

EXCLUSIVE: MEET OUR 10 RISING STARS OF DESIGN p22

TRADITIONAL HOME[®]

May 2015

spring
fresh &
fabulous

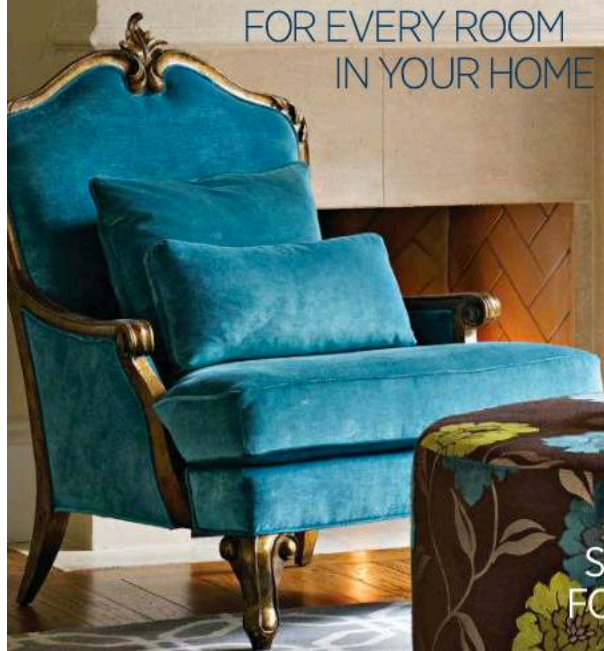
BE INSPIRED!

DECORATING IDEAS
FOR EVERY ROOM
IN YOUR HOME

COLOR
SET A RESTFUL
MOOD WITH
SILVERY BLUES
p44

WHAT MAKES
DREW BARRYMORE
TRADITIONAL?
p144

16
STYLISH STRATEGIES
FOR A CLUTTER-FREE
KITCHEN AND BATH





Coneflower Striking notes of floral color enliven the deeper hues of foliage in the small gardens.
Steps to patio A graceful stone stairway topped with slate steps leads from the lawn and garden on the north side of the house to an intimate patio.

set in
STONE

CHARMING SMALL
GARDENS ENCIRCLE
AN ARCHITECTURAL
GEM IN VIRGINIA

WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY MARTY ROSS PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROB CARDILLO





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mall gardens call for special attention to detail. When there's not much room to work with, you have to get it right.

Mary Bacon and John Crowder found intimate garden spaces with lots of potential surrounding the Richmond, Virginia, home they purchased 15 years ago. The house itself was a prize, one of four in the community designed in the 1920s by renowned architect Ernest Flag, whose work includes the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. But the lovely stone home was almost lost behind overgrown boxwoods. "You couldn't even see the house from the street," Mary says. "The boxwoods had to go, and we didn't know what to do."

Even though Mary grew up gardening with her mother a couple hours away in Norfolk, she knew the jumbled landscaping around their new home called for professional help. A friend introduced Mary and John to Meg Turner, a local landscape designer, and together they reclaimed the garden, step by step.

They started in the front, where Turner designed a new entrance courtyard paved with slate, complementing the rough-hewn stone construction of the home. She and Mary chose a planting palette that, like the house itself, was understated. A pair of handsome 'Natchez' crape myrtles, which produce great clouds of white blossoms at midsummer, anchor the courtyard. A couple of dramatic blue-glazed pots planted with neatly trimmed boxwoods stand on either side of the portico, which is covered with an evergreen akebia vine. In the spring, ivory-colored flowers blossom on the vine, and early-blooming white azaleas planted at the base of the crape myrtles add even more soft color.





Back patio A table and chairs make the back patio a perfect place to dine or just linger. Slate paving stones are laid out in a formal pattern here.

Chaises on the lawn The newest garden area encompasses a swath of lawn bordered by perennials and shrubs. The owners move the seating to take advantage of seasonal sun or shade.

