

INTERIORS SHOPPING ADVICE FOOD TRENDS EXPERTS INSPIRATION

HOMES & GARDENS®

FEBRUARY 2009 £3.60

SIMPLY STYLISH

HOUSES DESIGNED FOR RELAXED LIVING



DISPLAYING COLLECTIONS
CONVERTING A LOFT



CLEVER SHOPPING

- RECLAIMED FLOORING
- BOOKCASES
- PATTERNED LAMP SHADES

BRIGHT IDEAS

LIGHTING A BATHROOM **FOCUS ON SMALL SPACES**
3 SMART BEDROOMS CREATING A MEDIA ROOM

PLUS 14 PAGES OF GARDENING

RECALL 28/09/09



DESIGNER SECRETS

Philip Nixon creates an outdoor room for broadcaster Jamie Theakston and his wife Sophie



DESIGNER PROFILE

Top of his graduating class at the Ingham School of Garden Design, **PHILIP NIXON** holds

three Gold medals and one Silver-Gilt for gardens at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. As well as running his own garden and landscape design business with projects as far afield as Russia and Canada, he designs garden furniture and structures.

THE BRIEF "My client Jamie Theakston and his wife Sophie were looking for a comfortable family garden that complemented their stylish home."

"Originally, I was called in by the architect, who had recently restored the couple's Regency house and wanted to commission a garden to complement the interiors. As you enter the front door of the house, you can see through to the garden at the back, so it was important that the interior and exterior designs were unified. Because the garden is always on show, it has to be attractive all year round. Jamie has a great artistic eye, and in the house he has an unusual collection of stylishly kitsch items, including Charles and Diana memorabilia, on display. These inspired the garden bookcases, which have a potting shed style and are set out with antique gardening pots and tools, as well as a selection of gnomes.

"I have tried to make the most of the space, since the garden is just seven by five metres, and kept the design, materials and planting simple. The garden is overlooked by neighbouring houses so, to help generate privacy, I've used wattle screens in metal frames on top of the timber-clad walls, while marrying traditional with contemporary materials, just as the interiors mix old and new. The sofas and table, which doubles as a fireplace (a wooden lid lifts off to reveal a grate), create a room outside, and attract people out into the garden. A child- and pet-friendly bubbling water feature adds a dynamic finishing touch to the Modernist design." ■

INTERVIEW ZIA ALLAWAY | PHOTOGRAPH JERRY HARPUR/HARPUR GARDEN IMAGES



CREATING PRIVACY

"Boundary fences are often not tall enough to afford privacy in a town garden, but this can present a design opportunity rather than a problem. Here, bespoke wattle panels add height, while their texture and colour complement the wood cladding below, making a feature of the vertical surfaces. Check height restrictions with your local planning office."

PLANTS FOR URBAN SPACES

"This garden is shady, so I have chosen plants that tolerate low light levels. I have also used ever green and scented climbers such as *Trachelospermum jasminoides* (star jasmine) to clothe the walls, as they take up little ground space yet soften the hard landscaping. Box hedges and rhododendrons in pots create a sense of enclosure, while hardy perennials, such as geraniums and hellebores, inject seasonal interest."

CHOOSING FURNITURE

"Comfortable furniture encourages people to spend time in the garden, but it has to be low maintenance and aesthetically pleasing. I designed this furniture to be just that, with robust iroko frames and foam cushions that dry quickly. They are in a water-resistant canvas in Storm, 150cm wide, by Perennials Outdoor Fabrics in the US, 001 214 638 4162, perennialsfabrics.com, available in the UK at £68m through Robert Spurway, 020 7351 6888, robertspurway.com."

FACT FILE

PLANTS

- *Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa'.
- *Geranium phaeum*.
- *Helleborus orientalis*.
- *Libertia grandiflora*.
- *Thalictrum delavayi* 'Hewitt's Double'.
- *Trachelospermum jasminoides* (star jasmine).
- White-flowering rhododendron.

WHERE TO BUY

Claire Austin Hardy Plants.
01939 251173, claireaustinhardyplants.co.uk.
Shade-loving perennials.

Crocus.

0844 557 2233, crocus.co.uk.
Perennials and box hedging.

Jacksons Nurseries,
01782 502741, jacksonsnurseries.co.uk.
Trachelospermum and other climbers.

LANDSCAPE MATERIALS

The bookcases, wall cladding and furniture frames are all made to Philip's designs from oiled iroko timber, and the screens from wattle in metal frames, while the floors are grey basalt. The square clay containers are from Daylesford Organic The Garden, and the antique tools and vintage pots on the shelves are supplied by Clifton Nurseries.

WHERE TO BUY

Clifton Nurseries,
020 7289 6851, clifton.co.uk.
New and antique garden tools and accessories.

Daylesford Organic The Garden.

020 7730 2943, daylesfordorganic.com.
Natural garden products and clay containers.

Devon Stone.

01395 222525, devonstone.com.
Specialist in hand-finished basalt stone.

CONTACT DETAILS

Philip Nixon Design.
020 7371 0066, philipnixondesign.com.