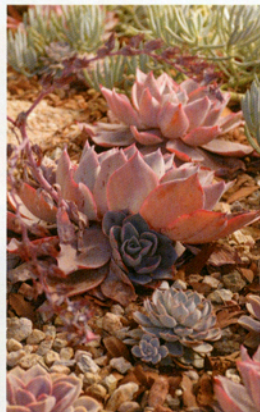




HOW TO DESIGN A

DREAM GARDEN

GARDEN GURU: *Lisa Gimmy Landscape Architecture* CULVER CITY, CA

In Los Angeles, constantly sunny skies mean you can really glam up your outdoor space

BY JASON ABRUZZESE

ONE GARDEN, FOUR DIFFERENT LANDSCAPES

In the Architect's Garden, Gimmy created a variety of landscape experiences in one project. Adapt some of her ideas to diversify your own garden.

In LA, looking good is a top priority, and thousands of different professionals specialize in making the ideal image a reality. Lisa Gimmy, principal of Lisa Gimmy Landscape Architecture, is one such pro. Her specialty: designing landscapes that capitalize upon the glitz, glamour, and bountiful sunshine of the City of Angels. Here, she dishes her insider secrets on how to create jaw-dropping gardens that will get you out of the A/C and into the SoCal sun.

Word on the street is that your project, entitled Architect's Garden, designed for an architect's house, is drop-dead gorgeous. What makes this project unique?

It was most important to relate the garden to

the home's views of the Santa Monica Mountain. The house is sited on a steep slope, so we built small retaining walls and framed the rear lawn with a low hedge. Now, there is a pleasing sense of containment that relates to the geometry of the house. The forms of the boulders, the aloes silhouetted against the mountains, and the seasonal flowering of the bush germander hedge all play up the drama.

What's your top tip for homeowners who want to bring your style to their projects?

Simplify. Consider limiting your plant palette and grouping plants for a dramatic contrast that generates a sense of discovery, and consider different themes and moods in different parts of the garden. ✦

TIP 1**That's a wrap**

Create a natural boundary using plants. Gimmy favors a drought-tolerant palette of native ceanothus and arbutus marina.

TIP 2**Group exotic plants**

Putting these unique varieties together will make your space look more lush. Gimmy's Architect's Garden features agaves, Kangaroo paws, dracaenas, aloe plicatilis, sansevierias, and aeonium zwartkop.

TIP 3**Bring the woods to you**

Incorporate grasses and trees for a natural look. "We created a grass garden framed by eucalyptus trees," Gimmy says.

TIP 4**Ditch the yard—well, most of it**

Gimmy replaced about 70 percent of the lawn with ground covers and decomposed granite, but she still carved out a lawn panel that focuses on the gorgeous Santa Monica view.