

STORY
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PHOTOGRAPHY
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Why pack the car, round up the kids and fight Friday night traffic on Ontario's highways when a blue water paradise is waiting at home? Enjoy two completely different takes on landscape design.

LE JARDIN À LA FRANÇAISE

"We were looking for a backyard retreat that we could enjoy at night as well as during the day and we wanted the design to complement our home's French-inspired architecture," says homeowner Liane Enns. "Working with the team at **ProScape Land Design Inc.** was a great experience. They created an inviting, secluded space that we use far more than we thought we would for relaxing and entertaining family and friends," says Enns. The design recently won a

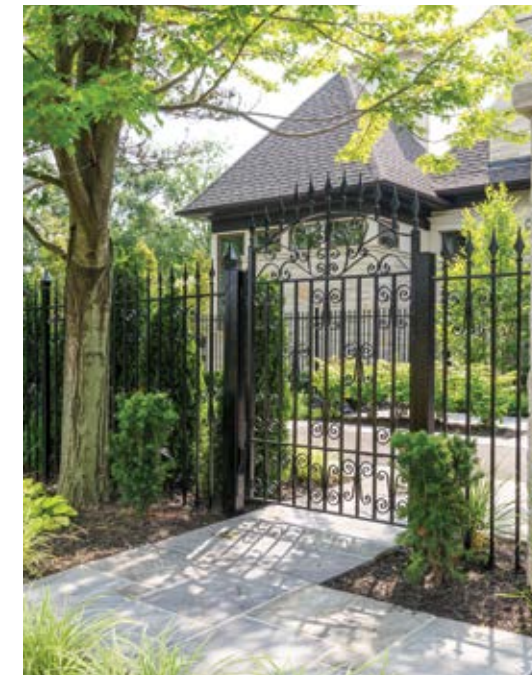
Landscape Ontario Award of Excellence in the residential construction category.

As the French might say, ProScape's design is completely *au fait*. A thoroughly modern take on the formal symmetrical garden known as *le jardin à la française*. It combines symmetry, connecting paths, formal planting beds, stone walls, copper fire pits, clipped hedges and water features. To match the home's exterior, the hardscape combines Indiana limestone and sandstone.

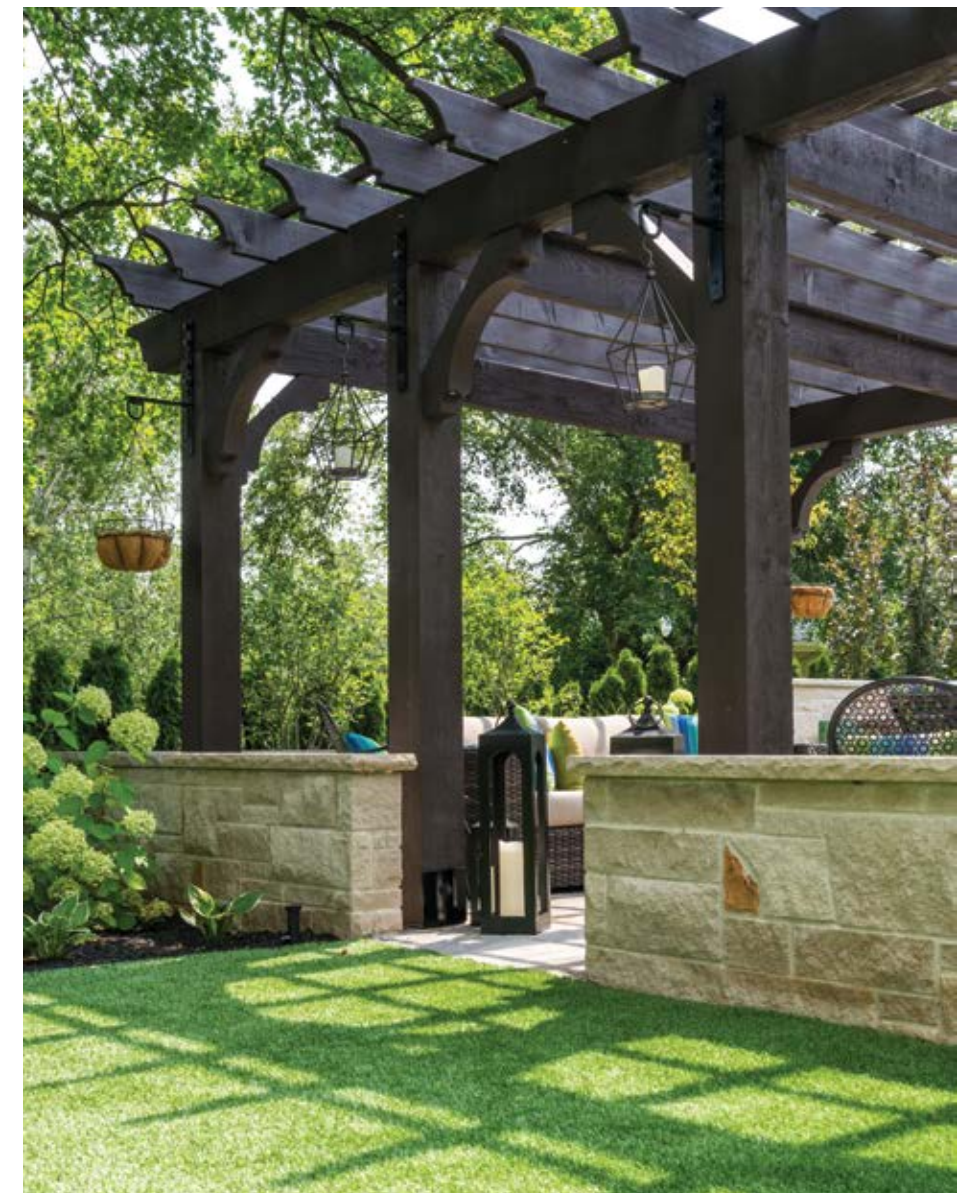
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Firebowls add warmth and drama.



