

Into the GARDEN

The air is sweet, the soil has thawed and the sun is (finally) shining. But what to do with that lucklustre yard or terrace this year? As growing season shifts into high gear, **Globe Style** hits the ground running, offering design and planting templates for a range of garden styles. Let's get the parterre started



PHOTO BY MICHAEL GRAYDON (WWW.MICHAELGRAYDON.CA)

A formal affair

You don't have to live in the Palace of Versailles to realize a formal garden, which, for all the structure and prescription, can be achieved in all kinds of spaces. For example, the neatly trimmed parterres containing the conical topiary in this grand Toronto space by architect Anthony Belcher (www.anthonibelcherarchitect.com) and OJ Muller Landscape Contractor (www.ojmuller.com) are arranged over a wide footprint, but even just one would offer similar impact in a much smaller yard. Alternatively, an allée composed of manicured linden trees (used elsewhere in this design) would work well in a narrow space. A key component, à la many a Parisian *jardin*, is gravel underfoot. And to offset all that green, introduce some containers (preferably stone) overflowing with blooms (ideally white) and a pair of small flowering trees. Whatever the details and above all else, remember the formalist mantra: symmetry, symmetry, symmetry.

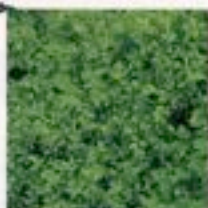
COOL TOOL

You can keep topiary crisp with traditional shears, but why not make life easier? Black & Decker's soft-grip electric HedgeHog Trimmer is as easy to wield as it is effective.



A locking on/off switch guarantees safety, while 24-inch dual-action blades ensure the sharpest of shaves. \$99.99 through www.blackanddecker.com.

PLANT LIST



Looking to box in your formal garden? Try **European box**, the ideal and most common hedging material. Other good bets include holly, myrtle and privet.



Hardy and long-lasting, **geraniums** are excellent picks for both beds and containers, offering pleasing mounding forms and attractive foliage.



For a blast of spring colour, install an even number of **flowering trees**, such as crabapple, cherry or magnolia. Prune them frequently to maintain health and shape.

DEFINITION

Parterre

A formal garden construction consisting of level planting beds edged in stone or tightly clipped hedging around gravel paths. Focal points such as topiary, fountains or other raised elements sometimes sit in the centre. The whole is intended to form a pleasing, usually symmetrical pattern.