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SPACES

EDITED BY KATE GARDNER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN BENFORD

LUSH AND INTIMATE





Robbi Woodburn of Woodburn and Company Landscape Architecture transforms a stone courtyard into a tropical oasis

“I met with Tom Dunn from Stoney Brook Landscaping and Masonry and the owners, and they described what they were looking for. We really like to listen carefully to our clients' visions as we design. They usually have an idea of what they want, but they don't know how to get there. So I sketch with them, and you can see from their faces whether the ideas register. The whole collaboration among owners, builder, and designer is something I really enjoy, and it results in very successful designs.

“The owners had a vision of an intimate courtyard for entertaining and outdoor living with a plunge pool, spa, and garage. The existing space lent itself really well to this concept. It used to be a paved courtyard with a fireplace and stone wall at one end and a fabulous katsura tree in the center. Plus, there are existing trees on two sides of the space that created a structural green wall, providing a great framework in which to add the pool, spa, and pool deck. Once the hardscape was constructed, Stoney Brook brought in perennials and annual plantings for the lush, textured, tropical character that owners envisioned. Banana, ginger, and canna alongside nicotiana added to the feeling.

“The spa spills into the pool. Tom Dunn and his masonry crew are excellent and did a great job matching the stone work on the spa to the existing stone on the fireplace. The pool is a midrange gray color, which makes it look dark and deep, and we used a native mystic stone around the pool. It's warmer and softer.

“In the very small area, we packed a lot in. The owners entertain a lot in this space. They're right near the beach in Ogunquit, and this is a great place to have people over at the end of the day to relax and cool off. It's very secluded. It turned out that the walls of the house, the fireplace, and the garage closed off the area and made it quite intimate. The garage, which was built off to the right, helps separate the space from the street. Our job at the time was to create that fourth wall for the space, and the garage really sealed the deal and contained it.”

—Robbi Woodburn, principal of Woodburn and Company Landscape Architecture **MH+D**