only create a little oasis in the small yard, they also offer a pleasing view from the house.

Since evergreen shrubs make excellent living screens, Corhan-Altken suggests planting flowering shrubs along with the evergreens so during the winter you still have some green in the garden.

For example, hydrangeas and boxwoods are a good pairing because during the summer the hydrangeas provide color, and they can be pruned down in the winter, so you can enjoy the verdant texture of the boxwood. It is important when choosing plants

that you educate yourself about those you are considering. For example, do they need shade or sun? Will they spread? Will they grow too tall and become unmanageable? Will they attract deer?



PHOTO COURTESY OF GJMCKENDRY/GETTY IMAGES
A classic pergola with colonnade serves as a garden retreat on this larger, well-planting, wooded property.

"There is no such thing as a no-maintenance garden; it can be low-maintenance, but everything needs to be tended to and trimmed and pruned," she adds. "If a plant is not working out, just move it; never be afraid to dig something up and move it."

See GARDEN, Page 4H

No need to travel further than your own backyard

Creative changes can turn yard into destination

By DONNA ROLANDO
SPECIAL TO HOMESCAPE

Although travel expectations for the summer aren't looking too bright right now due to COVID-19 concerns and cancellations, there's no reason not to make enjoyable use of your yard space, if you have some. With a little inspiration, even smaller yards can be quickly transformed into a family getaway or outdoor sanctuary, postponing the need to venture away from home.

Maybe you're new to the backyard scene, or a pro looking to add some amenities to an existing family hot spot. Either way the ideas below can help you unwind in no time — because after all, it is summer.

ALL DECKED OUT

A grassy yard may be great for playing ball, but when it comes to barbecues and lounge chairs, a deck will give your outdoor space a central focus. If you're handy with a shovel, hammer and saw, a platform or "floating" deck can be tackled in a weekend. The DIYer will need



DELPHART/GETTY IMAGES

Anchoring a tall canopy or two is a creative alternative to an umbrella or awning for shade and sun protection.

and lay the planking side by side across the frame for positioning, leaving a screw width of space between each. Adjust the positioning of the overall span if the width of the final plank comes up short near the edge of the frame. A little overhang evenly positioned around the frame can accommodate any needed span adjustment. Then screw down the planking to the frame, making sure to maintain a screw width of space between each plank for drainage. Suggested materials for planking are red cedar (a good choice for less splintering) or southern yellow pine. Also, consider a layer of gravel under the whole platform for drainage and longer life.

If the span is greater than 8 feet, attach two depth-appropriate and evenly spaced crossbeams underneath the decking and anchored to the frame for additional support.

Not so handy? Consider snap-together composite tiles with a sleek wood look that can easily transform a flat concrete patio into an inviting family hangout. One of the brands, NewTechWood, calls it a true day project.

See INSPIRED SPACE, Page 2H

Paths and walkways are integral to landscape

By FRAN DONEGAN
SPECIAL TO HOMESCAPE

Although many people consider them an afterthought, yard and garden pathways add structure to a home landscape. They provide a route to get from the street to the front door, from the back patio to the border garden or from the house to the private sitting area tucked into the corner of the yard.

They can be straight as a plumb line or meander and curve like a woodland stream. Those that are made from natural stone look as though they have always been part of the yard's landscape, and they complement the plantings and structures that are there.

"Walkways make getting where you are going in the garden fun," said Ellen Goldfarb of What's Blooming?, a garden design firm in Bergen County. "Walks are the gardeners' excuse for a leisurely journey from point A to point B."

WALKWAY DESIGN

The design of the walkway, the material used and even its dimensions depend on a path's purpose. A front walkway provides a route from the street to the front door. For a formal entrance, the path is usually straight, although gentle curves are also used, and consists of natural stone cut in precise squares or rectangles, as well as



PHOTO COURTESY OF WHAT'S BLOOMING?

Stepping stones provide dry footing as they meander through a boggy garden planted with irises, grasses, astilbe, sedges, and hosta, which do well in wet growing conditions.

brick and concrete pavers to provide a structured look.

The same is true in a formal garden. The path will be straight with right-angle turns. Some sort of edging will separate the plantings from the walkway. A traditional material, such as brick, bluestone or limestone is often used.

A path that winds its way through a cot-

tage or English garden will be less formal. The plants will spill onto the path. It may consist of large irregular stones with spaces between them. The spaces can be planted with grass or moss or contain gravel or mulch. Often, the stone used for this type of walk is called garden path stone or stepping stones. The large, irregularly shaped pieces provide a casual look.

