

# *Simply Beautiful*

7 MUST-HAVE PLANT TYPES  
FOR BEAUTIFUL GARDEN DESIGN



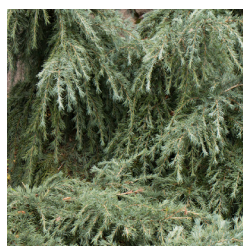
  
**MONROVIA®**  
*Grow Beautifully*



# Design Made Easy

**THE SIMPLY BEAUTIFUL DESIGN GUIDE** makes designing a garden straightforward with a simple approach that includes seven types of plants. Ranging from trees to groundcovers, these seven plant types play important roles in the garden. Inside the guide, you'll find three stand-out choices for each plant type, as well as an explanation for why you need it in your garden.

All the elements come together in an illustrated garden design by landscape designer Lisa Nunamaker on the last page. Use it as-is for your next design project or use it as a jumping-off point to create your own. Once you're ready to start designing, remember to share your garden designs with us. Tag us in social media @MonroviaPlants.



## ON THE COVERS

**FRONT COVER:** Blackhawks Big Bluestem grass and boxwoods add repeating interest and structure to this patio setting. Grace 'N Grit® Pink Shrub Roses add a punch of color in a large container, and small maple trees provide shade, vertical interest, privacy, and dramatic color in the fall. A mature evergreen magnolia tree stands tall at the back.

**BACK COVER:** Magic Carpet Spirea

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Doreen Wynja



# 1. Small Tree

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ANCHOR THE GARDEN AND LIFT THE EYE

**A SMALL TREE ANCHORS THE GARDEN** and provides vertical structure that lifts the eye. Mature heights for these trees can range anywhere from 5' to 20'; choose a tree with a mature size that fits your space. Once you know the size you're looking for, consider what other roles you'd like to see fulfilled in the landscape. Dramatic foliage, prolific spring blooms, evergreen leaves, and unique structure can all be achieved with the right small tree. Japanese maple, redbud, dwarf magnolia, crape myrtle, fig, and small conifers are all great choices for this role.



IN THIS PHOTO: Bracken's Brown Beauty Magnolia with Sundance Mexican Orange Blossom, Fanal Astillbe, and Golden Variegated Sweet Flag DESIGN: Robin Parsons





**CRIMSON QUEEN JAPANESE MAPLE**  
RICH, DEEP FOLIAGE

A stunning dwarf cultivar with a low-branching, weeping form that makes it a truly unique specimen in the garden. The foliage maintains a deep crimson all season long and turns a vibrant scarlet in autumn.

FULL TO PARTIAL SUN | UP TO 10' TALL AND WIDE | ZONES 5-8



**LAVENDER TWIST® REDBUD**  
CASCADING SPRING BLOOMS

An umbrella of cascading branches is covered in lavender-pink flowers in early spring. Heart-shaped leaves follow in summer. The perfect small specimen tree to act as a focal point in border, bed, or entryway.

FULL SUN | UP TO 6' TALL AND 8' WIDE | ZONES 5-9



**BABY GRAND® MAGNOLIA**  
EVERGREEN TREE WITH BELOVED FLOWERS

This special dwarf evergreen magnolia is an exclusive discovery from Australia. If you always wanted a magnolia but didn't have space, this is the perfect tree for you. The large creamy-white, and lemon-scented flowers bloom in spring and summer.

FULL SUN | UP TO 10' TALL AND WIDE | ZONES 7-9



## 2. Foundation Shrub

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SOFTEN, SCREEN, AND ADD STRUCTURE

**IF YOU'RE DESIGNING A GARDEN** near or around a house, your first decision is what to use as a foundation plant or hedge. Foundation plants are often shrubs that are planted in repetition or "en masse" to provide privacy or soften and screen the foundation of the home. These plants are essential for adding height and structure to the back of the garden, so will often play a big role in gardens away from the house, as well. Evergreen and deciduous shrubs like boxwood, pittosporum, hydrangea, pieris, holly, compact rhododendron, and spirea are all great foundation shrubs.



