

## GREEN

## FINGERS

We ask the experts how to turn your garden into a fantasy of green

Photographs David Lazarus  
Make-up Infidels

[ASK THE EXPERTS]







ROGER CODRAI

## INTERPLANT HORTICULTURE

**How did you get into your line of business?** Given the task of gardening at school as a punishment, I discovered a love and passion for the work. After spending many years in the industry, I opened my own company.

**Tell us about your business – what you do, what you sell, etc.** Interplant designs, creates and maintains outdoor spaces – we do everything from greening new large-scale developments to detailed projects for individual homeowners.

**What type of people use your services?** Developers and individuals who value quality, and want to have an ongoing relationship with their gardens.

**Are there specific trends for summer?** The cutting edge, I believe, is the blurring of the distinction between indoor and outdoor spaces – swap a plain plastered wall for a living wall, for example. Water-wise is still key, but by now that's a given. Composters and bio-digesters are becoming popular, but I do hope this isn't a trend – we need to recycle.

**What are the advantages of using your products/services?** Interplant has a well-developed network of suppliers. We offer consultations and hone all ideas and budgets until needs are met. When you deal with us, you communicate with the owner of the company, not a manager. We guarantee our workmanship and we deliver on time.

**What advice can you give homeowners relating to their gardens/entertainment areas?** Avoid thatched braai laps, garden gnomes and invasive alien plants!

**What value will your service/products give to a property?** Landscaping should be viewed as an investment, not a cost. We create and fulfil our clients' visions. The process is always an education for all concerned.

**Do you have a particular design or signature that people associate with your work?** Each space calls for a fresh idea; we try to avoid formulas, but workmanship, attention to detail and follow-up set us apart. However, we're strong advocates of using indigenous, and therefore water-wise, plants.



+27 (0)21 461 2543 | roger@interplant.co.za



ALAN DAWSON

## ALAN DAWSON GARDENS

**How did you get into your line of business?** While doing my two-year national service, I decided to study horticulture like my older brother and business partner, Marc, who was completing his horticultural studies. I was awarded a bursary from Spoorbet for my studies. I left Cape Town and attended the Spoorbet Horticultural College in Meerhof, just outside Pretoria. After that I enrolled for a National Diploma in Horticulture at the Cape Technikon. I took extra subjects in the National Diploma in Landscape Technology. After my studies I started working to pay back my bursary, but was offered a package to leave when Spoorbet was restructured. I started our business in 1994 with my wife, Paula, who's also a horticulturist.

**Tell us about your business – what you do, what you sell, etc.** We specialise in landscaping domestic gardens, although we also do commercial landscaping from time to time. We landscape different sizes of gardens, from small courtyards to private estates. We do our own in-house landscape design as well as implement gardens designed by other landscape architects and designers. We offer a complete landscape service, from design to completion.

**What type of people use your services?** Our services are used by an array of people, from private homeowners wanting to beautify and enhance their properties, and residential and commercial developers wanting to add value to properties prior to sale or rental, to schools and preschools wanting to create garden areas for the kids.

**Are there specific trends for summer?** We're noticing that more people wish to have a herb or vegetable garden incorporated into their garden design. We're also planting up a lot more indigenous gardens. There's a huge amount of indigenous plants available and the growers are constantly providing landscapers with new plant material.

**What are the advantages of using your products/services?** We have been in operation for 15 years, landscaping gardens all over Cape Town. We have well-qualified, hard-working and understanding staff who ensure that our clients' needs and wants are met. Over the years we've won numerous SALI awards for landscaping. We are creative yet practical and ensure that our clients are left satisfied at the end of a project. We have good plant knowledge and understand plants' requirements.



+27 (0)21 762 9595 | www.alandawsongardens.co.za



NOREEN DE WET

## PENINSULA LANDSCAPING

**Tell us about your business – what you do, what you sell, etc.** My husband Colin and I started our business in 1992 and since then we have been involved primarily in commercial landscaping, working in conjunction with landscape architects on projects like wineries and housing complexes as well as retail centres like Century City, Pick n Pay head office, and Croydon Olive Estate. In the last couple of years we have broadened our scope of work to include the residential market, and in conjunction with Viridian Consulting Landscape Architects, we were involved in a large landscaping project for Ina Paarman. We have recently set up a commercial maintenance division.

