

# GROWING ZEN

Tomatoes, blueberries, blooming perennials and various lettuces grow in this bountiful backyard that's a peaceful patch of paradise.

TEXT IRIS BENAROA  
PHOTOGRAPHY PATRICK BILLER





C

an a vegetable garden feel Zen? In Leigh Gravenor's hands it can. The Toronto-based landscape designer created a unique backyard for a pair of empty nesters. At its centre sit six carefully composed vegetable beds. "I thought it was bold of them to give up the largest portion of their yard to a walk-in vegetable garden," says Leigh. "People tend to think you need a big property to do that." There's also a flower garden that's lovely for table arrangements indoors and out, as well as a dining area. And recently, the homeowners added a Japanese hot tub to the back of the garden. "The garden has a bucolic feel. It's super informal – the epitome of a naturalized space – mixing together perennials, vegetables, cut flowers and herbs," says Leigh. "The result is an oasis of privacy, of calm." In other words: Zen.



### FROM YARD TO TABLE

"Because it's such a long yard, at 200 feet, it feels so private, a bit like you're in a larger property outside of the city," says landscape designer Leigh Gravenor of the charming garden ready for dining alfresco. It's easy to decorate the tabletop – the cut-flower garden, where allium, nepeta, salvia and Mexican feather grass all grow, is right beside the table.

### SERENE SCENE

A beech tree, tall hydrangeas and maples – both Japanese and paperbark – lend a sense of lushness to the backyard. Meanwhile, the pea gravel walkway skirts around the corten-steel planters to encourage an interconnectedness with the other parts of the garden and to invite people to linger. "They pull up chairs right into the vegetable garden," says Leigh, noting that the homeowner has a green thumb. "The nasturtiums, marigolds and cosmos are all from seeds."

**LANDSCAPE DESIGN,** Leigh Gravenor, Leigh Gravenor Landscape Design. **VERADEK PLANTERS,** Amazon. **CONTRACTOR,** RV Construction.

LOOKING FOR DECORATING INSPIRATION?

visit **styleathome.com**



Join the community

