

## natural appeal Peter Fudge, Peter Fudge Gardens

The focus in this Sydney garden is its view of the harbour. Designer Peter Fudge ([peterfudgegardens.com.au](http://peterfudgegardens.com.au)) ensured that it was emphasised from all points of the outdoor area, including the side of the property. The path shown here leads to a bench that takes in the incredible scenery. The path itself links visually to the rest of the garden, with a tough natural look achieved through a blend of authentic natives and hardy exotics. Trimmed into 'buns' along a flagging stone path are *westringia* and *Pittosporum tobira* 'Miss Muffet'. At the end of the path, the clipped shapes give way to the softness of willow *Agonis flexuosa* 'After Dark', which is used in groves throughout the garden, and *Lomandra* 'Tanika'. Foliage colour and textural contrasts are the key here, says Peter, with occasional flowers a bonus.

**Tip:** The casual look of the path is contrasted with the clipped low shrubs to prevent the area looking wild and overgrown.



## a warm welcome Tania Landsdorff, Tania Landsdorff Design

The owners of this beachside cottage wanted an interesting approach to their front door, reached via a side path. Tania Landsdorff made some simple changes to what was a dark, dead and boring entrance to bring texture, light and life to the space. The canopies of the existing fruit trees were lifted to give more light to the area and, at their feet, *Plectranthus* 'Nico' and *Lamium* 'Silver Beacon' were planted. These plants are kept clipped in an undulating wave of colour and texture. The *plectranthus* has prominently veined purple-green leaves, while the *lamium* has silver leaves edged in light green. They flower at different times of the year, 'Nico' with lilac spires in autumn, and *lamium*'s pink flowers arriving through spring and summer. The plants are bordered with mondo grass, and the interplay of these species creates an inviting look.

**Tip:** Choose plants that thrive in shady spots. These plants, picked for their foliage rather than for flowers, look good all year.

*Rough-hewn pavers suit free-form planting and ordered, symmetrical options are a good match for more manicured gardens*



## lounge in comfort

### Peter Fudge, Peter Fudge Gardens

The space between the back of the pool and boundary fence threatened to become a dead area in this Sydney home. Instead, designer Peter Fudge ([peterfudgegardens.com.au](http://peterfudgegardens.com.au)) has turned it into a densely planted 'secret' garden, bisected by a rustic path of partially dressed railway sleepers. A sculpture provides a focal point at the end of the path, which leads at right angles from the gravel-floored sunken lounge area of the garden, drawing visitors through. This area, with its fire pit and pod chairs, looks back toward the house. The side garden though offers an alternative view. Its planting echoes the larger garden with a naturalistic blend of exotics and natives. Grevillea, gymea lily and psyllid-resistant lilly pilli, along the back boundary, are matched with eupatorium to create a mixed planting of foliage colour and texture. A Japanese maple in the corner provides a splash of red.

**Tip:** Rather than dense planting at the back of a property, a path through the garden offers new opportunities to explore texture, colour and the height of your plants.



*Don't think of your path as just a segue between the back and the front – consider its link to the garden as a whole for a rounded space*

## vertical limit

### Matt Fearn, Fearn Studio

To allow light into the renovated back of this south-facing Bondi terrace, architect Matt Fearn ([fearnstudio.com.au](http://fearnstudio.com.au)) added two enormous skylights, as well as massive sliding doors that open to the narrow side passage. With only 1.2 metres between the side of the house and the boundary of the property, there wasn't much room – or much sunshine – for a garden. The solution was a vertical garden. Panels of 1.8-metre pre-finished fibre-cement sheeting provide the backdrop. The sheets have a raw cement look and are treated, so that they don't need to be painted or sealed. Climbing fig, *Ficus pumila*, is planted at intervals along the fence and will cover it to create a green wall, topped in spring and summer with an exuberant lacy trim from the neighbours' wisteria. Lights set into the hardwood boardwalk play across the foliage at night, changing the textural effects of the wall which operates as the backdrop to the life of the house.

**Tip:** Climbing fig needs to be trimmed flat against the wall to look its best, as younger foliage is smaller and less coarse than the mature leaves.