**What type of people use your services?** We work with landscape architects, developers and homeowners – anyone who needs a reliable landscaper!

**Are there specific trends for summer?** Always! But the main trend in landscaping is the move towards planting indigenous water-wise plants and trees to create a holistic ecosystem in which micro-fauna, such as butterflies, birds, frogs and so on, can thrive. Incorporating vegetables into urban gardens has also increased recently, especially in these difficult economic times.

**What are the advantages of using your products/services?** We are a family-run business with the ability to implement large contracts and offer hands-on service. We have a very low staff turnover and our core team is made up of fathers, sons and other family members who have worked with us for many years. We have also empowered landscaping teams that now subcontract to us. Our office administrator, Tracey Slabbert, runs a tight ship, providing good support and enabling work on site to run smoothly and cost-effectively.

**What value will your service/products give to a property?** Landscaping creates a sanctuary of calm away from the stresses of everyday life. It enhances the visual aspect of your property and often creates the first impression. A garden area that is well designed and integrated with the whole property will increase the resale value of your property.

**Do you have a particular design or signature that people associate with your work?** Our work is as varied as the projects, landscape architects and individuals we work with. We aim to interpret our clients' requirements and incorporate a simple, elegant style with large groupings of selected species.



+27 (0)21 715 7046 | penland@saol.com



CHERAL KENNEDY

## LIVING MATTER – LANDSCAPE STYLING AND DESIGN

**How did you get into your line of business?** I did a lot of soul-searching in my late 20s to decide what I was passionate about and what type of business I wanted to be a part of. While being an artistic, outdoor person and avid nature lover, it just made sense to merge design and outdoors. With the skills and experience I'd gained working in a corporate environment, I was confident that I could run my own business successfully, so I packed up the fast-paced life I was leading and started my own landscape styling and design company called Living Matter.

**Tell us about your business – what you do, what you sell, etc.** Living Matter is a creative landscape design studio focusing primarily on designing and styling unique landscapes (2-D and 3-D) for corporate and upmarket residential clients in the Western Cape. We also oversee the implementation process (using our network of highly qualified, quality and service-orientated partners) to ensure the design is implemented consistently and successfully.

**What types of people use your services?** Upmarket residential homeowners, property developers, outdoor-living installers (for example, decking), landscapers and architects.

**Are there specific trends for summer?** Our clients are moving towards outdoor living areas with simple, relaxing lines. The energy of the space is light, natural and refreshing. The style has gone back to basics. And definitely green.

**What are the advantages of using your services?** Our designs aren't limited to any specific style, or tried-and-tested products in the market, or what the client can conceive. We are limitless in our designs concepts, out-the-box thinkers and trendsetters. We design. Our partners implement. Each person concentrates on their areas of expertise, ensuring that the final landscape is of a high standard of quality and is at the forefront of creativity.

**What advice can you give homeowners relating to their gardens/entertainment areas?** Plan first! With a budget and a professional design, you can save money.

**What value will your service/products give to a property?** A well-designed and implemented landscape can increase a property's value by up to 20 per cent, depending on the extent and quality of workmanship included in it.



+27 (0)82 825 0982 | www.livingmatter.co.za







**STEVE LONGMAN**  
**LONGMANS LANDSCAPING**

**How did you get into your line of business?** Whilst studying for my National Diploma in Horticulture at Cape Technikon, I spent the first practical portion of the course at a local garden nursery. The customers would often require a planting service, and as we had no landscaping portion to the business, the nursery owner would refer customers to me. I was required to complete a further six months practical portion at the end of the three-year course, and I told my lecturer that I'd be starting my own landscaping business. With compost, tools and a couple of workers packed into my Mom's old Merc, we set off to create gardens! Steady growth necessitated me taking on a partner in 2006, and since then the business has grown exponentially.

