

OUR GARDEN CRUSH

Every issue we share a picture of a garden we love. This pretty courtyard mixes heady scents with natural colours and interesting textures

This courtyard garden in Guernsey was designed by Debbie Roberts of Acres Wild (www.acreswild.co.uk). Her clients asked her to create a space with English country garden character and a French twist.

"I wanted the design to be evocative of a French public square," says Debbie. "The bistro table and chairs invite you to take in the heady atmosphere created by scented roses, lavender and nepeta (also known as catmint)."

The courtyard sits against a glass link extension. Towards the rear Debbie created an area laid with Breedon Gravel, which has a mellow, golden tone and is quarried from limestone. A plane tree, which will eventually be pollarded (a pruning technique that keeps trees smaller than they'd naturally grow) forms the focus of this space.

Debbie chose exotic-looking agapanthus (often seen in coastal gardens) to line the edge of the glazed part of the house. With statuesque stems and striking globes of bright blue flowers which bloom from late summer, these popular plants can be admired from both inside and outside.

The path leading into the courtyard was paved with reclaimed York stone which has a weathered, worn surface, and has been laid in a traditional pattern. On the right side of the path Debbie planted a magnolia tree, which produces beautiful waxy, star-shaped flowers in spring and summer. She also planted salvia, centranthus, hardy geraniums, which flower for months, and delicate astrantia which has tiny, disc-like flowers and is a cottage garden favourite. This riot of flowers in differing shapes and co-ordinating tones pairs well with the hard edges of the stone and the mellow colour of the gravel. "The planting, while English in character has a windswept and coastal flavour with a touch of tender exotica giving a hint of Brittany and French elegance," says Debbie.

WORDS: RACHEL ANDREWS-INGRAM PHOTO AND GARDEN DESIGN: DEBBIE ROBERTS



A simple bistro set invites relaxation – a place to pause on a hot summer day.

Centranthus has dense clusters of fragrant flowers

Site catmint where brushing past will release its scent.