

# AT HOME IN THE GARDEN

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Interior designers call it casual elegance, a style that relies on high-quality materials arranged in an informal style. It all adds up to luxurious comfort – accommodating gatherings both large and intimate, welcoming a relaxed lifestyle and offering its inhabitants a sense of well-being.

Similarly, John Kenyon, principal of Redmond-based Sundance Landscaping Inc., has interpreted casual elegance for his clients' gardens, with inviting and attractive results.

A portal to enchantment, the view from home into the garden features both the near and distant landscape. The arbor frames a Japanese maple and provides an artful focal point to the guest entry. Planted containers grace the home's threshold, further blending the way indoor and outdoor spaces are utilized.

As with any project, Kenyon approached the design for a three-acre Woodinville site by following the property's cultural conditions, contours and character.

He partnered with local architect Thomas Harle, collaborating on decisions about situating the two-story, cedar shingled home to its best advantage. Kenyon also determined placement for the original driveways and outdoor architecture (staircases, retaining walls, patios and fencing), prior to the home's construction. "Very few people actually do this – they often don't think about it until it's too late," he says, explaining how important it is for clients to seek a landscape architect's input at the start of a project in order to have the home and garden designs feel unified.

The Woodinville project serves as a case-study for his typical approach. "This home is in a woodland setting, with alders, and it has a wilder feeling around the edges," Kenyon says. He defined the site by adding raised berms at the landscape's outer perimeter, distinguishing the ornamental garden from an undeveloped greenbelt beyond its edges.

In areas further away from the home, Kenyon installed natural-looking groupings of plants, some of which were indigenous to the property, such as western sword ferns (*Polystichum munitum*), flowering currants (*Ribes sanguineum*) and vine maples (*Acer circinatum*). "Some of these plants were already growing in the woods," he says of the decision to replicate the native landscape.

"As you come closer to the home, we move from white birches (*Betula utilis jacquemontii*) to katusras (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*) and ornamental cherries," he explains. These trees are more refined than some native varieties, adding an attractive texture close to the living areas.

A circular crushed gravel driveway, edged with concrete curbs, continues the informal feeling of the landscape. As visitors approach the home's entry, they enjoy a sense of enclosure and intimacy provided by a 9-foot tall-by-12-foot long cedar arbor that faces the front doors.