A vegetable garden with raised beds may have compacted gravel paths. An Asian-style garden may also make use of gravel paths. Asian gardens often include a water feature or a dry stream bed, which is often made of small rounded stones. Both real and dry water features often include large bridge stones as part of the walkway.

Garden paths often include a bench or some type of ornamentation, such as a sculpture, gazebo or a pond or fountain. The seating or ornament can be a stop along the path or it can be the destination at the end of the walk.

The way the path will be used also determines its design. "If people are going to be carrying things, they should not have to worry about watching their steps," said Goldfarb. "So, I might use plain gravel or flat bluestone. But if they want the area to be pretty and want a garden along with the path, I know they will be going slowly, so I will use garden path stone."

WALKWAY MATERIALS

"Bluestone irregular, which has no geometric shape, and bluestone pattern, which are cut into squares and rectangles, are the most popular types in this area," said Chris Nordstrom, sales manager for Wild Stone, a natural stone yard in Great Meadows.

The familiar blue-gray colors of bluestone

See WALKWAYS, Page 2H

YOU CAN BE IN HOMESCAPE!

We invite our readers to submit photos and background information for four of our recurring features:

■ **"MY HOME PROJECT"** — Do you love tackling home improvement challenges? Is it your idea of fun to build shelves, stencil walls or refinish furniture? Maybe you've even renovated a large area on your own! If you can provide a short write up and high quality "before" and "after" photos of one of your projects, we'd like to share them with our readers.

■ **"COMFORT ZONE"** — Do you have a "to-to" or unique space in your home designed to cater to your special interests? It could be a game room, fitness center, workshop, audio room, unique retreat where you indulge in your favorite hobby or just hang out with friends. "Scouting shots" are OK for this feature, because if your room fits our criteria we'll have our photographer photograph the space.

■ **"COLLECTIONS"** or **"FAMILY HEIRLOOMS"** — Are you an ardent collector of interesting items that fit a theme and are integrated into your home décor, or have you discovered a family heirloom that you've restored for display? We'd love to see your collection or learn about your heirloom's special history.

Contact James Emolo
at emolo@northjersey.com.

CUSTOM PUB SPECIALISTS

James Emolo and Joseph Ritacco

NORTH JERSEY MEDIA GROUP
1 Garret Mountain Plaza, PO Box 471
Woodland Park, NJ 07424

**ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT
PRODUCED BY THE ADVERTORIAL
DEPARTMENT OF THE RECORD
AND HERALD NEWS**

To advertise, call 973-569-7800.
For content, call 973-569-7895
or email emolo@northjersey.com

Copyright © 2020 North Jersey Media Group. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission of NJMG is strictly prohibited.

HOME SAFETY

Make home a safer haven this spring

As people become more active during the warmer months, keeping home safety top of mind can sometimes go by the wayside. However, when it comes to fire and carbon monoxide safety, you can never be too prepared.

Whether you are just beginning to take a stronger safety-first approach or looking to upgrade existing home safety equipment, keep these tips in mind as you spruce up your home for the season.

DON'T JUST CHECK BATTERIES.

CHECK THE ALARM

It's a good idea to review your safety equipment and ensure everything is in good working order at least a couple times each year. For example, every type of smoke alarm must be completely replaced every 10 years whether it's hardwired into your home or operates on a battery. New smoke alarms commonly come with built-in 10-year batteries, meaning no battery changes, but it's a good idea to test the units regularly. In fact, most manufacturers recommend weekly. You can also use this time to double-check the gauge on your fire extinguishers, test security systems and replenish first-aid kits.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SMART TECHNOLOGY

According to the National Fire Protection Association, 40 years ago people had an average of 17 minutes to escape a home fire, but today the average has decreased to about 3 minutes due to synthetic materials used in modern-day home furnishings. To get the earliest warning of a home fire, install wire-free interconnected battery-powered combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. When one alarm senses a hazard, all alarms throughout the home sound in unison. Features like color-coded status rings and built-in 10-year sealed batteries make Wire-Free Interconnected Alarms, such as Kidde's, a smart solution for optimal protection. They offer simple setup and operate without the hassle of hardwiring or a Wi-Fi connection.

CHECK APPLIANCES

While going through your spring home safety checklist, take time to check your appliances or schedule an annual maintenance check for your stove, oven, heating system and more. According to the American Red Cross, dryers are responsible

for approximately 9 of every 10 appliance fires. These common household appliances can collect dust, lint and other particles, which are potential fire hazards and can cause carbon monoxide leaks.