IN THIS PHOTO: Chicagoland Green® Boxwood with Golden Flare Azalea





**SCALLYWAG™ HOLLY**  
**YEAR-ROUND INTEREST**

This dense, rounded, and upright holly offers evergreen fall and winter color with shiny, dark green foliage that takes on a purple-burgundy hue as temperatures drop. Scallywag is a male holly pollinizer that does not produce berries.

FULL SUN | UP TO 4' TALL AND 3' WIDE |  
 ZONES 5-9



**GREEN VELVET BOXWOOD**  
**CLASSIC HEDGE PLANT**

A full-bodied evergreen shrub that provides cold-hardy, year-round structure down to Zone 4. The dense, rounded structure is perfect for forming low hedges en masse or repeated structure in small numbers. Develops rounded form when unpruned.

FULL TO PARTIAL SUN | UP TO 4' TALL AND  
 WIDE | ZONES 4-9



**SEASIDE SERENADE®**  
**CAPE LOOKOUT HYDRANGEA**  
**DRAMATIC BLOOMS**

Long-lasting, large blooms emerge pale green, turn pure white, and then blush pink as they age. Dark green foliage turns bronze in autumn. Sturdy stems make great cut flowers and don't flop.

PARTIAL SUN AND FILTERED SHADE | UP TO  
 3.5' TALL AND 3' WIDE | ZONES 4-9



# 3. Sculptural Plants

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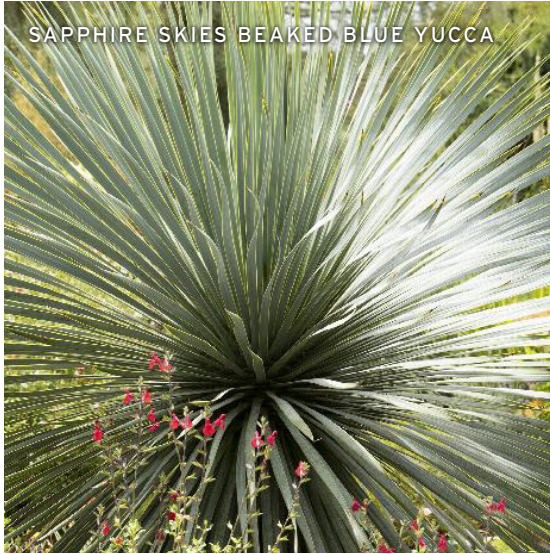
ADD ENTICING VISUAL INTEREST AND STRUCTURE

**STRONG SCULPTURAL PLANTS PROVIDE VISUAL INTEREST** and structure in the garden, and can act as an intriguing focal point or specimen. They often have a bold architectural element or a unique branching structure (e.g. twisted, weeping, curved) that draws the eye and encourages further admiration of, and interest in, the garden. The right plant can turn a disinterested visitor into a garden enthusiast. The striking structure of yucca, cordyline palms, weeping conifers, upright grasses, and large succulents like aloe makes them great sculptural and specimen plants.



IN THIS PHOTO: Sapphire Skies Beaked Blue Yucca





### **SAPPHIRE SKIES BEAKED BLUE YUCCA**

#### **STIFF, ARCHITECTURAL STATEMENT**

Plants with narrow, stiff, sword-like leaves make great architectural specimens in the garden, and Sapphire Skies is a bold example of a striking sculptural plant. The baby-blue leaves form a dense crown atop a single trunk.

FULL SUN | SLOWLY GROWS UP TO 10' TALL AND 4' WIDE | ZONES 5-11



### **FEELIN' BLUE DEODAR CEDAR**

#### **UNIQUE BRANCHING AND STRUCTURE**

A standout example of unique evergreen structure, Feelin' Blue is a dwarf cedar with a weeping, spreading form and cool blue-green foliage. Its intriguing form is perfect in shrub borders, naturalistic compositions, and rock gardens.

