

# room with a view

*Lushly planted borders and generous outdoor living areas make the garden of this family home in London somewhere to eat, play, relax and entertain*

When garden designer Jane Brockbank was commissioned to create this London garden, her brief was to develop an outdoor space that reflected the traditional lines of the neoclassical-style property, but still had a contemporary feel. Her solution was to combine romantic English country-garden planting with Mediterranean-style hard landscaping, which effectively bridges the gap between old and new. The result is both relaxing and elegant.

The design transitions seamlessly from the house to the garden through a paved and roofed loggia and a gravelled 'outdoor room' framed by four rowan trees. It also allows for alfresco living, whatever the weather. On balmy summer evenings, the family enjoy drinks

in the dappled shade of the outside lounge, while the loggia provides shelter on rainy days.

The garden is 'all-singing' in summer, when the flowers are in full bloom, but lime-green foliage, white spring blossom and fiery autumnal leaf colour ensure seasonal appeal. Evergreen shrubs brighten the dull winter months 'and provide anchor points to the garden, giving structure all year round,' says Jane.

The family love their garden. 'The owner told me about a particularly magical Sunday afternoon during their first summer,' remembers Jane. 'They had friends over, everyone was outside and the children were running around happily. It was lovely to hear that the garden was doing exactly what it was supposed to.'

## OUTDOOR LIFE

The sofas, placed opposite each other to echo an interior living room, are upholstered in waterproof fabric. The neutral shade complements the gravel, while the woven design of the frames adds texture and interest. The pot-shaped firepit, made statuesque by a metal sculpture, is a stylish focal point. Four rowan trees, chosen for their lightly spreading branches, provide dappled shade above.

## CLEVER TOUCHES

The children's playhouse (right), discreet in wood cladding, is in the shadiest part of the garden. 'Shade can be challenging to plant, so it was the obvious location,' explains Jane. The loggia (below) has Dutch clay-paver flooring, which is used throughout to define specific areas, and to add texture and pattern. A curved chair and footstool, plus a decorative, oversized hurricane lantern, lend a homely feel. The simple wooden bench (below right) is at the end of the garden and, tucked among seasonal foliage, offers a calm place to read and relax.



*"The loggia cleverly allows for alfresco living, whatever the weather"*