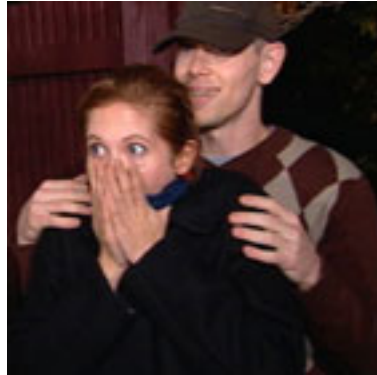


BACKYARD BLITZ

Asian Inspiration



Julia and Allison Thompson are amazing young women. Both have completed degrees at university, are now undertaking Masters degrees and are the proud owners of a cottage in the NSW Blue Mountains. They were able to purchase the home with an inheritance left by their late father. Unfortunately they have no gardening skills and the once beautiful cottage garden began to resemble a jungle, inspiring Julia to write to Backyard Blitz for help.



Design intent

Landscape designer, Andrew Davies, has drawn inspiration from Allison's love of Asian artefacts and colours to bring a distinct theme to this mountain garden. A low-level deck provides a new entertaining area at the rear of the house and enables the new garden to be admired from above. Large expanses of gravel, granite steppers and shoji screens lend an authentic feel to the space. Cool climate trees and shrubs add colour and will thrive in their new mountain home. **Design tip:** Particular attention to materials selection ensures the success of this design. Traditional combinations include granite steppers and gravel mulch, nylon screens and timber batten screens. Subdued colours complement and enhance the new structures in the garden.

Adapting this plan to your garden

Make a detailed scale drawing of your backyard (eg 1:100) showing the location of the house and

major features, then incorporate the desired elements from our makeover. As your garden will be a different size, you will need to estimate the required amounts of materials.

Note: On your plan show the locations of any services (water pipes, sewerage, power, phone, etc) so you can avoid damaging them during the makeover.

Permits and approvals: many garden structures, such as privacy screens and decks, require council approval. Always discuss your project with neighbours and the council prior to starting work. It may save you money and help the project to run smoothly.

Getting started

A bobcat cleared all unwanted vegetation from the site and excavated to subgrade levels for paving. Post holes for the deck and fencing were created and the team got to work.

Garden elements

Deck: Scott built a sleek new deck off the side of the house to encourage Julia, Allison and their friends out into the new garden. Treated pine posts (H4,90x90mm) installed vertically inground in concrete support bearers (H3,190x45mm) connected with galvanised cup head bolts. Joists (H3,90x45mm) skew-nailed perpendicular to the top of the bearers support decking boards (90x20mm) nailed down with stainless steel spiral shanked nails. A fascia plate of fibre cement sheeting will prevent potential bushfire embers from entering under the deck. **Blitz Tipz:** Speak to your local council before starting a project like this deck, as you may or may not require council approval. Council can also offer some limited design advice on timber sizes and spans.



Batten fence: a sleek new fence provides visual interest and a physical barrier to passers by. Treated pine posts (H4,90x90mm) installed vertically inground support rails (90x45mm) nailed onto the posts. Pink primed battens (50x50mm) nailed vertically against the rails at 30mm intervals allow glimpses into and out of the garden. Prefabricated metal panels create focal points behind specimen trees. Painted 'Dark Crimson' from the WattyI Solagard range, the fence provides an attractive backdrop to the new plantings. **Blitz Tipz:** Pink primed timbers are generally of higher quality than rough sawn timber - they are also more expensive. Make sure that all cut ends are primed before painting for maximum protection from the elements.



Shoji screen: a decorative shoji screen disguises the utility area in one corner while maintaining the Asian theme of the garden. Vertical treated pine posts (H4,90x90mm) support a top beam (H3,190x45mm) bolted in place with galvanised cup-head bolts. Frames constructed with pink primed battens (42x19mm) support Ripstop nylon stapled in place. Two solid screens were connected to vertical posts while the central screen slides along a rail screwed to the back of the overhead beam.



Granite steppers: Nigel laid a formal stepping stone path using granite steppers laid on a bed of 4:1 sand and cement. A surrounding mulch of quartzite gravel (20mm) provides a contrasting background and a pleasant sound underfoot. **Blitz Tipz:** Gravel mulches are best kept separate from grassed areas or garden beds with a raised edge of brick or timber.



Garden beds: Jody improved the existing site soil by incorporating organic matter through the new garden areas. A 75mm thick layer of forest fines mulch over planted areas will help to retain soil moisture, regulate soil temperature and prevent weed regrowth. **Blitz Tipz:** Spread mulches between 50mm and 100mm thick over all planted areas other than turf, making sure that mulch is not piled up around the stems of plants.

