

Michael Derrig's East Hampton home has a bluestone dining terrace with a raised pool area.

custom design

LANDSCAPE DETAILS FOUNDER
MICHAEL DERRIG CREATES
QUIET SPACES THROUGHOUT
THE HAMPTONS.

BY JAMEE GREGORY

What makes a young landscape architect pack his bags, encourage his wife to give up her dream job in publishing, and uproot their new baby? Why the Hamptons, of course! "I saw how many trees were being driven to Long Island," says Michael Derrig. "It was impressive that 40 percent of East Hampton was preserved. I was drawn by the beauty of the place."

Since his impetuous move in 1998, Derrig now employs more than 80 people at his Sag
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LEFT: Michael Derrig's poolside pergola with white wisteria and crepe myrtle Natchez in bloom. BELOW: An antique bench situated below a Trident Maple.



“Gardening is about evolution and attention.”

—MICHAEL DERRIG

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Harbor-based landscape firm, Landscape Details, which creates exquisite exteriors for properties ranging from a Sag Harbor cottage to a 48-acre estate in Bridgehampton. The company offers everything from design and installation to masonry, lighting, and large tree planting; with every design, Derrig carves exterior spaces and creates outdoor oases. “My customers keep me on my toes,” he says. “They are quick studies and full partners.”

At his own dream house, set on a half-acre close to the beach and East Hampton village, Derrig was drawn by majestic arborvitae trees and the opportunity to scale down, with less lawn and a more intimate environment for his family. A privet surrounds the property and a stone wall and a black Dutch-lacquer gate are the first things a visitor sees. Derrig also installed a stone-seat wall by the pool, which is behind the 1940s Cape Cod-style home and took a large London plane tree from a client who wanted it cut down. “I used it as an anchor, softening the house and making the landscape feel mature,” he says. “It provides a frame as you enter the driveway.”

A two-tiered landscape with stone steps by Landscape Details.

Derrig's landscape also includes Japanese holly, green-leaved Japanese maples, and hydrangea “Endless Summer” and “Blue Decker.” Antique granite paving stones set in grass create a geometric design in the parking courtyard. He put in an English-style cutting garden, filled with peonies, hollyhocks, salvias, sage, dahlias, and roses, leading to a private garden just outside his bedroom, with a hot tub, outdoor shower, seating, and music. Two pet Labradors help keep the property deer-free.

His home illustrates his “less is more” mantra—Derrig believes that people put too much in

their gardens and lose cohesiveness. He prefers geometry, structure, and fewer varieties of plant material. Color is limited to a few hydrangea beds and the cutting garden.

“Throwing perennials everywhere and over-planting is not wise,” he says. “Gardening is about evolution and attention. I urge clients not to be afraid of letting go. It's far better to toss overgrown plants than to dig them up and move them around where there is no room and no plan.” *Landscape Details, 1796 Sag Harbor Tpk., Sag Harbor, 725-0018; landscape detailsinc.com* **H**