LEFT: Like a secret garden, a wrought iron gate surrounded by lush greenery opens to the backyard oasis. **BELOW:** The pergola offers shade and privacy. **OPPOSITE:** Many zones for relaxing and entertaining give the backyard a resort-like feel.





No French garden worth its salt would be without a backdrop of greenery. Groupings of tall deciduous and evergreen trees soldier the property, offering privacy from the road and the neighbours. Low boxwoods outline the pergola, its latticework entwined with leafy vines. **Tom Henderson**, owner

of ProScape, says they created the space using varying shades of green, interspersed with pops of colour, like the planting of ever-blooming hydrangeas.

In typical old French style, the backyard is designed as a series of outdoor rooms connected with stone steps and pathways.

The French liked to be able to view their gardens from a raised terrace. Here, the covered porch delivers a wonderful view across the backyard. Liane and Gary opted for a wood-burning fireplace instead of gas, and enjoy the heady scent of wood smoke on cold evenings.

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TOP: Vibrant pops of colour in the cushions mirror the blues and greens of the natural environment. **LEFT:** Sculpted gardens add colour and dimension. **ABOVE:** Water cascades softly into the pool from copper water scuppers.

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The pergola adds height and structure to the softer lines of the landscape. **ABOVE:** The terrace with its wood-burning fire allows the family to enjoy their outdoor space in cooler months.

In the pool area, a stone wall is flanked with hammered-copper gas fire bowls on stone pedestals. It's an elegant, upscale design, particularly at night when the fire bowls light the area. Along the rear wall, copper water scuppers spill soft sheets of water into the pool.

The custom pergola is crafted from Douglas fir and accented with heavy brass hardware. Resin furniture is cushioned in shades of blue, echoing the keynotes of the sparkling blue pool, and a gas fire pit adds a warmth to cooler evenings.

ProScape collaborated with **Gib-San Pools** on the gunite pool. Unlike fibreglass pools, gunite is built on site, in almost any shape and doesn't require

a liner. Gunite is a steel rod framework over-sprayed with a mix of sand and cement. Wondering how the pool got its iridescent blue colour? The secret is the Pebble Tec finish.

From pool maintenance to the water features, lighting and music, the yard is fully automated and controlled by an app on the homeowner's phone.

