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**Antique-Inspired Kitchen Design
in Indianapolis, Indiana**

A Merging of Worlds

A thoughtful design intermingled this Virginia couple's disparate styles, creating a garden that's as timeless as it is unconventional.



The plantings throughout the yard take into account the region's cooler climate. "A lot of the perennials and deciduous shrubs lose their leaves," landscape architect Joseph Richardson says. "So, we love the idea of having the right balance of deciduous and evergreen materials so that there's always some structure in the garden in wintertime."

Combining two distinct tastes into one yard isn't often a recipe for landscape success. Luckily, home builder Michael Winn and his wife, Melinda, turned to the right person when designing a one-of-a-kind setting for their newly built Virginia cottage. "I think of this project as the ultimate husband-and-wife mediation," says landscape architect Joseph Richardson, who was hired when the previously engaged designer's plans failed to inspire.

While Michael favored classic Western elements in his outdoor space, Melinda's Japanese American heritage inspired a desire for a Japanese garden—a compromise that needed to exist within a space that


presented unique logistical challenges. "Probably the biggest component of the project was how to marry these two unique styles seamlessly," Joseph notes of the aesthetic side of the design.

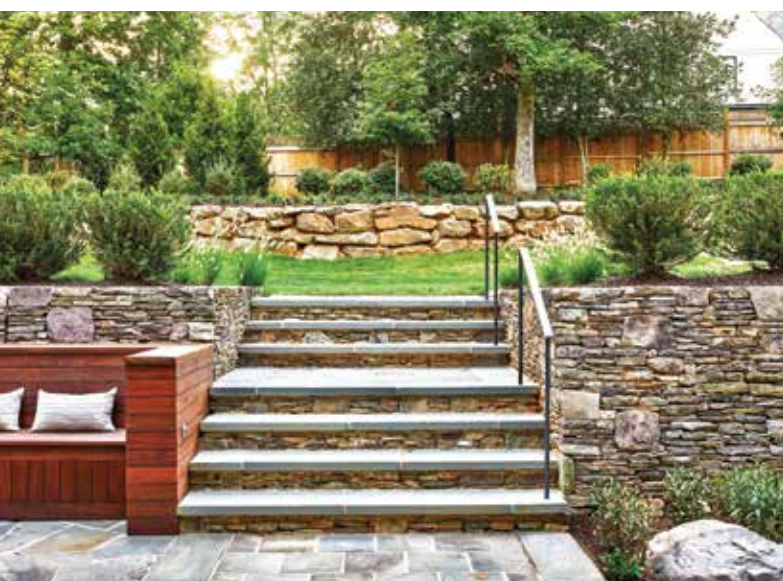
Rather than relegating the Japanese elements to an obscured side portion of the lawn, as the previous architect had planned, Joseph made the Eastern-inspired section a centerpiece, using it to connect the two functional terraces that facilitate outdoor gatherings. A path of floating pavers meanders between the two, lined with boulders that contribute an organic touch—carefully selected and transported to preserve layers of moss and lichen.



The feature introduces extra texture and pattern to a hardscape that uses these elements in a very intentional way. While Joseph used a Pennsylvania flagstone throughout, the gathering spaces are based atop irregular patterns, while the stairs sit above rectilinear stones—and everything is lined in a 12-inch border. “So, the stepping-stones, the terraces, the walkways, the border—it’s all the same stone, but done in different ways to help you define space,” Joseph says.

Further adding to the variety of pattern and texture—and addressing a need for structural integrity in light of a near-13-foot gradation—Joseph opted for a less conventional alternative to the concrete retaining wall. “It’s a gravity wall,” he explains of the stacked-stone structure that retains the earth through its trapezoidal shape and the weight of the stones themselves. “This wall was built just like you would build a wall 100 years ago or more.”

Careful attention to detail is evident in the living elements of the design as well, which follow a “fading formality” approach. While classic boxwoods welcome visitors to the front door, following the stairs up to the back lawn reveals a looser, less structured planting style. Playing host to casual sporting matches and movie nights under the stars, the lawn offers an oasis steps away from the flawlessly blended—and functional—spaces that make this project perfectly personal and truly unique. 



TEXT BY BETHANY ADAMS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY STACY ZARIN GOLDBERG



(Top) A hand-carved Japanese lantern is the focal point of the center garden, which also features a Japanese maple that was handpicked for the spot. “We probably went through several dozen trees to hand-tag that little Japanese maple, and it was a perfect fit for the space,” Joseph says. (Left) To soften the stone-heavy design, Joseph added a bench made of ipe wood in a warm finish. “It’s a tropical hardwood but extremely durable outdoors,” he says, noting it’s the only wood element in the project.