

A dramatic transformation

Do not be daunted by big changes in the garden – it can lead to a whole new space to enjoy!

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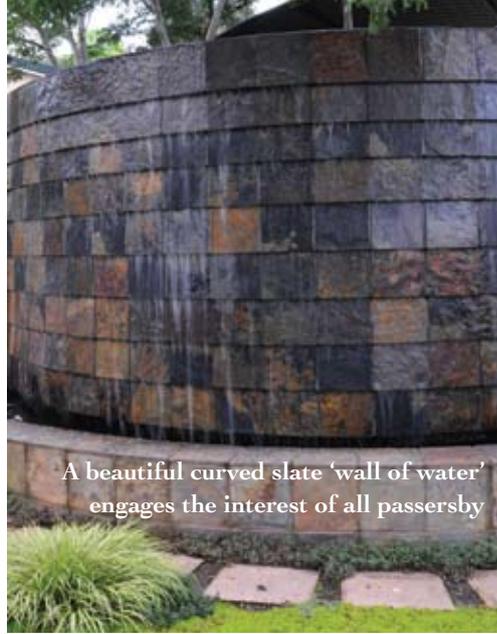
ny substantial change in a garden brings joy, and some exceed all expectation.

This month's garden is just such a case. The initial canvas consisted of an open, dry, sun-baked courtyard between the house and the garages. It was enclosed on both ends with brick walls edged on top by an old-fashioned checkerboard pattern, complete with small, unsightly burglar bars to the side.

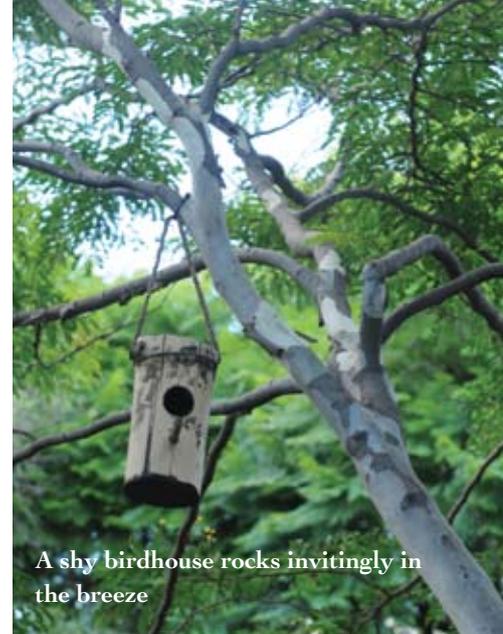
Although of a wonderfully generous dimension, the space was too hot to use. The outside of the courtyard forms part of the front façade of the house and was of course, equally uninspiring. The courtyard represented an ideal area for private entertaining, as the house also accommodates a business for which the rest of the garden caters, but that left the homeowner without adequate private entertaining facilities.

WISH LIST

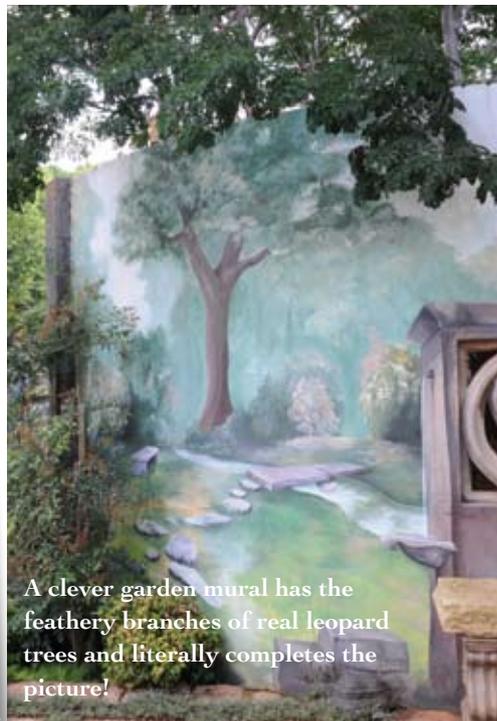
- Cool the area down and provide shelter by enclosing it
- Create the illusion of being in the garden instead of in a courtyard
- Maintain the security of the space
- Provide interesting features to direct attention away from unevenly plastered walls
- Improve the outer facade facing the street front
- Incorporate the soothing sound of running water to create a tranquil atmosphere, and also to psychologically 'cool' the area



A beautiful curved slate 'wall of water' engages the interest of all passersby



A shy birdhouse rocks invitingly in the breeze



A clever garden mural has the feathery branches of real leopard trees and literally completes the picture!