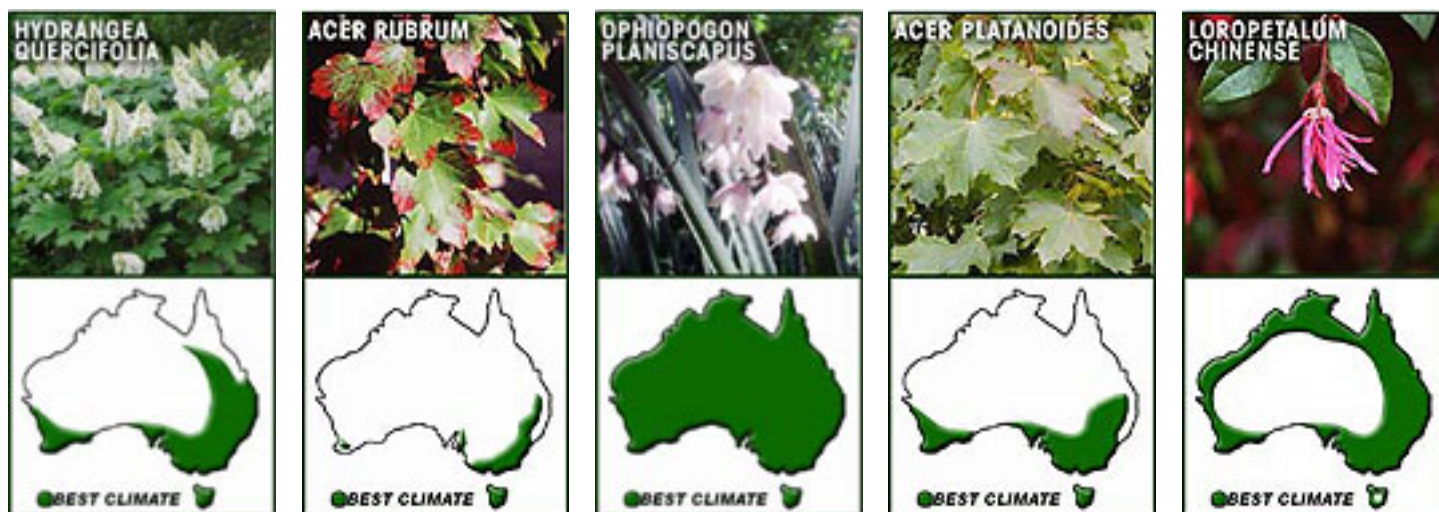
Plants

Cold climate plants have been selected for their suitability to this mountain garden and will provide year round interest.

Trees: maple 'October Glory' (*Acer rubrum* 'October Glory'), designer maple (*Acer platanoides* 'Globosum'), silver birch (*Betula pendula* 'Fastigiata')

Shrubs: Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii* 'Rose Glow'), fringe flower (*Loropetalum chinense* var. *rubrum*), oak-leaved hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia* 'Snow Queen')

Groundcovers: leather-leafed sedge (*Carex buchananii*), black mondo grass (*Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Nigrescens')



Cost and availability

We used mature plants in our makeover to create an instant effect for television. As a result, our total cost for plants and materials was \$12,120. The use of smaller plants would have reduced the cost to \$9710.

Product details

- Large granite pavers and are available from stone and granite suppliers Australia wide. The pavers we used were supplied by Sam the Paving Man in Sydney. Phone (02) 9642 5666.
- Ripstop nylon was supplied by Bretts in Sydney. It costs from \$10 per square metre. Phone (02) 9648 5622.
- Dulux Solagard exterior paints were used on the fence and shoji screens.
- Penrith Wrought Iron created the decorative fence panels. Phone (02) 4721 8328 for further details.
- Most of the plants we used are readily available at, or can be ordered from, nurseries. Nurseries can also advise on similar varieties suited to your area. You may need to contact specialist nurseries for some plants. Your local nursery should be able to provide you with contacts.
- Most other materials are available from large hardware stores or building or landscape

suppliers.

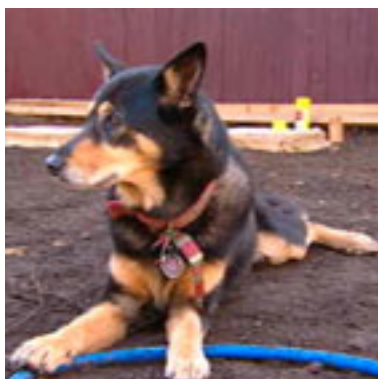
- All tools used are commonly available for hire, including the concrete mixer and the nail gun.



Getaway details

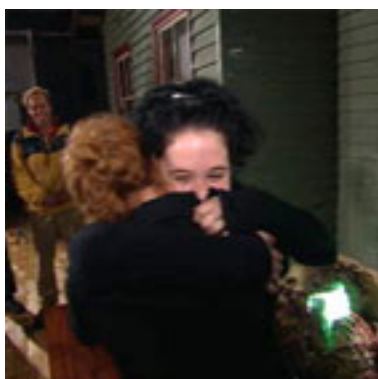
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Acknowledgments

Design by **dig**
design - ideas - gardens
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Construction by the Backyard Blitz team (all gardens are gifts from Backyard Blitz).

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For more Step by Step Constructions click [here](#)