KEEP OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES IN MIND

Cooking on grills is a popular pastime, but thousands of people are injured every year while using them. In fact, according to the National Fire Protection Association, nearly 9,000 home fires are started by grills each year. Now is a good time to get your home's grilling area in tip-top shape. Keep a 3-foot safety zone around hot grills for children and pets, and have a multipurpose home fire extinguisher nearby as fires can occur unexpectedly. Propane and charcoal grills both put off carbon monoxide as a byproduct, so be sure keep your grill at least 10 feet from the home and ensure it is positioned away from windows, doors, vents and ductwork.

For more safety tips to better prepare your home, visit Kidde.com.

Provided by Kidde.com
and Family Features

Inspired Space: Turn yard into destination

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1H

its tiles are made of recycled material in a variety of colors like Caribbean Blue.

Another transformation for a patio or deck can be as simple as a coat of paint. Designer Tess Gilliani of her eponymous Ridgewood firm turned a large deck from ordinary to a watery blue with giant kol and lotus flowers, using Sherwin-Williams deck paint. Not that creative? Cording said just painting the patio, perhaps a neutral tan, will cure the concrete blues.

LIGHT UP YOUR LIFE

Not only does lighting set the tone, but "it creates an atmosphere, a nice ambience," said Tomianna Pagano, owner of Any Excuse for a Party in Fairfield. To give your yard a relaxing glow the whole family will enjoy, consider lining the perimeter of the yard with fairy or string lighting and hanging battery-operated lights on your umbrellas. "LED systems are phenomenal," said Cording, adding that a homeowner can easily

See **INSPIRED SPACE**, Page 4H



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAKUB MAZUR/GETTY IMAGES

String lights and creative light fixtures turn this patio into an evening dining experience.

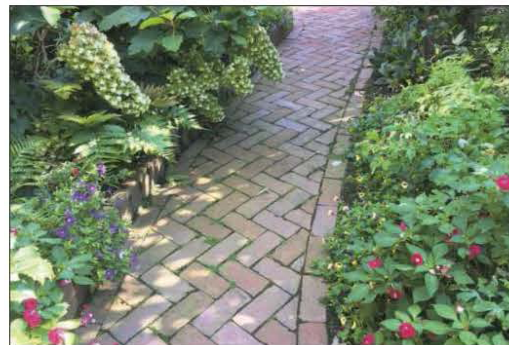


PHOTO COURTESY OF WHAT'S BLOOMING?

This herringbone brick design is almost carpet-like as it defines the edges of the garden.

Walkways: Cost varies based on choice of materials

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1H

can be seen in gardens throughout the area. But the material is also available with rust or tan overtones. Other natural stone products contain reds and greens, as well. You can find stone with either a smooth or a textured surface. A well-stocked stone yard will have a display area to help pick the right stone for your pathway.

Stone is sold on pallets. Wicki distinguishes between horizontal and vertical pallets. Smaller irregularly shaped and cut pieces come on horizontal pallets. Large stone is shipped on vertical pallets. "When we ship, we try to get the stone as close to the worksite as possible," said Nordstrom.

A gravel walk installed will cost about \$3 to \$6 per square foot. A brick or concrete paver path will cost \$5 to \$25 per square foot. A natural stone walk will cost between \$10 and \$30 per square foot, according to Home Advisor, a company that links homeowners with contractors.

WALKWAY INSTALLATION

Most walks are at least 36 inches wide, but to accommodate two people using it at the same time, the walk will be 48 or even 60 inches wide. "But if the walkway is going through a garden, I like to make it as narrow as possible because I don't want to give up garden space. I sometimes go down to 18 inches wide for that type of path," said Goldfarb.

Formal walks are often set in mortar, but

casual paths are often set on a sand base. "People just need to know the dimensions of their path and we can tell them how much stone and base material they will need," said Nordstrom.

If the path will be a DIY project, call 811 before doing anything. It is the national call-before-you-dig number. When you call, you will be put in touch with someone from your local utility who will mark the location of buried utilities.

Once you have the "all clear," start by marking the layout on the ground. You can use two garden hoses to layout curved walks. Run a 2x4 piece of lumber between the hoses so that the width of the path stays constant throughout its length.

If you are using stepping stones lay them out in a dry run. That way you can mark the location of each when it comes time to dig. You will need to dig down the thickness of the stone, usually about 1 1/2 inches plus about 6 inches for the base. With the sod removed, tamp the bare ground. You can use a hand tamper or rent a power tamper for big jobs.

Add about 4 inches of quarry process, which is a mix of small pieces of gravel and stone screenings. Tamp this down as well. Tamping helps prevent heaving when the ground freezes and then thaws. Add a layer of stone dust or sand and then set the stone. Use a rubber mallet to level the stone.

Short casual paths make for a good weekend project, but for larger jobs hire a professional to get the path done right.