



Country life

The relaxed design of the country-style garden offers
the perfect retreat – *by Rami Moorosi*



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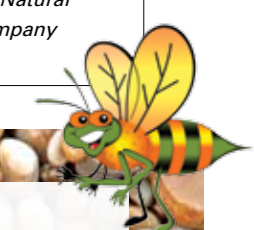


Accessories and hardscaping

Accessorising and hardscaping a country garden is fun as there is hardly any limitation in the way you can furnish or decorate the space. "In terms of furnishing and accessorising a country-style garden, one would choose elements that have a natural finish, such as wrought iron, wood, wicker and railway sleepers. Other materials might include slate, gravel, pebbles or bark chips. Bird baths and natural water features work well with this style of garden, as do bird feeders. For ornamentation, old gardening and farm implements such as ploughs, wheelbarrows and forks make interesting focal points, as do large natural elements such as boulders," says Brandon Mansour, director of Four Seasons Gardens.

As guideline to creating this type of garden Brandon says: "A country garden is meant to recreate nature, so use Mother Nature as your 'blueprint'. Lines in a country garden are soft and flowing. Planting patterns appear random. Make use of bright colours and strong textures. This style is all about organised chaos". 🏡

With thanks to Four Seasons Gardens, JPJ Landscapes, Living Matter - landscape styling and design, Natural Gardening Principles, The Colonial Stone Company and The Friendly Plant



March garden tip:

- Control caterpillars with Eco Insect Control, which is a natural bio-insecticide that is non-toxic to humans.
- Start fertilising the lawns with Wonder Vitaliser All Purpose 3:2:1 (19) + C (8) SR*.
- Prepare bulb beds by digging in old compost and some Wonder Bonemeal.
- Start now with a spray program to control Conifer aphids with Aphicide and Insecticide Granules.

There are many garden design styles to choose from, but the allure of the country garden lies in its informal appearance, which makes use of a variety of elements, such as an abundance of plants, bright colours and various textures.

"Country gardens are synonymous with lots of flowers and a slightly 'wild' element. They have a whimsical feel to them and often include small artworks or objects of interest that add character or a certain quirkiness to the garden. Although country gardens tend to be mostly informal, there are some that include elements of formality by using hedges and other topiary," explains Craig de Necker, the managing director of The Friendly Plant.

Types of gardens

There are different types of country gardens, with the English garden probably the most well known. This is characterised by the use of a variety of rose bushes and other colourful flowering plants. These gardens tend to be very informal and often include hardscape elements such as water features, pathways, statues and benches.

The French country garden is usually characterised by its vast use of lavender and tends to be more formal than its English counterpart. These are more organised in their planting schemes, and have a more "provenance" feel. This country style also includes topiary in the form of hedges and lollipops.

You can also create a country-style garden with a local flair using indigenous and flowering plants. To get a local feel, add a little authenticity to the mix by including decor such as a windmill or farm implements.

Choosing plants and flowers

When it comes to creating this look Cheral Kennedy of Living Matter - landscape styling and design suggests: "Choose a selection of plants that flower predominantly at the same time; plant them in an informal pattern, making sure that the taller plants are placed at the back. Plant complementary flower colours (reds, oranges and yellows or yellows, blues and purples) and then mix white flowers and one other pastel colour into the mix. Let the front plants ramble into the pathway or over straight edges to soften the hard edges and to bring in the country feel."

Judy Panton-Jones, horticulturist/landscape designer of JPJ Landscapes, adds: "A large portion of the plant material would be flowering annuals and perennials, herbs, shrubs, roses, creepers and vegetables – try a mixture ranging from the tallest working your way to the shortest such as hollyhocks, phlox, lupine, roses, heartsease, blue forget-me-nots and daffodils all in profusion and planted behind a low formal boxwood hedge along a pathway – always with a cabbage or two (seemingly there is controlled chaos)."

