



NZ House & Garden, November 1995



A Capital Classic

Classical pillars and paving stones glimmering in the bright sunshine... Adie and Matt McClelland have created just such a Mediterranean garden among the windy hills of Wellington, says Jillian Fryer.

“Three years ago it was just a typical suburban back lawn sloping down to a perennial border” said Adie. “All that’s left of it now is that *Pittosporum crassifolium*, as a shade tree!”

With the help of local landscape designer Philip Roche the McClellands created a series of terraced, tiled courtyards stretching from the veranda via broad paved steps to a rose pergola and barbecue area hidden against the fence-line.



Nine columnar cypresses punctuate a sea of lavender, with large terracotta urns contrasting warmly with the greenery. “Instead of stone columns, we’ve used Italian cypress which keep their shape and golden colour throughout the year,” said Adie.

In mid-summer purples and reds brighten the scene, with the flowering bracts of *Lavandula stoechas* and splashes of potted colour. The brilliant red of ‘Dublin Bay’ roses on the pergola is highlighted by potted petunias, fibrous begonias and pelargoniums.

“A small sloping space works best with terracing,” said Adie, “and it’s also pretty childproof,” as evidenced by two-year-old Maisy who enjoys jumping on the concrete seats which mother plans to enliven with red-striped squabs. “We love the terraced gardens on hillsides in Greece – we took Maisy back with us last year,” said Adie.

The skillful use of line makes the garden appear larger and more complexed than it is. “It’s so simple really – just terraces of lavenders and conifers.”

The bold design of the garden with strong vertical lines of the *Cupresses sempervirens* ‘Swane’s Golden’, and distinctive urns might be simple, but it is also effective.