

Gold-Medal Garden Stroll

Loungy terraces and wispy garden paths conspire to create powerful moments for both rest and ramble.

TO LOSE YOURSELF IN THE ROMANCE of a garden may be one of life's greatest pleasures, but arriving at such a retreat is no easy task. It took James Doyle and Matthew Willinger of James Doyle Design Associates six years to pull it off for their clients in a pastoral, six-acre expanse in New England. "The property had beautiful mature trees and a sloping topography overlooking a pond, but it lacked structured outdoor rooms and gardens," says Willinger.

So the structure needed to be created and their meandering entries mapped out. "We applied classic design principles, placing dressier rooms closer to the house progressing outward to looser styles," says Willinger, noting the walls of clipped boxwood that now encircle a pair of teak benches "to point you right to the door." "It's simple in form, but formal," notes Doyle.

In the blousy meadow, a roughly 80-year-old sugar maple bridges the

private terraces along the side of the farmhouse with a looser, unbound garden, while the upper allée off the back porch takes full advantage of the pond views and "works as an avenue connecting the porch to the lower gardens," says Willinger. There, cubed linden trees, peonies, dahlias, and a river of nepeta await, while below a double herbaceous border garden sets a path to follow. Defined by hornbeam hedges and crabapples, the elliptical edges burst with jewel-toned perennials (favored by butterflies and bees), from butterfly bush and Giant scabiosa to Japanese anemone. From here, one enters the gate to the hen run with fencing that "will soon

be clad with coral honeysuckle," says Doyle, or wander out to the pond beyond. "In the summer, the large swath of native plants draw so many bullfrogs and their sounds fully absorb you," says Doyle. No better place, perhaps, to lose yourself in nature.

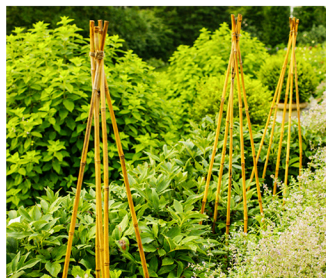
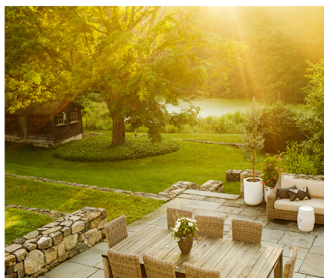
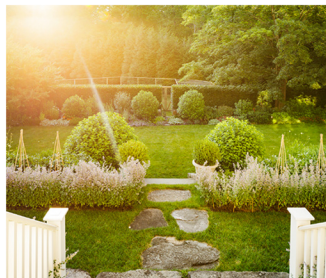
**Greenwich,
Connecticut**
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**DESIGN BY JAMES
DOYLE DESIGN
ASSOCIATES**

Hornbeam hedges and cubed linden trees provide continuity and structure in a double herbaceous border garden teeming with Scarlet beebalm flowers, purple coneflowers, and Japanese anemone.



WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

"There's a wonderful balance here of simple moved paths and fields and interesting borders. It's subtle; it doesn't overwhelm the house."—BUNNY WILLIAMS



TOP LEFT: Stacked stone pillars and mounds of lamb's ears mark the exit from the border garden and frame the view to an original cabin on the property. **TOP RIGHT:** Loose plantings including tall and fine fescue grasses float like clouds in the meadow. **MIDDLE LEFT:** In the lower gardens, flame-colored butterfly weed in full bloom marks high summer. **MIDDLE RIGHT:** Billowy borders of Droptone catmint define an upper allée garden. **BOTTOM LEFT:** A roughly 80-year-old sugar maple overlooks the pond where native Blue Flag lilies thrive in May and June. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Tuteurs stand at the ready to support summer's top-heavy dahlias.

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