THE SOLUTION

Facilitating shelter: Fitting a flat roof would have created a dreadful 'boxed in on all sides' experience. A domed, 'floating' roof provides an airy space with light streaming in literally on all sides.

Creating a green space: To enable the creation of a courtyard garden and also to break the straight visual line of the front façade of the house, a curved wall was built on the street end of the courtyard.

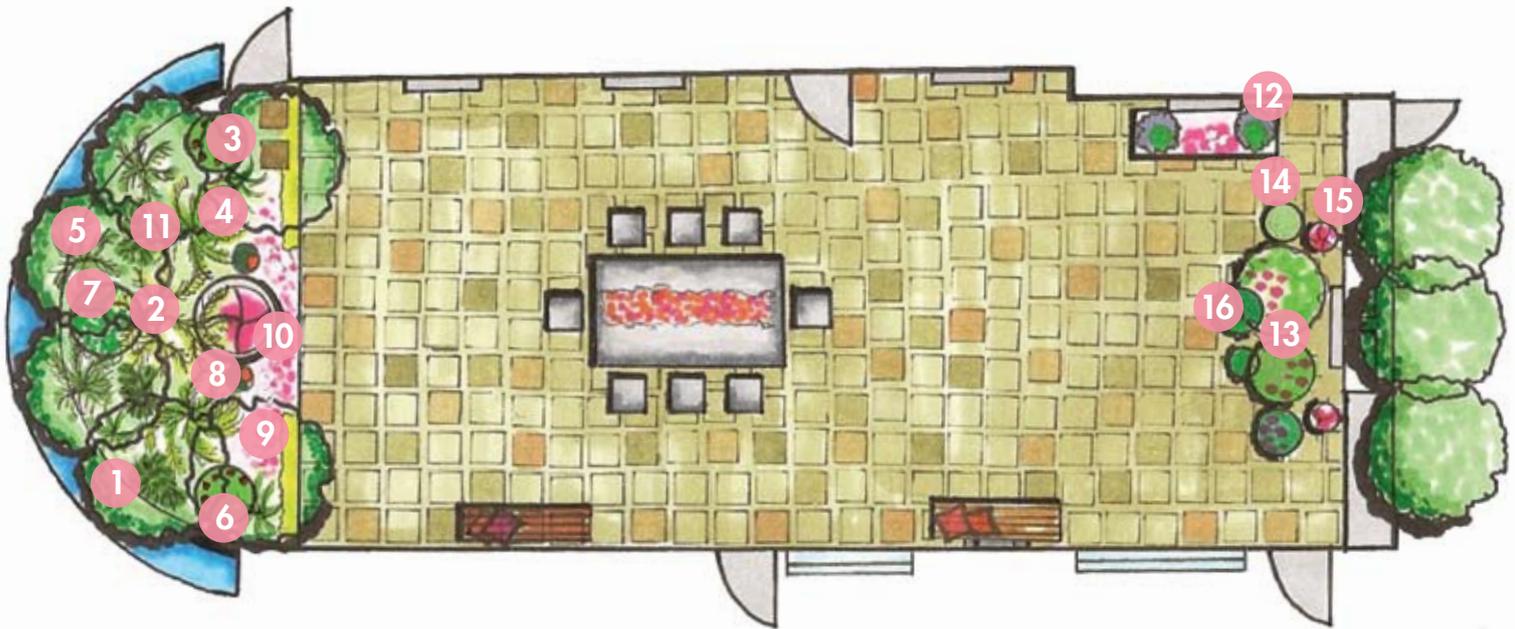
Cool soothing water: The curved wall was designed to facilitate a cascading wall of water on the outside: the water runs down artfully angled slate tiles into a narrow trough below. This not only provides a dramatic focal point to enhance the curb appeal of the residence, but also provides the soothing sound of running water. The water can also be heard on the inside of the courtyard, creating a sense of mystery.