FULL SUN | SLOWLY REACHES UP TO 5' TALL AND 10' WIDE | ZONES 6-9

### **OVERDAM FEATHER REED GRASS**

#### **VERTICAL STRUCTURE AND MOVEMENT**

An upright grass that provides vertical structure, catches the light, moves in the wind, and looks gorgeous combined with bright, blooming perennials. This waterwise grass is a favorite for sunny, dry climates.

FULL SUN | FOLIAGE UP TO 2' TALL AND WIDE WITH BLOOM STALKS UP TO 6' TALL | ZONES 4-9





# 4. Low, Slow Spreaders

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UNITE THE FABRIC OF THE GARDEN

**TRUE MULTI-TASKERS, LOW-GROWING AND SOFTLY SPREADING** perennials are essential to a well-designed garden. They soften edges, borders, retaining walls, and pathways; suppress weeds; add color and texture; hide the legs of shrubs and taller perennials; and unify the “fabric” of the garden. These are must-have foreground plants that add to the depth of a landscape. There are many choices, but cranesbill, sedge, forest grass, sedum, heuchera, and bellflower are all examples of fantastic low-growing perennials that unify and soften the garden.



IN THIS PHOTO: Ice Dance Japanese Sedge and Golden Japanese Forest Grass



**ICE DANCE JAPANESE SEDGE**  
**GENTLE SPREADER FOR SHADE**

A gently spreading, non-invasive, and grass-like groundcover that suppresses weeds and ties together a garden. This lush sedge looks stunning in a woodland or Asian-inspired garden. Slender, green leaves with creamy margins brighten shady gardens.

PARTIAL SHADE | REACHES 1' TALL AND  
SLOWLY SPREADS BY RHIZOMES TO FORM A  
CARPET | ZONES 5-9



**ROZANNE CRANESBILL**  
**EASY-CARE, LONG-BLOOMING**  
**PERENNIAL**

At home anywhere from lush cottage gardens to low-water rock gardens thanks to its easy-going nature, mat-like spreading habit, long-blooming purple flowers, and verdant, deep-green foliage. A perfect spreading perennial for softening the landscape.

FULL OR PARTIAL SUN | UP TO 20" TALL AND  
24" WIDE | ZONES 4-10



**ITSY BITSY® WHITE FALSE HEATHER**  
**CONSISTENTLY BLOOMING, LOW-**  
**GROWING SHRUB**

This ground-hugging, evergreen shrub is perfect for covering exposed legs of older shrubs, nestling into stones, softening edges, and lining a pathway. A year-round wonder in mild climates, with glossy evergreen leaves and consistent, small white blooms.

FULL OR PARTIAL SUN | UP TO 12" TALL AND  
24" WIDE | ZONES 9-11



# 5. Container

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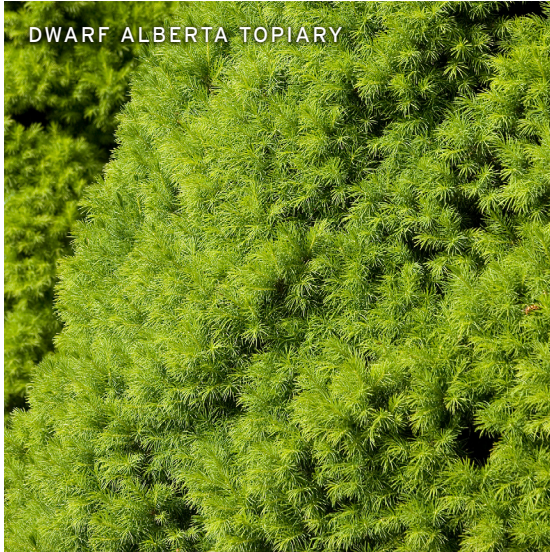
ADD ALL-SEASON DRAMA AND ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

**WHETHER TUCKED INTO THE GARDEN** or front and center in an entryway, containers add dimension and drama to any space. Plus, they provide all-season architectural interest. Choose containers large enough to hold bold, distinctive plants and you'll be rewarded with a captivating focal point year-round. Choose from boxwoods, spruce, juniper, and dwarf olive for an evergreen topiary that stands the test of time. Or go for a sculptural succulent or palm like agave, aloe, yucca, cordyline or sago in dry, hot climates to make an impact.



