

36. The verdant backdrop in this lush garden, designed by Scott Leung of Eckersley Garden Architecture, allows flowers including hydrangea and New Zealand lily to glow a little brighter.

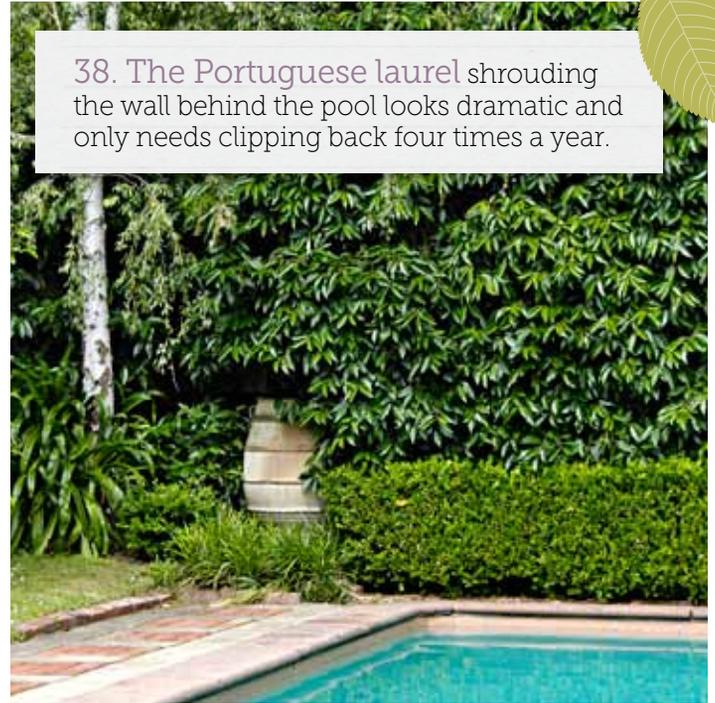
leafy retreat

Careful planning and abundant greenery bring a touch of Europe to this enchanting garden

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37. Choose pieces of portable furniture (try Jati for a similar setting) over built-in benches for an adaptable outdoor area. "I like spaces to be flexible, where you can introduce a lounge to catch the sun or bring in a table for entertaining," says Scott.



38. The Portuguese laurel shrouding the wall behind the pool looks dramatic and only needs clipping back four times a year.

39. Mix and match foliage. The box hedge at the foot of the Portuguese laurel adds a complementary border and another take on the garden's green theme.



40. If you're worried about leaves falling in your pool, opt for deciduous vine like Boston ivy that only shed their foliage for three weeks in autumn.

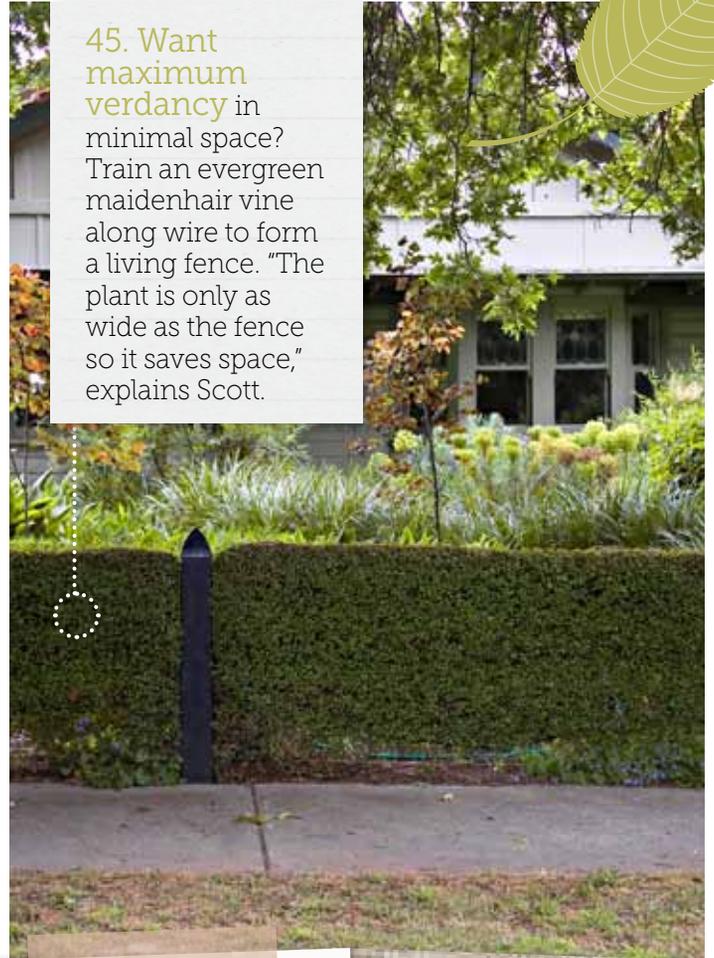
41. Despite the image it presents, this garden doesn't require too much maintenance. The lawn needs weekly attention but Scott concentrated the grass into contained areas to minimise maintenance. He also suggests ditching the lawn and opting for low-lying natives – try native viola.

42. Create a European look with a variety of pavers - try Eco Outdoor's 'Architectural Concrete' flooring in Coco. >



43. Choose ribbons of plantings to give your garden a lush feel. Ground-level liriop, mondo grass and veronica lead the eye to a structural hedge line with cannas and giant liriop behind it.

44. Give plants time to establish. For example, the earlier you shape hedges the better. "Plants will multi-stem and thicken, but if you let them go they won't form a decent screen," says Scott.



45. Want maximum verdancy in minimal space? Train an evergreen maidenhair vine along wire to form a living fence. "The plant is only as wide as the fence so it saves space," explains Scott.



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46. Use varying shades of the same colour. The pretty purple buds of the limonium stand out like dainty gems, and echo the tones of nearby hydrangeas.

47. Opt for Boston ivy (left) to add a flowing natural element to a pergola. This deciduous climber provides cooling shade in summer, autumn colour and lets in the winter sun. Posts finished in Bristol Treacle blend effortlessly with the garden's overall scheme.

48. Try a natural roof: canopies create a mood of seclusion.



51. Plant like with like. "Mass planting looks carefree, but it is also neater," says Scott.

49. Red bricks were laid out to form a border between the path and garden, and usher visitors to the front door.

50. View green as a neutral. "There are no fashion fads within the garden. It's about a simple palette of greens," says Scott. "Greens are not contrived or forced and they immediately put people at ease."