

WOODLAND *Wonderland*

Living on the edge of a woodland sounds like a fairytale setting, but this month's challenge places a thoroughly modern house sympathetically within natural surroundings

the CHALLENGE

The design challenge for this month's garden was to create a smooth transition between a very modern home and almost wild surroundings. We had to fuse ultra chic, modern living spaces with the eco-zone that adjoins the property on two sides.

the SOLUTION

The secret of creating cohesion between two apparent opposites lies in layering unifying details within the design framework, which may not be obvious. The result is that the overall impression provides an unexpected thrill, but does not disturb the experience of the viewer.

When looking at the house, the background is viewed simultaneously with the foreground at any given viewing angle. The first design consideration was to acknowledge the background. In this instance the approach to this modern house called for an equally sleek frame. The architectural details of the house play on textures with stainless steel fittings, red face brick detail and textured paint finishes. The variation in texture is repeated in the design of the entrance garden.



a graceful

ENTRANCE

The planting palette of the entrance garden comprises a variety of ornamental grasses and miniature flaxes with bold tree aloes as accent plants. Burgundy *Phormium* 'Rubra nana' hints at the colour of the face brick and contrasts beautifully with yellow *Acorus* and dark green mondo grass.

Stainless steel pots planted with euphorbia repeat the material choice of the light fittings of the house. The unusual shape of the euphorbia engages the interest of the visitor and orange hues subtly enhance the face brick.



the outside

INSIDE

The main garden contains a contemporary style pool house and a slim, rectangular lap pool. Ceiling to floor walls of glass permit a full visual embrace of the surrounding woodland from all the main living areas of the house.

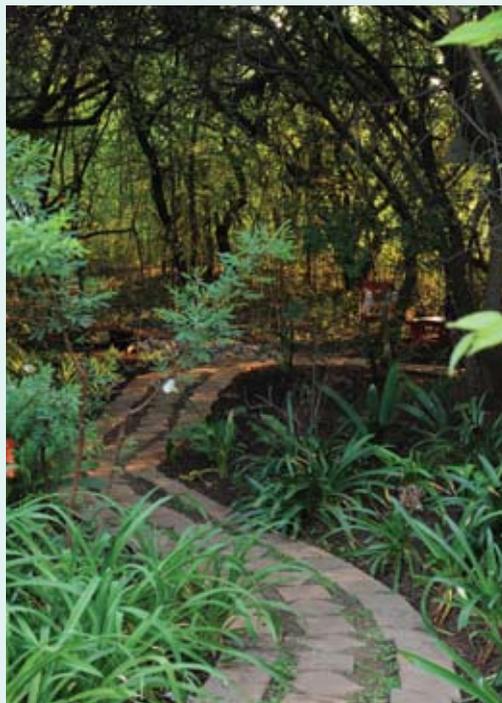


design

UNITY

The lawn meets the house without interruption in a deliberate design decision. The garden's ground pattern and the outer edge of the lawn associate with the architectural lines of the house and create cohesion. Indigenous plant material links with the natural setting effectively. *Agapanthus*, *Scabiosa*, *Diascia* and miniature day lilies provide no-fuss colour in a more detailed foreground planting.

The freehand aspect of nature's way is mimicked by detailed foreground planting giving way to mass plantings deeper into the woodland. It is therefore difficult to tell where the garden ends as the borrowed woodland simply becomes part of the owner's space. Neutral colours from within the residence and the pool house repeat in the colour choice of the lawn edging and choice of stepping blocks.





happily EVER AFTER

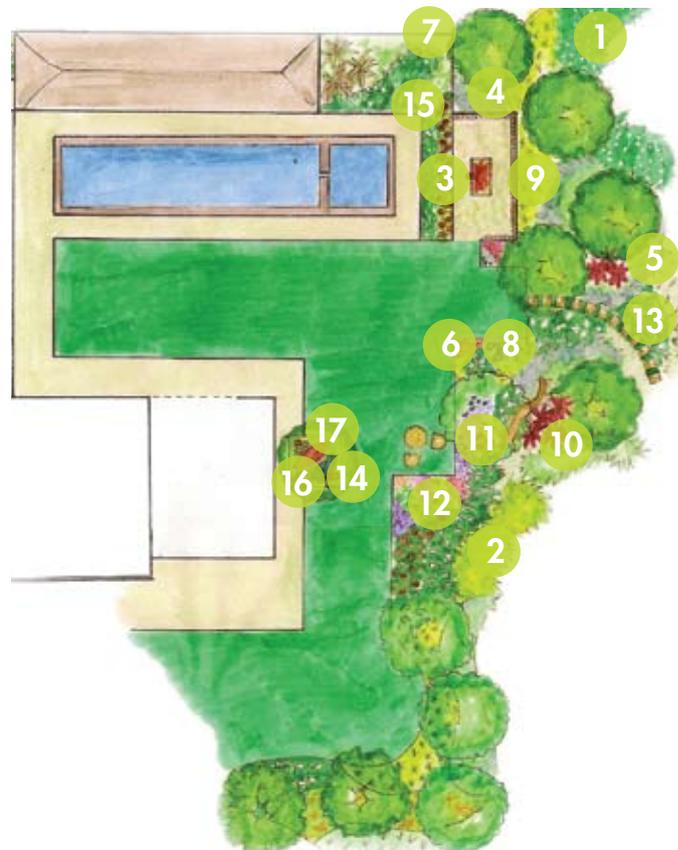
Al fresco meals can be enjoyed in comfort alongside the pool. A couch in this area caters for the obligatory post-prandial nap or simply to stretch out to enjoy a good book or a cup of coffee.

A reed-enclosed boma alongside the woodland provides a true bush experience. A raised fire pit ensures comfort in an intimate outdoor corner. A shy path slinks

past the boma and meanders through the woodland's edge to a children's picnic hideaway. This sets the stage for a teddy bears' picnic around a small wooden table in the heart of the woods.

In this space you have one foot in the city and one in the bush, and at any given moment you can immerse yourself in either. Talk about having your cake and eating it!

Top tip: Contrast is most effective when managed sensitively without compromising boldness. Do not be blatant just for the sake of it.



PLANT LIST

1. *Diets grandiflora*
2. *Diets bicolor*
3. *Hemerocallis* sp.
4. *Agapanthus praecox*
5. *Ophiopogon jaburan* 'Vittatus'
6. *Diascia barbarae*
7. *Carex* 'Frosty Curl'
8. *Scabiosa columbaria*
9. *Acorus gramineus* 'Ogon'
10. *Phormium tenax* 'Rubra nana'
11. *Nemesia* sp.
12. *Bellis perennis*
13. *Zantedeschia aethiopica*
14. *Clivia miniata*
15. *Ophiopogon japonicus*
16. *Plectranthus* 'Mona lavender'
17. *Viola hederacea*
18. *Erigeron karvinskianus*