



Multi-stemmed trees

look wonderful lit at night. Almost anything can be used for this and Viburnum, with its stems stripped of leaves to 1.5m and the canopies controlled a bit, works particularly well.

Long grasses are completely de rigueur, giving that enticing natural look we are all loving right now.

Water in a small way, from pots with waterlilies and a pair of gold fish, to shallow reflection ponds with mosaics. And rills always makes one feel happy.



Change Course

Landscape designer Franchesca Watson shares easy-to-apply trends that will usher your garden into the new year

Crazy paving is back, so roll out the slate (aka slasto). Big wobbly-edged pieces look best, but anchor it well – you may have to make a little slab of concrete foundation for each one. Flat ground cover planted in-between makes for a very cool look.

Architectural plants

appeal to us all, especially the not so sophisticated gardeners who may not understand a plant but understand a good shape when they see it. Go for something a bit different such as big swathes of flax (*Phormium tenax*) in the new bright colour ways, or a veritable forest of tree ferns of various sizes.

Lights are moving away from bollards and spike lights. Try something flat or more hidden, such as ‘cats eye’ style lighting, for a gorgeous soft glow. Lighting can be customised too. Take your cue from Paul Pamboukian Lighting Design, who slices boulders and embeds lights within them, creating a directional strip of light – garden magic!

Training plants are big news for smaller spaces. Think espalier, stilt hedges, cloud trees and living pergolas – anything except lollipops.

Astroturf, love it or hate it, is here to stay. Funky colours may be available soon – what about red with strands of purple woven through it?



Shaping the ground

adds wonder to almost any space, but it is more difficult in smaller spaces. Anything up to 40 degrees is fairly easily plantable, but mown grass is best if you want the shape to read well.

Ground-cover roses

are generally easy and cover a lot of space, taking slopes in their stride. And add security if they are planted wide enough.

Old-fashioned plants

such as *Solandra guttata* or Pot of Gold that will open on your table in the middle of your dinner party, or Pride of Madeira that will throw up its huge blue spikes in a dry part of your garden. Scented pinks and carnations are also very now. ■ Franchesca Watson ☎ 082 808 1287 🌐 francescawatson.com



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