

Accents in a Harmonious Landscape



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Simplicity

Simple designs are both easier to care for and often more visually pleasing. Place only one major architectural focal point, such as a statue, fountain, or structure, within each area of the landscape. Avoid using a lot of unrelated details that will create a cluttered appearance.

Limit the number of different paving and structural materials, types of plants, and colors in a landscape in order to get maximum impact from each. Statues and fountains should be in similar colors and of similar styles. Matching pavers throughout the landscape create unity across garden areas. Trellises, arbors, fences, and other structures that match in color and material help make the landscape work together harmoniously. In planting, use a color theme for each view, using a single thematic color or a complementary pair of colors.

Plantings for Curb Appeal

When planting around the house foundation, be sure to preserve clear views of key architectural features, such as windows, doors, and corners. Take into account the mature size of shrubs and trees so they do not grow to block the house. If the house has a special architectural focal point, balance the focal point on the house with one in the landscape. For example, balance a tall two-story arched window, with a specimen tree of similar height. Create harmony by placing the tree on the opposite side of the yard as the window, and as far away from the house as the height to the center of the window. A striking specimen tree will draw attention to itself, and with its balanced arrangement, will guide attention to the house.



Photo: The Agency Realty

Specimen Plants

A specimen plant is one used for unique beauty or as an outstanding example of its type. It should have a position of importance and strongly draw the eye at least one season of the year. Aim for one specimen plant per garden room. Multiple specimen plants may occupy the same garden area if each specimen has seasonal interest that does not compete with neighboring specimens. For instance, a tree with glorious autumn color, like sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboretum*), might not compete with an early spring-blooming tree, like Japanese magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangeana*). It's a good idea to allow just one specimen per major garden area per season.