**Tell us about your business – what you do, what you sell, etc.** We offer a range of landscaping and horticultural services, from evaluating the initial site and garden design to itemised costings, selecting suitable plants, installing irrigation and implementing our landscape designs. We follow this up with a seasonal maintenance service, where we care for the garden and carry out the required pruning, composting and fertilizing to ensure that your investment is well looked after.

**What type of people use your services?** I meet such a variety of interesting people every day in my business and this is probably the biggest positive of being a landscaper. Many of my clients have been with me for most of the 10 years I've been in operation. They range from residential clients with a small courtyard garden to architects, builders, project managers, large property developers and office-construction companies.

**What value will your service/products give to a property?** Our clients generally want to have their gardens properly landscaped to enhance their homes. The garden has become an extension to the house and most clients request that the layout is practical, often low-maintenance, water-wise and able to be used by both adults and children alike. Once we have completed the landscaping and achieved their requirements, there's a practical and financial value that has been added to the property – plus our clients are happy with the result.



+27 (0)82 898 4681 | [www.longmans.co.za](http://www.longmans.co.za)



**MARLENE LOUBSER**  
**ML HORTICARE**

**How did you get into your line of business?** Gardening has always been my passion and hobby and it eventually became my career. I'm a qualified horticulturist and plant breeder. I started my career as a project manager on a production farm for fresh-cut roses. Then, wishing to broaden my horizons, I worked in Holland, which was a great learning curve and experience. On my return to SA, Christo Wiese needed a horticulturist to maintain and improve his grounds on the estate at the Lanzerac Hotel in Stellenbosch. I took the job as general ground manager and horticulturist, and worked there for three years. After that, I started my own landscape business and acquired my first big contract to landscape all public open spaces and wetlands for Boschenmeer Golf Estate. Other projects followed, and the rest is history...

**Tell us about your business – what you do, what you sell, etc.** The business is about designing external spaces. Ensuring that land, water, built environment and views combine to form an integral and harmonic part of your development, estate or land. We supply the complete gardening solution, from the design to soil preparation, building of fountains, water features and curbs as well as the installation of irrigation systems and the planting of trees and shrubs.

**What type of people use your services?** Mostly property developers and also homeowners.

**Are there specific trends for summer?** I think the water-wise way is mainstream. The strategic planting of deciduous trees around your home can reduce your need for central air conditioning. A quick-growing climbing vine on a lattice or trellis is also an excellent natural shade device, especially for patio areas. A specific garden area for kids is a priority. With the trend of buying more local produce, you can't get more local than growing your own herbs, vegetables and fruit.

**What are the advantages of using your products/services?** Gardens, courtyards, water features, terraces, pools, pergolas and fences enrich and complement the interior spaces of your property. Our products/services are of a very high standard; we use only the best-quality products, from irrigation through to disease-free plant material. We place great emphasis on soil preparation and fertilization, as this forms the foundation of creating healthy plants that will create a beautiful garden.



+27 (0)82 898 9187 | [mloubser@telkomsa.net](mailto:mloubser@telkomsa.net)



**COLIN PRIEM**  
**THE GREEN PERSPECTIVE**

**How did you get into your line of business?** I've always had an interest in nature. I started a gardening company 20 years ago as it was something different to do, and the business grew from there.

**Tell us about your business – what you do, what you sell, etc.**

We design, build and maintain award-winning gardens.

**What type of people use your services?**

Our clients include corporates, hotels, wine estates, universities, property developers, housing estates, construction companies and owners of upmarket homes.

**Are there specific trends for summer?**

Landscaping and gardening is a year-round activity. However, in the hot summer months one focuses on the efficient use of a very precious resource: water. A water-wise garden using plants suitable for our local climate assists us in cutting down on the excessive use of water.

**What are the advantages of using your products/services?**

We develop, design, install and maintain water-wise gardens and/or landscapes using mostly indigenous plant materials and efficient watering systems, like drip irrigation.

