

GOING NATIVE

A Chestertown garden is transformed with luxurious new amenities and indigenous plant life

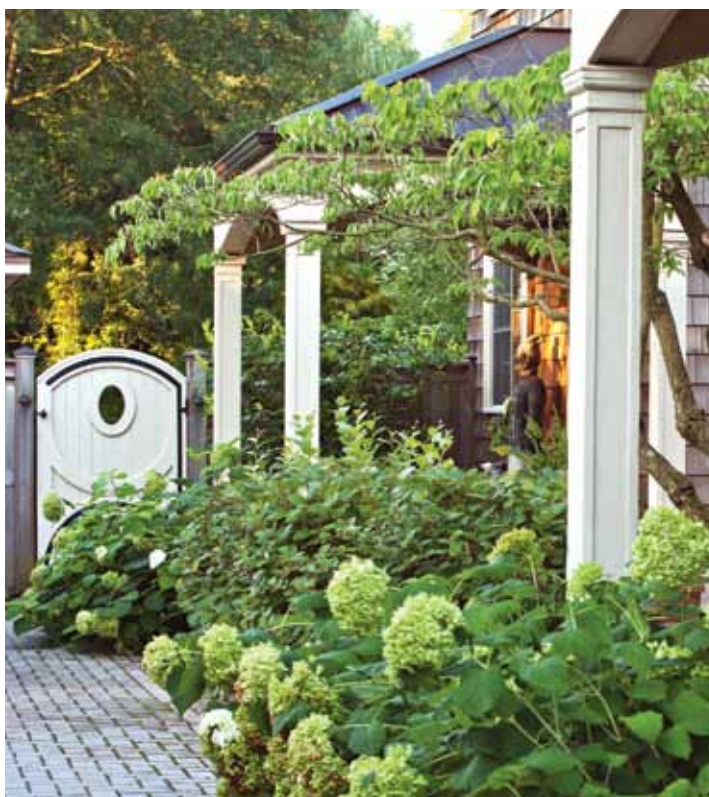
Landscape architect John Gutting had begun to revive the grounds of his daughter's home in historic Chestertown, Maryland, but, sadly, was unable to design the second, most ambitious phase of the project. After Gutting passed away in 2006, the family hired landscape architect Miles Barnard to tackle the job while respecting Gutting's design vision and dedication to indigenous plants.

The project scope was complex, especially given that the lot measured a mere half-acre. Designed to complement a renovation to the house, the new landscape plan would include a pool makeover, the design and construction of a pool house and the creation of a drainage system to capture rainwater. It also called for new garden gates, brick walls, cedar fencing and a lighting plan. "Our goal was to create a biologically diverse, indigenous landscape with quality materials consistent with the house, enhance privacy and create functional space," Barnard explains.

The homeowners now enjoy al fresco areas for dining and showering, space to sunbathe and a pool house with a kitchen and bath—amidst native plants including Sweetbay magnolia, dwarf fothergilla and Black-Eyed Susan.

"The lush landscape feels like an oasis in downtown Chestertown," says Barnard. "A space should look good, but it's most important for it to feel good and have a sense of spatial security."

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE: D. Miles Barnard, ASLA, RLA, South Fork Studio Landscape Architecture, Chestertown, Maryland. LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR: Anthony's Flowers and Landscaping, Chestertown, Maryland. POOL RENOVATION: Masten Pools, Greensboro, Maryland. PHOTOGRAPHY: Allen Russ.



MILES BARNARD'S TRADE SECRETS

- Consider the whole property as a single composition. Don't get lost designing one space without thinking about how it relates to others in terms of materials, scale, function and circulation.
- Take soil samples at the beginning of the project and have them tested for pH, calcium, organic matter, nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium. Selecting plants without knowing this information is like selecting windows for a house without knowing which direction is north.
- Make a vision statement for the project with your landscape architect at the very beginning of the process. Follow that up with a list of things you want to see or experience in the final built product. I give my clients a questionnaire when we first meet so that I can better understand their expectations.