

# IT'S THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS...

AWARD-WINNING LOCAL DESIGNER ANDREW CHRISTOPHER DUNNE LOOKS AT HOW TO ADD THOSE ALL IMPORTANT FINISHING TOUCHES TO YOUR GARDEN

There are many elements to be considered when designing a garden, some are obvious like planting and seated areas, others less so, such as where to put the washing line, the positioning of the outside tap. Nonetheless a good garden designer will give every tiny element of a design, the consideration it deserves. At our practice we design everything from the furniture to the position of the garden pots. It may sound over-the-top but to make a garden work you must put thought into every area of your outdoor space. Whether it's the size of your water feature, or the location of a garden bench

you must start to think like a designer. No longer will you see a large pot in the garden centre and buy it just because it is half price. Now you will consider exactly where you will place it, what you will put in it and what it will look like from all the different views in your garden. Okay, I know it is always hard to resist a bargain but if you designed a pot into your garden in the first place you will end up with exactly the right effect, instead of a mismatched collection of garden centre rejects.

Whatever you are going to put into your garden, you just have to give it that extra bit of thought to give it the designer

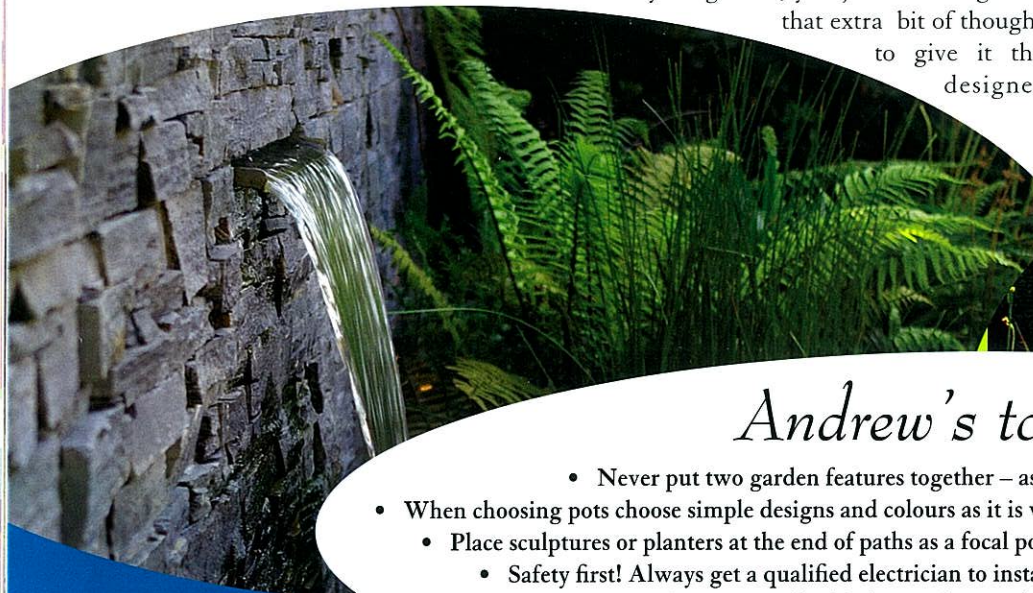
look. Lighting in a garden is a perfect example where a little thought goes a long way. Done right, a well-designed lighting scheme is a stunning and valuable asset to any garden. Done wrong it can look like a landing strip for a 747. So try this: instead of choosing lights by the light fitting, choose lights for the light they can cast and position them to illuminate architectural plants and features and not just the space around them.

The same goes for garden features such as sculpture and

you can make when choosing a garden feature is to choose it based solely on its own merit, i.e. 'I bought it because it was gorgeous'. There should never be one item in your garden that stands out, they should all work together to form the overall picture.

furniture. Choose pieces that are in keeping with your original design. If you have a contemporary style garden, a rectangular table and chairs with glass or stainless steel looks best, but in a less formal design this will look out of place. The biggest mistake

I guess what I have been trying to do in this series is to encourage everyone to give our gardens the thought they deserve. They can be so much more than just a lawn and a patio. After all, with volcanos, global warming and recessions we will be spending a lot more time in them, so why not make the most of this most valuable outdoor space?



## Andrew's top tips:

- Never put two garden features together – as one will take away from the other.
- When choosing pots choose simple designs and colours as it is what you plant in your pots that you will be looking at.
- Place sculptures or planters at the end of paths as a focal point. Or line them up with views from your house.
- Safety first! Always get a qualified electrician to install your outdoor lighting and water features.
  - If you can't afford lighting place tee lights in glass jars around your garden for atmosphere. Use at least 50!

ANDREW CHRISTOPHER  
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Andrew Christopher Garden Design, Clogherhead, Co. Louth.  
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