**What advice can you give homeowners relating to their gardens/entertainment areas?**

Gardens and entertainment areas should be an integral part of the house. Correct landscape design will assist the homeowner in utilising areas outside effectively for entertainment and relaxation.

A landscape design should ideally form part of the initial design brief when designing a house, just as interior design does.

**What value will your service/products give to a property?**

It should add at least five per cent to the property value.

**Do you have a particular design or signature that people associate with your work?**

'Natural' is the word I would use to describe our landscape designs.



+27 (0)21 531 9329 | [www.greenperspective.co.za](http://www.greenperspective.co.za)



**JASON TURNER**  
**ARG DESIGN**

**How did you get into your line of business?** I started off in dairy farming, but quickly realised I was in the wrong 'field'. I then studied horticulture, found my passion in landscaping, specifically in design, and made a conscious decision to focus my energies on developing my design aspect.

**Tell us about your business – what you do, what you sell, etc.**

Our business is landscape architecture and design. We design the interface between built environment (anything constructed) and the surrounding landscape. Our company's vision is, 'Creating Inspirational, Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Settlements and Buildings'. Finding sustainable solutions and using them in the developments we do is central to our approach. 'Sustainability' is a word you hear a lot these days. In our world it means looking at the biosphere as a complex interrelationship and cycle as opposed to a commodity. We strive to support and enhance this interrelationship and the marriage of building and landscape.

**What type of people use your services?** Property developers, State and parastatal bodies, local councils, private companies, farms, blue-chip residential developments and private homeowners. Ours is an enormous field with a broad range of services.

**Are there specific trends for summer?** As of July, we officially headed into a drought cycle with an El Niño oscillation having been identified, so thoughts are turning to water scarcity and how best to prepare for that. Building buffer capacity within our landscapes is now a priority. This is an unfolding process and some progressive thinkers are embracing it faster than others.

**What are the advantages of using your products/services?**

A beautiful environment makes your property more attractive than your competitor's. This translates into money, be that ROI in sales, rental or foot traffic. Buffering capacity can protect both your building and landscaping investment from damage. Research supports this. Research also supports that a natural environment reduces crime, violence, depression and vandalism. It is also proven to help with concentration and a sense of wellbeing. We are BEE-rated as a Level Two company. Everyone is concerned about saving the planet right now, but unsure of how to make a meaningful difference. Recreating a functioning biosphere within your local environment is possibly the single most important contribution you can make. We can show you how.



+27 (0)21 448 2666 | [www.argdesign.co.za](http://www.argdesign.co.za)





## [ASK THE EXPERTS]



DEON VAN EEDEN

## VULA ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

**How did you get into your line of business?** I studied horticulture and then fine arts, majoring in Sculpture – this introduced me to environmental art. I then worked for a number of leading landscape architects and landscaping contractors until we formed Vula in 1999. We now work from Alexander Bay all the way to Agulhas.

**Tell us about your business – what you do, what you sell, etc.** We focus on the design and construction of ecologically balanced and sustainable landscapes. On the industrial side, we do mine rehabilitation and dune reclamation as well as golf estates and shopping centres. We grow local indigenous plants and supply bulk seed for rehabilitation and hydro-seeding. We also install irrigation systems, control alien vegetation and stabilise erosion in degraded environments.

**What type of people use your services?** Our client base includes private individuals, property developers, mining companies, civil contractors and municipalities.

**Are there specific trends for summer?** Summer trends? No, we don't do those – we develop landscapes that integrate people's living spaces back into nature. That is not a short-term trend at all.

**What are the advantages of using your products/services?** The landscapes we create are sustainable, ecologically sound, and good for you and our planet. This type of garden is very economical in both the short and long term. We offer a scientific approach to landscaping, not just short-lived seasonal colour.

**What advice can you give homeowners relating to their gardens/entertainment areas?** Manage your garden as an ecosystem and not as a one-off 3-D painting. It will reward you for years to come.

**What value will your service/products give to a property?** Good conceptual basics, appropriate design and thorough construction are as important for a building as proper foundations. You can rely on this for years to come to enhance the appearance and experience of your external living space.

