



Landscape designer Scott Brown turned an empty courtyard into a peaceful Japanese garden with green foliage, a stunning water feature and

traditional Japanese elements, creating a low-maintenance masterpiece which he's proud to share.

The clients travel often and do business in Japan, so they understood the true nature of Japanese garden design. Sometimes, when asked to design a Japanese garden, I need to establish whether in fact they desire a real one or if they're just after the tranquillity a Japanese garden offers. The pure simplicity of Zen Buddhism has been incorporated into this courtyard, with the mantra 'less is more'.

There are only three types of plants used in this garden – a deliberate decision to minimise the number of different elements in the space, both planted and built. This creates a sense of tranquillity and helps one to subconsciously relax. The trees are lacebark maples *Acer palmatum dissectum* 'Seiryu' and their open foliage softens the area and allows a degree of visual penetration for an unblocked view of the entire courtyard. Their graceful growth provides some height to the garden – this vertical texture is very important. Mass-planted dwarf mondo grass, *Ophiopogon japonicus* 'Kyoto dwarf', forms tufted mats covering the raised mounds at one end of the simulated lagoon. This provides relief from the gravel and sand ground treatment and incorporates greenery in a simple, clean form without adding visual 'noise' to the garden. Japanese sacred bamboo, *Nandina domestica*, while not a true bamboo, provides some oriental flavour as well as more height.

The 'lagoon' is simulated – there is no water. The use of a feature rock over which water cascades, provides the gentle sound and tranquil view of running water. The water is pumped from a sump beneath the rock – there are no mosquitoes, fish or bodies of water to clean or remove, so the entire set-up is low maintenance.

This garden is designed in such a way as to afford a serene outlook from the lounge room and kitchen, regardless of the time of day or night. It can be enjoyed from within the home as well as from within the garden itself – meaning pleasure may be derived from it no matter what the weather conditions.



For more information on **Scott Brown Landscape Design** phone (03) 9417 6654 or visit www.scottbrown.com.au





MY FAVOURITE GARDEN

ZEN *space*

