

come & see
my garden

bold & beautiful

Strong, intense colours and easy-care plant choices create the wow factor in this small backyard entertaining area.

For the Jacobs family, a recent move from South Africa to start a new life in a new country brought with it the excitement of creating a new and very modern garden. The vibrancy of the African landscape and culture, rich with bold colours, was something that they wanted to include in their design. The brief to landscape designer, Michael Mansvelt of Plantation Landscapes NZ, was to create a colourful, contemporary courtyard garden, where the family can cook all year round.

The idea was to keep the permanent structures and hard landscaping neutral and inject luscious colour using plants and mosaic tiles. The large water feature (pictured above) is a combination of privacy wall and fountain. Its powerful colour is repeated throughout the garden, at different times of the year, as different plants flower.

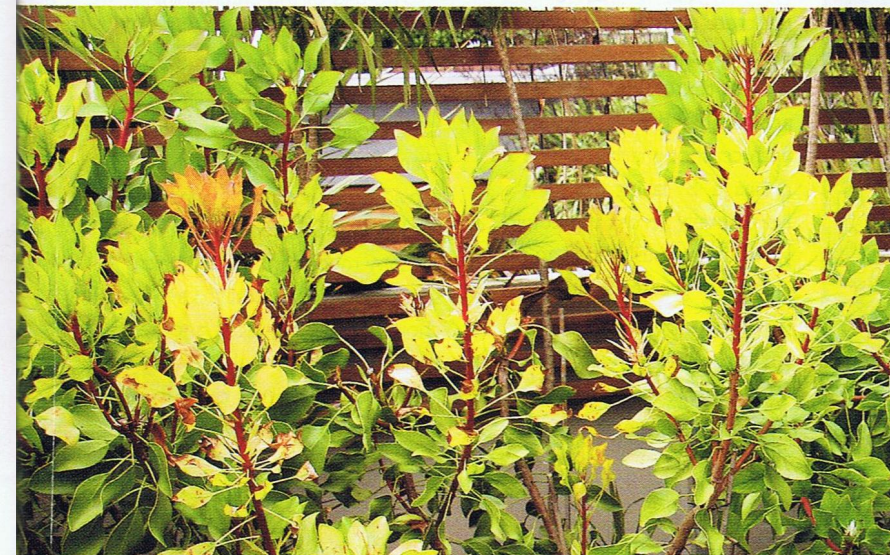
Horizontal slats erected above the fence line and warm-toned timber benches, which form extra seating options, provide strong design elements.



above: the vireya rhododendron 'Ne Plus Ultra' has showy orange-red flowers, plus an interesting story. In 1845 the first live vireyas were introduced to Britain from Sumatra. Only a handful of those 500 hybrids remain today and 'Ne Plus Ultra' is one of those.

Story and photos by Sandy de Beyer; garden design by Michael Mansvelt

above: the sound of falling water helps block background noise and enhances the tranquil mood of the courtyard. Timber slats and dense plantings further increase the sense of privacy, without shutting everything in.



The garden uses a blend of plants native to New Zealand and South Africa.

above: plants are scaled to be like stoppers in bottles and become part of the total sculptural effect. Poor knight's lily, *Xeronema callistemon*, a NZ native, which has a red brush-like flower, fills the front planting.

left: the garden blends South African and NZ natives. Here, it's a South African king protea, *Protea cynaroides* 'Arctic Ice', with white flowers when in bloom.

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above: an existing covered area is wide enough to accommodate a table and chairs comfortably. PVC blinds are dropped when the weather becomes unfriendly, protecting the whole area.

The easy-care plantings allow the owners to spend their spare time entertaining guests.



above: exposed aggregate concrete paving, chosen for its durability and affordability, creates textural interest. These are combined with rills filled with crushed marble, which aid drainage. By laying the slabs horizontally across the courtyard, the stripes create an illusion of greater width.

left: the Mexican fan palm, *Washingtonia robusta*, adds to the garden's graphic design.

The end of the entertaining area is closed off between the first two piers to create an area for an outdoor sink and bench space for the barbecue. Translucent glass lets in light but provides privacy from neighbours.

The overall effect here strikes a happy medium between open spaces and cosy privacy. The choice of plantings adds another dimension, a personal one, that links where the family came from, and where they are now. ✱