

# ROOM SERVICE: 5 ways to sit in style

# at home

IN FAIRFIELD COUNTY

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GREENWICH  
GARDEN



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## estate planning

For a home inspired by the style of early twentieth-century country houses, a complementary design by a Greenwich landscape firm completes the vision.



The property's long driveway ends at a 650-year-old stone of the home's main entrance, with attention paid to details that accentuate the order and symmetry of the architecture.

Landscape Design: **JAMES DOYLE, DOYLE HERMAN DESIGN ASSOCIATES**

interior: **JUDY OSTROW** photography: **NEIL LANDINO, JR.**



**Tell me about the property.**

**James Doyle:** The architecture for this new home was inspired by the elaborate, formal and classically based Colonial Revival "country houses" of architects David Adler and Delano and Aldrich; their designs date to the early part of the twentieth century. This particular house, which is sited on five acres in backcountry Greenwich, was designed by Judy Tarnon of Gardiner de Lanon in New Canaan, and was purchased by the clients in 2010.

**How did you get involved with this project?**

The clients had moved here from England, and they had been exposed to the great architecture and gardens that are everywhere in this country. They wanted a completely new landscape, and we submitted a proposal that reimagined the home's surroundings to set off its architecture and define the outdoor spaces

by utilizing traditional design principles, strong axes and the creation of outdoor rooms. For this effort, I worked with designer Tizio Hunkawa from my office (now moved on, to California), and with my business partner, Kathryn Herman, who did all of the outdoor furnishings.

The approach to this house consists of some thoughtfully curated elements. Can you describe the design?

The long driveway leads to a formal courtyard, this was our way of getting a head-on entry point to a very symmetrical house. Two mature pin oaks and boxwood patterns of cubed linden trees and annuals define the approach as one nears the courtyard; this configuration focuses attention on the home's beautiful and impressive façade.

This arrival point has lovely details.

The courtyard inlay is made with granite block to complement the stone used for the house. The floors of the house is softened with plantings of rounded evergreens and climbing roses, with elegant cast limestone urns centered on each window. The urns are planted with boxwood, with annuals added in season. We take a holistic approach to our projects; Kathryn specified the Longmeadow urns and the light fixtures, which came from England. It is part of our practice and process to think things all the way through, right down to the color of the shutters at the façade windows.

This is a picturesque, sloping parcel of land. How did you use that feature? The rear of the house sits at a high elevation and affords views across the entire back portion of the property. All of the masonry is consistent with the stone on the house, which is a light toned, random



**MR. Climbing English roses soften the linear aspects of the façade; right, a columned recesses one of a pair of benches, urns and elbowed columnar hedges that define the mid-point terrace of the grand staircase that descends from the house to the large play lawn, below. A view of the house from the center of its back boundary reveals the structure that Doyle used to set off the home's position at the high point of the land.**





and horizontally laid out granite. A large, limestone terrace allows for dining and entertaining; its cascading grand staircase leads to a wide play lawn below. Flower borders flank a mid-level terrace on this stair; this broad seating point invites a step to view the surroundings from garden benches that are placed there. On either side of the long view that extends from the staircase are rows of undipped linden trees, adjoined by gravel paths and stone inlays. The lawn terminates with an aerial hedge of linden trees, and a monumental garden ornament that stands more than eight feet tall.

It's quite a view, with beautiful symmetry. What about other features at the rear of the house?

Elevation changes were maximized to set up destinations and private garden spaces. One is a double herbaceous border "room" reached by a procession of gardens. The path begins to the south (right) side of the front courtyard, with two larch trees flanking an entrance to the "Oenothera" garden, which as the name suggests includes a massing of variegated dogwoods. An area for cut flowers and herbs bridges this garden and the border "room." Steps lead down to the borders, and the whole enclosure feels like a sanctuary, complete with an oak bench that allows for contemplation and enjoyment of a bright array of perennials. We tried to cover the whole spectrum, using hot colors as well as pastels.

Walking from the front and around to the rear of the house from the north, what would one find there?

Another destination is the swimming pool and pool house, also within a hedge enclosure. In addition to the symmetrical, Doric-columned pool house, which is furnished for dining, a row of crabapple trees installed along the pool deck has been underplanted with rows of hydrangeas to add summer color to this area.



**Top left and right:** Rows of clipped linden trees, set in brick-paved patterns that flank the driveway above. Crabapples, underplanted with hydrangeas, line the hedge enclosure around the pool, with furnishings like those chosen by DR® principal Kathleen Sherman.



**Top left and right:** Close views of the clipped columnar form and hydrangeas above left and right. Grass in its green lawn is of limestone rather than a sea of brick paving.



"It is part of our practice and  
process to **THINK THINGS**  
**ALL THE WAY THROUGH.**"

-JAMES DONKE

From the side of  
the lawn, one sees  
the details of the  
hedges, including a  
grand ornamental  
hedge styled  
linden.



**Left and right and opposite:** The double-tiered border "island" is an intriguing setting for companions and for viewing a garden full of colorful geraniums.

**Below:** A close-up of the eight-foot-long garden urn that is the centerpiece at the end of the broad lawn.



Your plan uses a great deal of evergreen. Overall, a strong architectural sensibility was expressed in the landscape plan, both in the layout and in the plants forming the structure of the garden. These structural plantings of yew and privet hedges, boxwood parterres and aerial linden hedges became the backbone of the garden and help to complement the scale of the house. Their form and scale provide structure in winter as well as throughout the growing season.

This project is a lesson in harmonizing a home and its site. Because of the size and scale of the property, I'm sure it's even more impressive to see in person. As it happens, there will be an opportunity very soon. The landscape was selected for *Goodlands*, the Garden Education Center of Greenwich's annual self-guided tour of private town gardens.

That's great! When is it?  
The tour is on Sunday, June 12, from 10 until 4. (Edgar) near Foxe, visit [goodlands.org](http://goodlands.org)

#### RESOURCES

**Landscape Design:**  
Doyle Herman Design Associates,  
125 Greenwich Avenue, Greenwich:  
203-869-2900; [dhsa.com](http://dhsa.com)

**ARCHITECT:**  
Gardner & Larson Homes, New Canaan

**Landscape Installation:**  
Aquino Garden and Landscape Service,  
Stamford

**Lighting and Electrical:**  
Manny's Lighting & Electrical, Ossining, NY

**Tree Removal:**  
Bartlett Tree Experts, Stamford

**Irrigation:**  
Summer Rain Sprinkler Systems, Cos Cob

**Fence & Gate Installation:**  
J&J Fence Service, Stamford

**Surveyor:**  
RWL Land Surveying, New Canaan

**Driveway Installation:**  
Fred N. Durante Jr., Gen. Contractor, Stamford

**Plant Material:**  
Munich/Johnson Horticultural Distributors

**Furnishings:**  
+ Gate Burvil  
+ J&N'S et Cie  
+ McKinnon and Harris  
+ Burke Foundry  
+ Arora Appliance & Electronics

**Urn:**  
LongHawth