Homeowner and designer Mary Bacon (right) and garden designer Meg Turner with the family's dog, Sophie.

Entrance courtyard A crazy-quilt pattern of slate complements the house's stonework and makes an intriguing contrast to the symmetry of the design and plantings. Three sides of the house wrap around the space.

Hydrangea In June, each blossom of a lace-cap hydrangea is a burst of blue.

Wildlife welcome A birdbath tucked into a flower bed invites feathered friends for a sunny splash.



Side door Instead of removing a huge old boxwood obscuring part of the side entry, homeowner John Crowder limbed it up. **Flower spikes** In June, hostas bloom in a shady spot. **Stone seat** Handsome stonework in the garden matches the home's design. On the terrace along the top of the stone wall, perfectly pruned boxwoods and a Japanese maple form a backdrop for the built-in seating. **Official greeter** Sophie waits on the patio amid potted annuals.



The couple's one-story home is an example of Flagg's abiding interest in small-scale residential architecture and energy efficiency. "We don't care to have a big house," Mary says, but she and John did decide to enlarge it somewhat, adding a family room on the north side that overlooks the garden and claiming a little more space for the kitchen.

As welcome as the seamless stone-finished addition was, it ate up a bit of the garden. And a side door opening out of the new room "flummoxed" her at first, Turner says. "But sometimes your challenges become opportunities," she adds. She realized the door could serve perfectly as the defining apex of a comfortable garden space that focused on a wide stone seat built into an arc of low stone wall.

The wall strongly echoes the home's architecture and formally embraces the intervening oasis of lawn. On the terrace along the top of the wall and in beds in front of it that circle the new garden room,

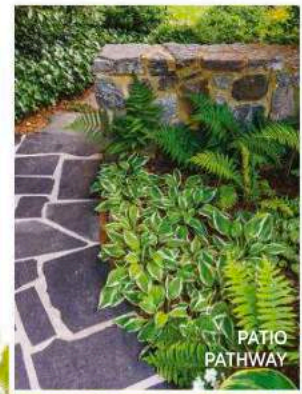
trimmed boxwoods, billowing hydrangeas, and long-blooming perennial flowers add rich layers of texture and splashes of color.

Turner worked with Mary and John on one section of the garden at a time. "Most properties are more clear-cut" and call for a master plan, she says, but here the garden plan evolved as the family reclaimed spaces around the house. For example, just outside the back door, the property extends only about 15 feet. There was little privacy, and drainage problems limited the area's usefulness. Turner solved the drainage issue and turned the narrow strip into a cozy patio paved with slate. Tall hollies behind it provide privacy, and plantings of ferns, variegated hostas, and smooth hydrangeas in the shade of native eastern red cedar trees emphasize the patio's woody quietness and intimacy.

As the garden developed, Mary and John contributed their own touches, adding favorite plants and working with Turner to fine-



STONE SEAT




PATIO PATHWAY



POP OF PINK: PENTA

tune the spaces and link them together. “We’re constantly editing and adding and changing things here or there,” Mary says.

Each space stands on its own, distinguished by changes of level from one garden area to the next and subtle differences in the style of patios and paths. On the other hand, repeated use of some plants and materials throughout the small gardens brings a sense of unity.

Just a few plants from the original landscaping remain, including an enormous boxwood at the side entrance to the home. John, an expert gardener himself, decided to limb the 20-foot specimen up like a tree, exposing a surprisingly graceful structure of slender trunks hidden in the old overgrown shrub. His artful work rescued the plant, and it occupies a place of particular distinction in this carefully structured and polished garden—bringing the taming of the boxwoods full circle. 

Landscape designer: Meg Turner **For more information, see sources on page 136**

Details

WHERE Richmond, Virginia

CONDITIONS A small house on a large lot with intimate, carefully defined garden rooms surrounding it

HIGHLIGHTS Elegant stonework in the garden echoes the style of the home and gives even the newly designed spaces a feeling of maturity. Every window in the house provides garden views.



GARDEN WINDOW