Although still a relatively new build, the softscape is already weaving its magic, softening stone walls and paths, adding character to structures and making intimate areas a touch more intimate. Like a fine Bordeaux, this French-inspired outdoor space will only get better with age. **OH**

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A TOUCH OF PARADISE

Of all the beautiful features and focal points in this stunning south Mississauga backyard, bringing a client’s vision of a fully automated backyard retreat to life is what really excites **Brandon Cook**. His team at **Pool Doctors** is behind the design of this summer oasis. “The clients have complete control over pool and spa

functionality from a Hayward OmniLogic app on their phone or computer,” he says. They can monitor and adjust water temperatures, activate the infinity edge spa and control landscape lighting from a simple, user friendly interface. Even when the family travels, they can check in on their slice of paradise back home.

The narrow shape of the property posed challenges, but homeowners Matthew and Shari Wing are thrilled with the outcome. “We wanted an original design that would make the most of the space,” says Shari. A pie-shaped lot on a cul-de sac, the width shrinks as the property gets further from the house.



A seating area with a fire table makes great use of the narrow back portion of the property.



LEFT: Daughter Olivia and family fur baby Schneider soak up the sun on lazy summer days. **BELOW:** A Muskoka-style patio off the house provides a shady place for dining. **BOTTOM:** The softscape adds dimension and colour, and was designed with low maintenance in mind.



With an overwhelming array of pool styles available, they chose an irregular shape custom-designed by Pool Doctors to fit the property. “Our biggest surprise is how the narrowest part of the property turned out,” Shari says. “Brandon’s team created a lounging area with landscaped garden

and a granite-top gas fire pit. The design actually exceeded our expectations. It’s made the space a really relaxing place to unwind in the evenings. Our backyard now has all the amenities needed for an oasis, without leaving the city, much like being at the cottage.” *Continued on page 62*



“We wanted an original design that would make the most of the space.”

backyard tour



The four-season spa is located close to the house, so the Wing family can use it even when the snow falls. The steps into the pool and the hot tub bench seating are padded for maximum comfort, and step treads are textured for a non-slip surface.

One of the elements that gives this backyard its resort feel is the vinyl pool's infinity edge. Five sheer-descent waterfalls deliver wide, clear arcs of water that extend from a modern, natural-stone capped water feature that runs the length of the pool. Colour changing LED bubblers produce water plumes that extend 18 inches above the water surface. A large rain shower designed and installed by **Jon De Vera**, Pool Doctors' head installation manager, is positioned high over the spa for a sparkling, moving water accent by day and a dramatic changing LED light show at night. *Continued on page 64*



Designed right, the property had plenty of room for a large pool and several entertaining and relaxing zones. **TOP LEFT:** Thoughtful plantings and water features give this backyard space serenity. **TOP RIGHT:** A rain shower cascades into the hot tub and lights up at night.

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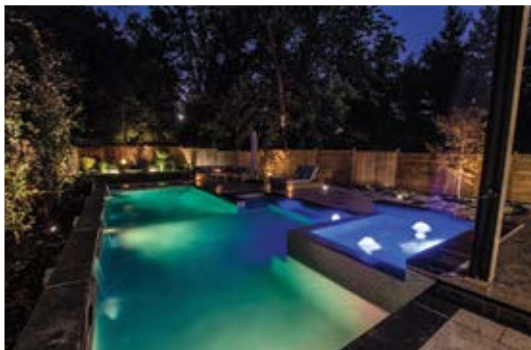
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ABOVE: Shari and Olivia can spend quality time on hot summer days. **TOP RIGHT:** A cabana-style area is well-situated by the pool. **RIGHT:** Schneider loves pool-side relaxing with the rest of the family.

The time to enjoy outdoor spaces is short in Ontario, so time-consuming maintenance didn't appeal to Matthew and Shari, particularly with young children. "We didn't want a concrete jungle, so we kept some grass at the back, separating the pool area from the lounge area," says Shari. The hardscape on the patio is armour stone, and the coping on pool sides is a combination of staggered natural stone and black-and-white granite. Low-maintenance grasses spill onto the walkway, softening hard edges. Shiny black river rock in the lounge area conceals a clever hydroponic irrigation system that allows plants to thrive without the traditional weekly watering. Each plant, including the large Japanese maples, has its own dripline irrigation.

Achieving order and symmetry isn't easy when working with an irregular-shaped yard. But in this case, soft and hardscapes deliver a modern zen-like aesthetic that gives Matthew and Shari exactly what they wanted – a backyard oasis that is low on maintenance and high on pleasure. **OH**

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