IN THIS PHOTO: Dwarf Alberta Spruce spiral with Junior Walker™ Catmint





#### **DWARF ALBERTA TOPIARY** **EVERGREEN TOPIARY**

This dense, cone-shaped dwarf conifer makes a formal statement and adds year-round interest when artistically pruned into spirals, poodles, and even small Christmas trees. A superb container specimen that looks great in any season.

FULL OR PARTIAL SUN | UP TO 8' TALL AND 5' WIDE UNPRUNED | ZONES 2-8



#### **SPIRAL ALOE** **SCULPTURAL SUCCULENT**

This agave forms a solitary rosette with a stunning geometric spiral pattern that becomes more dramatic as it grows. Brilliant in a container where the remarkable structure can be put on full display. Requires excellent drainage. Move indoors in cooler zones.

FULL OR PARTIAL SUN | 1' TALL AND 2' WIDE | ZONES 7-9



#### **TORBAY DAZZLER DRACAENA PALM** **TROPICAL FLAIR**

Perfect as a tropical container specimen, this palm-like evergreen tree has bright, narrow leaves with ribbons of green, creamy gold, and reddish highlights near the center. Fragrant, white flowers bloom in the summer. Move indoors in cooler zones.

FULL SUN | SLOWLY REACHES 18' TALL AND 8' WIDE IN THE LANDSCAPE | ZONES 9-11



# 6. Dramatic Foliage

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MAKE A SEASONAL IMPACT

**SHRUBS, PERENNIALS, AND TREES** with dramatic foliage add texture and color that make an impact through the seasons. Ranging in shades from bright chartreuse to dark purple, these plants are all non-conformists in their color palette. Even better are plants with foliage that turns shades of gold, orange, or red in autumn. This autumnal color change adds excitement to the garden as temperatures dip and flowers fade. Look to shrubs like ninebark, St. John's Wort, smoke bush, fringe flower, spirea, and chokeberry for dramatic foliage from spring through autumn.



IN THIS PHOTO: Royal Purple Smoke Tree and FloralBerry® Pinot St. John's Wort





MAGIC CARPET SPIREA

### **MAGIC CARPET SPIREA** **EYE-CATCHING AUTUMN GLOW**

A compact, mounded shrub with foliage that stuns in every season. Leaves emerge a vibrant red, mature to bright gold, and turn a rich russet red in fall. The extraordinary combination of colors brightens any landscapes.

FULL SUN | UP TO 24" TALL AND WIDE |  
ZONES 4-9

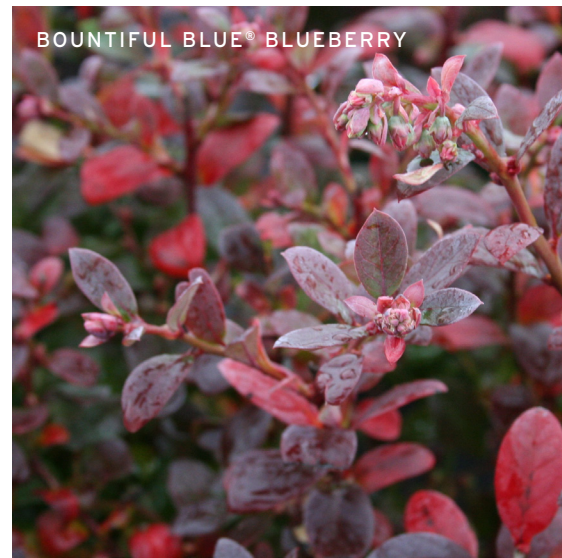


LILLA SMOKE BUSH

### **LILLA SMOKE BUSH** **RICH COLOR AND UNIQUE BLOOMS**

A dwarf form of the beloved Royal Purple Smoke Tree, this small shrub has a rounded habit that makes a big impact with dark oval leaves that turn shades of bright orange, coral, and red in the fall. Displays unique blooms.

