

Gardens for a Gardener

On five acres in Athens, Georgia, a couple developed every aspect of their new home to suit their desire to spend time gardening and to see a variety of views of their garden when they could not be outside.

On the relatively flat lot and in the center of the property about two of the five acres were cleared of infested and dead pine trees and briars. Once cleared, an edge of healthy pines, oaks, sweetgum and redbud trees were trimmed to provide an attractive transition from garden into the woods that will be supplemented with native plants over time.

With a clean slate, the opportunity existed to create a unique and special place. Landscape architects have the experience to scale outdoor rooms in proportion to outdoor space, and their study of historical places provides reference for drawing bold lines of well-ordered space to create a new home and garden plan.



▲ The clients' desire to delineate a special place called for the installation of a white picket fence. A small concrete footing keeps brick chips in place. Annual and perennial herbs are supplemented with perennials and annuals in red, orange and golden yellow colors.



◀ The garage-side mud- and laundry-room access became the primary family entrance and was dressed up with a small wood deck and trellis. Additionally the glass door allowed light to enter, and from inside a picture-perfect view of the bird bath was framed.

In this project the landscape architect was consulted to help with selecting the house plan and to site the house. Revisions to the floor plan included adding a glass side door to the kitchen and two sets of fixed glass doors along the great room to maximize the view to the formal lawn and perennial border.

With the property set adjacent to larger parcels, including backing up to a 600-acre parcel, the nature of the site was secluded and the house was set down a long wooded driveway meeting the client's desire for privacy. Beyond that, the owner's goals were clear: to see as much of the garden as possible from the interior rooms, to have only two to three steps into the house from an entertainment lawn and perennial garden, to have a variety of large garden spaces linked by smaller ones.

Distinct garden types were discussed as separate rooms with the priority being on an entertainment lawn with a classic perennial border and a large vegetable garden with storage for tools and supplies near at hand. An herb garden for cooking located closer to the kitchen than the large kitchen garden.

Additionally, shade walks were desired to link points throughout the site as well as to create as many areas for diverse planting niches as possible for the client, who brings home a new plant – or three – every week.

Relatively few constraints existed in this project except for the challenge of deer, and for that reason the vegetable garden was fenced. Although the client was prepared to surround the property with an electric deer fence, they were please to find deer were a relatively small problem and controlled with one or two yearly applications Liquid Fence. 🐾

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▲ The entrance to the kitchen garden is a 10-foot high trellis, large enough to allow for hanging planters. A double entrance gate with a chicken wire window opens to the large 60x40-foot vegetable garden, with the shed located inside to provide easy access to tools and supplies. Evergreen wisteria (*Millettia reticulata*) was selected for its late summer bloom and planted on the trellis into the kitchen garden.



◀ Passion vine (*Passiflora incarnate*) was selected as a blooming evergreen for the back porch columns.

Cross vine (*Bignonia capreolata*) was selected as a blooming vine for attracting pollinators to the vegetable garden and planted on the garden shed. ▼

