

# 20 GREAT GARDEN IDEAS

Innovative design and sustainable planting flourished at this year's Melbourne International Flower & Garden show, offering plenty of great ideas to take home

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## ENTICE ALL SENSES

Water features can introduce unique drama and sensory richness to an outdoor space, as James Dawson skillfully demonstrated in *Through The Keyhole*, his entry to this year's show. Striking 'Hedgehog' lights by Mance Design took centre stage as water danced over the lights' spiky forms, splashing into a pool below. Created in support of Guide Dogs Victoria and with a focus on all five senses, *Through The Keyhole* proved sight is not the only sense that matters in garden appreciation.

**Designer:** James Dawson Landscape, 0433 872 331, [jldesign.com.au](http://jldesign.com.au).

**1 Size matters** When choosing a water feature, consider scale, colour and style; as it's a relatively permanent fixture, it should harmonise beautifully with the aesthetics of your garden and home.

**2 Location, location** Put a little thought into placing a water feature; will it clog with leaves from nearby trees or pose a child safety concern? Will you also be able to enjoy it from inside your house, and will the sound of splashing water bother you at night?

**3 Light fantastic** Outdoor lighting is a great way to add drama by spotlighting foliage and features. A garden lighting designer can create a unique display for you, or you can do it yourself, with a range of easy-to-install solar and low-voltage products available.

**4 Shades of drama** A dark palette will boldly contrast with your plantings and inject an atmosphere of mystery to your garden. Try a deep charcoal for hardscaping features, with lighter grey gravel and pops of colour to lighten the mood.

**5 Children's garden** Kid-friendly tactile features will engage children and get them playing outside. A splash of chalkboard paint turns a boring wall into an interactive attraction, while a bright ball pit makes a fun alternative to the traditional kids sandpit.

**6 Scents and sensibility** The colour and aroma of herbs can add to the sensory experience of a garden. Thoughtfully planted, they can offer as much colour and vibrancy as a bed of flowers.

**7 Keep herbs within reach** Planting kitchen staples in raised beds means that daily access becomes a back-strain-free process. Build your own, or buy ready-made planters to suit your garden.



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### SHELTERED SPACE

Creating a weatherproof spot in your garden will allow you to enjoy the outdoors year round. With its new take on garden furniture, Natural Inspirations' Geo-Dome caused quite a stir in their silver-medal-winning *The Health & Wellbeing Garden*.  
**Designer:** Natural Inspirations, 0417 539 305, [naturalinspirations.com.au](http://naturalinspirations.com.au).

**8 Warm and dry** Look for furnishings in water- and UV-resistant materials. You might also consider a raised dais, for protection against the elements at ground level.

**9 Temporary measures** If you only want to entertain outdoors for a few months of the year, small portable gazebos can be purchased from many garden stores. They're quick to assemble and can be durable enough to last all year. >