FULL OR PARTIAL SUN | UP TO 4' TALL AND  
WIDE | ZONES 4-8



BOUNTIFUL BLUE® BLUEBERRY

### **BOUNTIFUL BLUE® BLUEBERRY** **SPRING BLOOMS, SUMMER BERRIES, FALL COLOR**

This award-winning variety has blue-green foliage that turns a deep red in fall. Add the dramatic fall display to the profuse spring bloom and abundant crop of sweet, juicy berries and you have 3 seasons of impact.

FULL SUN | UP TO 4' TALL AND WIDE |  
ZONES 6-10



# 7. Spring Surprise

CELEBRATE A NEW GROWING SEASON

**GARDENS RICH IN SPRING BLOOMS** reflect the excitement, rejuvenation, and joy of the season. Plants that bloom early in spring offer a visual celebration of a new growing season, as well as nectar for emerging pollinators. If you choose your plants wisely, your garden will burst to life at the first sign of spring. Sand cherry, forsythia, wisteria, camellia, azalea and hellebore offer a tried-and-true prolific spring bloom. Planting trees like redbud, magnolia, cherry and plum is also a great way to add more spring excitement to the garden.



GET THE LOOK: Ice N' Roses® Red, Winter Jewels® Rose Quartz, and Cascade™ Blush Hellebores





**DARKSTAR® PURPLE LEAF SANDCHERRY**  
**UPRIGHT SPRING COLOR**

A Monrovia exclusive with a compact, upright habit, and dense branching from the ground up. Perfect for early color in shrub borders, the white-pink flowers appear in spring before the dramatic maroon foliage emerges.

FULL OR PARTIAL SUN | UP TO 5' TALL AND 4' WIDE | ZONES 3-9



**DOUBLE SHOT® WATERMELON AZALEA**  
**VIBRANT SPRING COLOR**

A compact rebloomer that puts on a bright display twice a year. The prolific, showy pink flowers welcome spring, then return in late summer for another punch of color. Evergreen foliage looks great all year long.

FULL OR PARTIAL SHADE | UP TO 3' TALL AND WIDE | ZONES 6-9

**WINTER DREAMS™ DOUBLE FANTASY HELLEBORE**  
**FIRST BLOOMS OF SPRING**

Beautiful, semi-double, and outward-facing blooms with ruffled petals and a circle of gold stamens look truly magical in late winter and early spring. Dark green leaves form clumps that accentuate the pure-white buds.