**Do you have a particular design or signature that people associate with your work?** We pioneered the crossover trend that brought natural wild gardens into the suburbs. Our landscapes are appropriate to local climatic conditions and living ecosystems.



+27 (0)82 564 5748 | admin@vula.biz



LEON WAGENAAR

## LEON WAGENAAR LANDSCAPE DESIGN

**How did you get into your line of business?** Even though I started out in the engineering business, I've always had a passion for gardens and garden design. It was only after 15 years in engineering that I decided I had to follow my dream. I attended some courses at Lifestyle College and that was the beginning of my landscaping business – I've never looked back since.

**Tell us about your business – what you do, what you sell, etc.** In the business, I utilise design together with hardscape implementation to create unique and individualistic gardens. My main aim is to turn my clients' dreams into reality. I also specialise in designing koi ponds and water features.

**What type of people use your services?** My clientele is made up of various types of people, from corporate businesses to individual homeowners.

**Are there specific trends for summer?** Summer trends include gardens with a strong visual impact, ones that are low on maintenance and look good all year round. Various garden art and outdoor sculptures feature strongly this year. Well-designed water features always leave a good impression in any garden.

**What are the advantages of using your products/services?** Quality service and good value for money leave me with a satisfied customer, which is my main aim. This is also the reason that I receive great repeat business from all my clients.

**What advice can you give homeowners relating to their gardens/entertainment areas?** Homeowners should see their gardens as an outdoor extension of their indoor living space. Therefore, they need to invest in an established landscaper with a good reputation and good references.

**What value will your service/products give to a property?** Remember, a garden always creates a first impression of any house. A well-designed garden not only enhances a home, it also enhances the soul, and will ensure a good return on your investment.

**Do you have a particular design or signature that people associate with your work?** Each garden should be an individual creation, as each client has his or her own preference and tastes. All the gardens that I've created are unique.



+27 (0)76 141 4996 | +27 (0)82 521 4508



KATHRYN WAIT

## LAVENDER &amp; THYME LANDSCAPING

**How did you get into your line of business?** It's my mom's fault, really! She seeded my passion for gardening when I was young and I've always had 'green fingers'. Later I discovered that I also have an eye for design.

**Tell us about your business – what you do, what you sell, etc.** We are based in Tokai and we specialise in designing and installing upmarket residential gardens in Cape Town's southern suburbs. We manage all stages of the installation process, from planning through to completion, including specialised maintenance afterwards. We also offer project management of all aspects of the 'outside space', from site excavation, tree felling, irrigation, water features, paving and wooden decking to the installation of swimming pools, tennis courts and cricket pitches.

**What type of people use your services?** Some of our clients approach us to revamp their existing gardens and other clients are starting from scratch, having just built or renovated their homes. We cater for all garden styles, from classic French and English country gardens to contemporary, indigenous and water-wise gardens, so we appeal to anyone who is looking for a quality service.

**Are there specific trends for summer?** 'Purple and white' continues to be a firm favourite, but people are tending to want more colour in their gardens. People continue to seek primarily low-maintenance gardens with water-wise plants, but they are definitely looking for something stylish at the same time.

**What are the advantages of using your products/services?** We strive to accurately interpret the vision that our clients have for their homes and gardens, then we tailor this around the practical parameters and their budgets. Each garden is unique – we pride ourselves on the quality of our work and attention to detail. I'm very dedicated and passionate about my gardens and have a hands-on approach. It's truly wonderful to spend time creating things of beauty and then to come back and see how the gardens have flourished and filled out over time!

**What advice can you give homeowners relating to their gardens/entertainment areas?** It's important to consider the garden as an extension of the living space; the garden should be tailored towards the family's lifestyle requirements. It's important to have a good flow from the entertainment areas out to the garden and the garden should frame these areas in an inviting way.



+27 (0)82 777 7166 | www.lavenderandthyme.com

The wallpaper for the Landscapers photo shoot was kindly sponsored by Hertex Fabrics. Turn to page 12 to win your own!