Linking the courtyard with the outer garden: A side section of the outer wall was painted with a garden scene mural, which has the tops of the trees deliberately omitted. The picture is completed by the foliage of a cluster of leopard trees on the inside cheekily hanging over the wall.

To continue the sense of a 'wrap-around' garden, leopard trees have also been planted on the outside of the opposing courtyard perimeter.

Variety and interest: Tree ferns, *Clivia*, arum lilies, holy bamboo, asparagus ferns and colourful impatiens provide a lush planting palette underneath the leopard





trees' beautiful dappled shade.

A classic wishing well base had a wrought iron 'crown' designed for it, with an ornamental cross on top. Cheerful double impatiens smile up at you from this unusual planter:

Security: Decorative lattice wrought iron access gates that provide the necessary security without compromising aesthetics.

FOCAL POINTS AND OBJECTS OF INTEREST:

- To continue the old-world theme of the courtyard, an aged paint effect was used on the wall to obscure the uneven plaster surface.
- Picture frames for decorative items were plastered on to the wall. The inside of the frame was chipped back to the bare brick of the wall to provide an unusual backing texture detail.
- Focal points include a wire basket with silk flowers and a selection of old-world concrete plaques.
- A generous arrangement of pots framed by two gorgeous hanging baskets with fuchsias provide a green focus on the other wall, obscuring the braai area when not in use.
- The cross in an arched plastered frame echoes the one on top of the crown structure in the half-moon garden area.
- Functional terracotta tiles with inlays provide a functional floor surface that easily obscures doggy footprints.

A completely wasted space has been transformed into a safe, attractive, interesting and lush outdoor entertaining

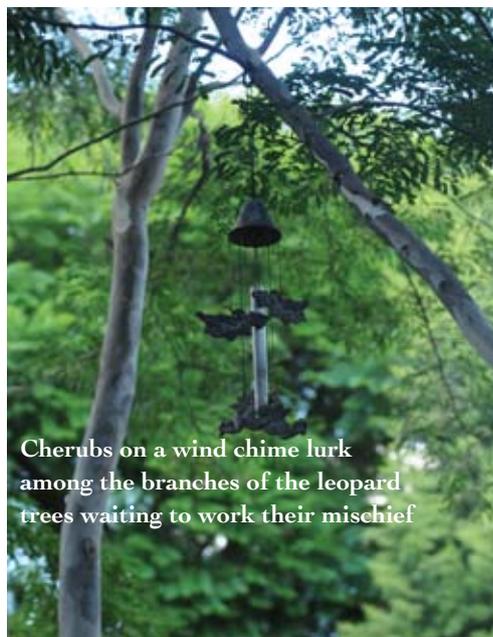
area, while improving the curb appeal of the front facade of the house dramatically. A double victory and a true transformation!

PLANT LIST

1. Leopard tree (*Caesalpinia ferrea*)
2. *Cyathea* sp.
3. *Nandina domestica*
4. *Dicksonia antarctica*
5. *Microlepidia* sp.
6. *Rumohra* sp.
7. Azalea
8. *Clivia miniata*
9. *Acorus gramineus*
10. *Impatiens walleriana* (double flowers)
11. *Asparagus virgatus*
12. *Plectranthus ecklonii*
13. Azalea in a pot
14. Bromeliad
15. Fuchsia hybrid cultivar in hanging baskets
16. *Hedera helix* in pot 🌿



Substantial vistas into the surrounding garden naturalises and visually enlarges the space.



Cherubs on a wind chime lurk among the branches of the leopard trees waiting to work their mischief