FULL OR PARTIAL SHADE | UP TO 12" TALL AND 16" WIDE | ZONES 3-9



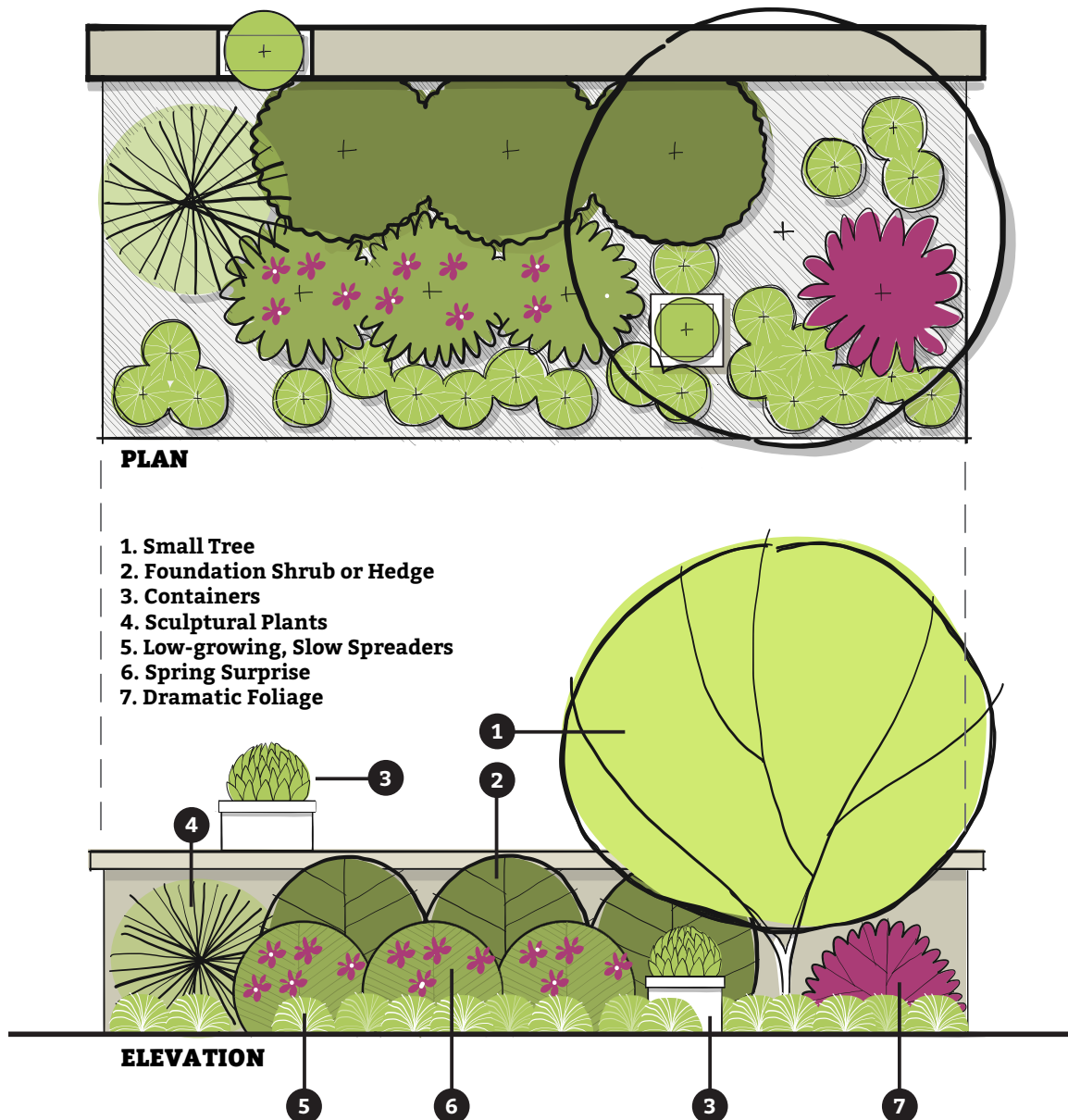


# Pulling It All Together

## HOW TO CREATE A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN

**YOU NOW HAVE ALL THE KEY ELEMENTS** of a beautiful garden in your hands, but how do they come together? We asked landscape designer and educator, Lisa Nunamaker of Paper Garden Workshop, to help you visualize the possibilities. The key is to create contrasts and layers with your plants, allowing them to mingle in exciting ways while maintaining a structure that feels natural.

To give you an idea of how to get started, Lisa created a “plan” view and an “elevation” view of the same design. She says, “when designing a planting bed, it can be easier to visualize when you draw it in both plan and elevation because you can see how the plants look in relation to each other and surrounding objects. It’s a powerful combination.”







## *Looking for More Ideas?*

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### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Find more expert design lessons in the design section of our "Be Inspired" blog.

[www.monrovia.com/be-inspired/category/design.html](http://www.monrovia.com/be-inspired/category/design.html)

Get the "Shades of Beautiful" plant palette guide [here](#).

[https://go.monrovia.com/hubfs/Garden\\_Color\\_Guide21.pdf](https://go.monrovia.com/hubfs/Garden_Color_Guide21.pdf)

Get the "Low Water, High Beauty" drought-tolerant gardening guide [here](#).

[https://go.monrovia.com/hubfs/LowWater\\_HighBeauty\\_Guide.pdf](https://go.monrovia.com/hubfs/LowWater_HighBeauty_Guide.pdf)

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