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## **Decorating around the garden**

**By Melissa Cameron**

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### **Straight Talk On - Decorating Around the Garden**

Do you live near a park? Most people do - there are so many around now. All levels of government recognize the value of a green environment. And, of course, if people know that government has provided them with lots of parks and trees, they'll get lots of votes. But the bottom line is - we have, in North America, some absolutely beautiful parks.

Some of the most beautiful parks are natural areas, untouched by man, with lots of trees and plants flourishing in their natural environment. For example, New York's Central Park is a welcome escape from the hustle and bustle of the city, even though it's right in the middle of the city. In California, there's Redwood Park, with its statuesque redwood trees. In Vancouver, Canada, there's Stanley Park, another beautiful acreage of natural habitat, set right next to the city.

And then there are the world-famous gardens, like Butchart Gardens in Victoria, British Columbia, the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, England, and the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens in Cape Town. These displays of flowers literally take your breath away, their beauty is so stunning.

But you don't have to go around the world to find a garden that takes your breath away. You can create your own park - your own place to go on sunny Saturday afternoons, complete with shady trees and cool summer breezes. You can create the best of parks right in your own backyard (or front yard, too, for that matter).

**Imagine your garden as a beautiful park**

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Why do people go to parks? Most would probably say that they go to parks to relax. Think of the soothing feeling you get when you walk into a quiet forest, with their pine needle beds and their sweet scent of mature wood. Or perhaps the park you most like to visit is a garden of floral delights - roses, chrysanthemums, magnolias, and perhaps even orchids. These gardens are definitely places that whisk us away from the rush of your daily lives into what almost seems like

another world. These are the gardens that are decked out in flowers, with

, statues, bridges, **fountains**

- all the things that just call out to you saying, Come. Sit down. Relax. Breathe in the wonder of nature. Who could resist that call?

But you don't need to go out to parks or gardens to find an environment so sweet. You only need to go as far as your own back yard. There's no reason why you can't create a garden of your own, just as good as any you'll find in your neighborhood, or in your tourist area. You can create your own garden.

If you don't think you're creative enough, then there are lots of landscapers who can give you expert advice. They'll come and survey your yard, and present you with a number of plans that'll give you a wonderfully unique garden that'll make you the envy of the entire neighborhood - or maybe even the city. Landscapers are trained professionals. They can design and create a whole environment of beauty from your plain old yard. But whether you hire somebody, or do it yourself, the possibilities are endless. There are literally hundreds of ways you can beautify your garden. One unique way is with a

and post in front of your home.

You can create a garden as good as any park

To come up with a wonderfully-landscaped garden, just sit back, close your eyes, and let your imagination run wild. Picture yourself sitting in your gazebo, the soft water of a gently-running fountain soothing your senses. You rise from your garden bench, and slowly wander over your little wooden bridge that crosses the babbling brook flowing through your garden. You stop here and there to admire the roses climbing the trellis, or smell the carnations crawling up the gazebo walls, perhaps picking one to take inside and put in a glass on your living-room table.

What a wonderful feeling that is, isn't it? And this is something

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totally within your range of possibility. Think of all the things you could do to turn your yard into a park. You could put little statues at the entrance, beckoning everyone that passes by to stop and commune with nature a while. If you'd like to educate your friends as they enjoy your garden, you could put up garden signs, naming the more exotic plants and flowers you've brought in. Great conversation pieces!

One of the more popular items in a creative garden these days is a pond. There are dozens of types of fish you can keep, depending on the size of the pond. You can fill it with lily pads, and floating plants. You can even put a fountain right in the pond. There's nothing like sitting in your yard with your eyes closed, listening to the soothing sound of gently-splashing water. It just seems to take you away from it all, doesn't it?

### **Gardens can be functional, too**

The functional aspects of your garden can be esthetically-pleasing, too. You can now get decorative water sprinklers with a dragonfly or butterfly on top. And garden structures don't have to be big and ugly. You can get

that look more like little guest houses, colorfully decorated with ivy

and vines. Outside the shed, you could put a garden bench, inviting someone to sit and take a deep breath of fresh air, fueled by the fragrance of blooming flowers.

You can do the same thing with your shade structures, too. You can strategically place canopies around your garden, creating little rest areas. Or you can get very creative with awnings, like attaching them to your gazebo, or a trellis, where they can be rolled out as the sun passes. Again, these are available in many attractive designs, fulfilling their function, while still providing a pleasant view.

And how about a deck, to connect all that garden beauty to your house. A deck can also be very functional, while still remaining charming and stylish. And you can outfit your deck with some great-looking teak patio furniture, and protect yourself from the sun with a colorful awning that'll match your house. Again, it can look good and provide a purpose at the same time.

### **What a picture you've painted**

That's quite a picture you've painted in your mind, isn't it? Well, it doesn't have to remain just a picture. You can turn it into reality any time you want. There are some wonderful

out there. There's sure to be one in

your neighborhood. The people there are usually very knowledgeable and very helpful. They can guide you through all the phases of creating your own park in your own yard. They'll help you find the best garden decorations. They'll show you the best garden furniture. They'll help you choose the best garden structures.

When you're developing your garden, take the time to let your creative juices flow. Come up with unique ideas that identify your garden with you. Duplicate your personality in your garden.

Melissa Cameron is a successful author providing moneysaving tips and common sense advice for consumers purchasing

and

. Her many articles offer valuable insight and

straight talk on confusing topics.

### **Children's Bedroom Decorating Ideas Begin With The Right Furniture**

**By Grace P. Fairchild**

When you are trying to come up with children's bedroom decorating ideas, it is important that you select the proper furniture to go with the kids bedroom decorating of your choice. It may not have even crossed your mind that there is actual furniture out there created specifically for decorating a kids bedroom, but these are essential for creating a child-sized space that is easy and safe for your kids to live and play with.

There are many different styles of furniture that you can use for decorating childrens bedroom, so the first thing that you will need to consider is the age of your child, the size of the room, the shape of the room, and whether or not the room is being shared. No matter what, this do it yourself bedroom decorating for kids allows your child the ability to:

\* Rest well \* Study in comfort \* Play in a safe and attractive space \* Store all belongings in easily accessible places

Among the best children's bedroom decorating ideas for creating space is to purchase multi-functional furniture. These kids bedroom decorating ideas allow the furniture to be used for many purposes such as storage, bins, bookcases, and stackable crates. Decorating kids bedroom this way allows you to keep things off the floor, but still remain within reach of the kids.

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Other real space-saving bedroom decorating ideas for kids include using bunk or loft beds when children are sharing the room. This allows two beds to be in the room, taking only the space of one. When your children aren't sleeping, they'll really appreciate these children's bedroom decorating ideas for the extra play space they have.

You will be certain to discover that when it comes to children's bedroom decorating ideas these days, the options are practically limitless.

Grace writes for

North Carolina's largest online furniture store

offering premium furniture including a large selection of children's bedroom furniture

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