

MAKEOVER YOUR GARDEN ROOM WITH FIVE EXPERT TIPS

Whether you are looking to create an outdoor retreat or just want a great place to entertain this summer, night and day backyard transformations can be a blooming success with tips from a pro any gardener can follow.

Professional garden designer and author of *Container Gardens for Florida* and *Instant Container Gardens*, Pamela Crawford shares the 5 fool-proof secrets she used to breathe life into the gardens surrounding her exquisite Georgia home.

1. ANNUALS ARE A QUICK FIX

“Annuals are the perfect solution for injecting color into an outdoor scene,” says Crawford.

Look for bold new color choices in annuals like petunias, impatiens and vinca along with intricate pattern details in foliage annuals like coleus.

“Plant sweeps of color in hues that pop, like reds, pinks and oranges,” says Crawford. “The ‘sweep’ technique draws the eye across the space and lends to an ‘at ease’ feeling for those that enter the garden.”

2. FASHION FABULOUS YET FUNCTIONAL CONTAINERS

“A great container arrangement adds instant style to patios, porches, walkways and even flower beds,” says Crawford.

So what design guidelines did Crawford adhere to in building the container plants that adorn her home? In one word: dimension.

“For the front porch, I chose hanging baskets filled with white wax begonias, new guinea impatiens, and caladiums. Their vigorous growth habit offers volume,” she says.

3. FEED THEM OR FORGET IT

“Many gardeners skimp on providing their plants with basic needs like food and water,” says Crawford. “That’s why I recommend that gardeners only plant as much as they are realistically willing to maintain.”

Crawford feeds her plants with a slow release fertilizer called Dynamite™. It contains both macro and micro nutrients, and feeds plants continuously for up to 9 months.

“Dynamite is the very best plant food available to home gardeners to date,” says Crawford. “I feed it to everything in my garden from container and bedding plants to trees and shrubs. Because it is also environmentally sustainable, I don’t have to worry that it is harmful to the environment.”



And along with food, plants need plenty of water. “Water well,” says Crawford, “It’s a common mistake to give plants too little water.”

With both container and bedding plants, remember they prefer a slow soaking rather than a fast hit with the hose because it allows the roots time to absorb the water.

4. INVENT DEPTH WITH ILLUSIONS

Adding wow-factor to your gardens can be as simple as adding one major feature or a series of mini features.

For the flower border that outlines her back pathway, Crawford installed decorative black metal posts, of varying sizes from 3 to 5 feet, in a staggered arrangement throughout the border.

When planted with lush, bountiful hanging baskets, the posts created mini focal points along the curved pathway. While the width of Crawford’s flower border was a mere 2 ½ feet, the flower adorned posts added depth that created an illusion of a larger space.

5. ACCESSORIZING THE EXTERIOR

Well-placed accessories like planters, garden ornaments and fountains make all the difference when attempting to upgrade an outdoor style, but selecting and using them appropriately can be a challenge.

When working with accessories, Crawford says to “think in terms of scale and style.”

“Look at your home’s architecture and hardscaping for style clues. Once you have found your style, be it ultra-modern or cottage garden, pick a theme and continue it throughout the space by adding other accessories of the same genre.”

For more ideas and photos, visit www.gardenmediagroup.com.

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