

THIS SUMMER'S HOTTEST OUTDOOR FURNITURE

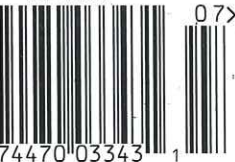
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# Design IS IN THE Details

A Denver garden designer reveals how she has transformed her home and garden into a cohesive, fresh retreat.

BY JILL VIVED  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMILY MINTON REDFIELD

CLARI DAVIS HAS ACHIEVED THE DREAM that has eluded many a homeowner: a sense of peace in her home. Built in the 1950s and remodeled several times through the last 30 years, this Hilltop-neighborhood gem is a quiet sanctuary. From the contemporary gardens to the cool and sophisticated interior, the home is a work of balance both inside and out. We sat down with Ms. Davis to find out just how she created this timeless, Zen-like abode.

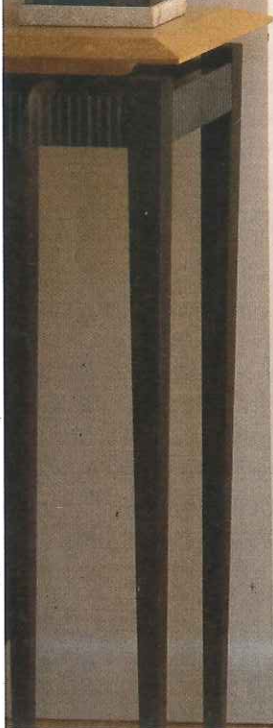
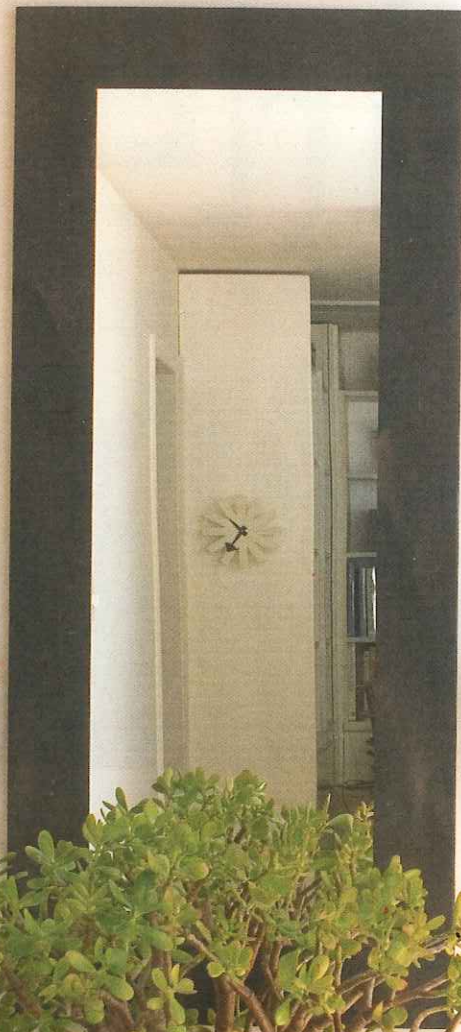
**CH&L:** You are a garden designer by profession. Tell us how designing for the outdoors inspired your design choices for your own home.

**Clari Davis:** My primary rule is that the exterior should be indicative of the interior; there should be a good balance between the two. When we first considered remodeling 30 years ago, we were supposed to be just adding one room to the back of the house, a studio for me. Then one thing led to another and we were redoing the whole house. My son is an

(right) For garden designer Clari Davis, the most important element in designing a home is balance between the exterior and the interior. Here, the cement planters filled with globe arborvitae are repeated in the front courtyard and in the backyard to provide continuity between the spaces. Inside, Davis used circular shapes and a neutral palette—both reminiscent of the round planters guests pass on their way in.

(opposite) Using indoor plants and floral elements in the sunroom creates a balance between the garden and the home's interior. The floral plates by Robert Mapplethorpe add to the circular motif found throughout the home.







architect and designed the contemporary space, which turned out to be a great feat of engineering. I designed the garden with lots of woody materials, lots of green, to bring to the garden the same serene feel as the interior. I get a great sense of peace when looking out into the garden.

**Your use of a neutral palette with pops of color here and there is so crisp and modern, with just the right touch of playfulness. What inspired your color choices?**

It's peaceful. It's basic. With the neutral palette I can introduce any color. Right now I'm into lime green. I've tried a more vivid overall color palette over the years, but because I work with color all day, I need to come home to peace. It's important to keep a sense of cohesiveness in a small house, and a neutral palette makes it easy to move things from room to room.

**Tell us about your art collection. It's such an eclectic mix.**

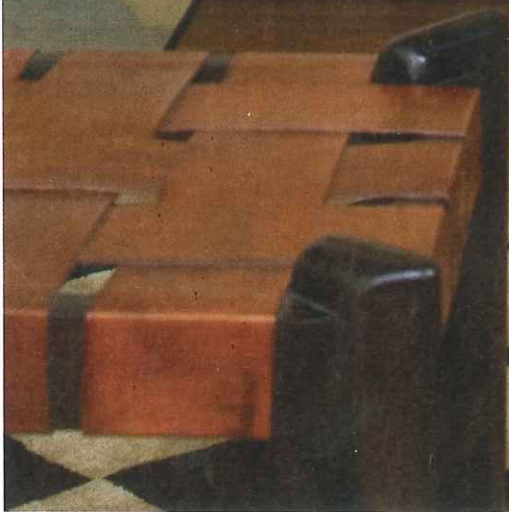
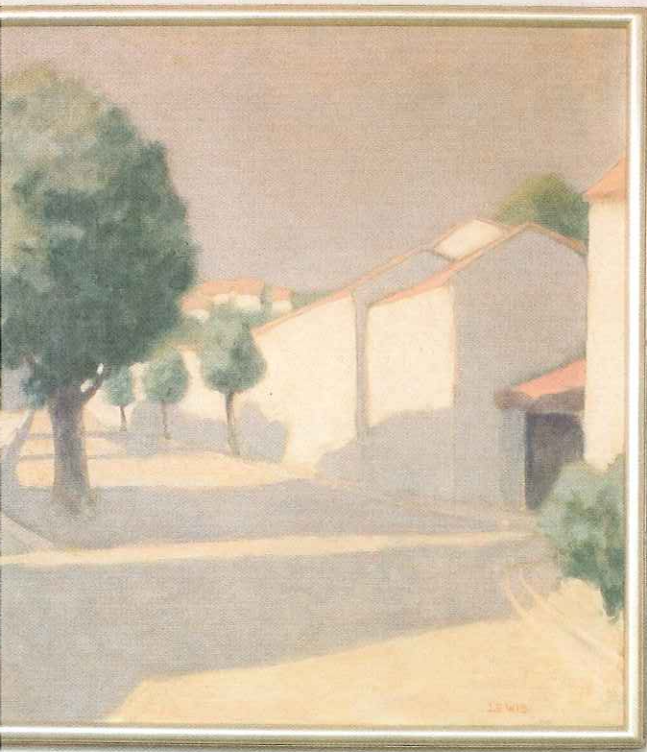
I have spent a lifetime collecting. Most of the pieces are regional, although I do have a Russian piece I purchased from a gallery in downtown Denver, as well as a Japanese piece. I also own six botanicals, which I love; they were painted by my daughter-in-law, Marian Davis, who is actually a cardiopulmonary nurse by profession. The ceramic sculpture in the living room is by Bob Smith; it was produced using the Raku firing process and comes apart in at least a dozen pieces.

**There are lots of nooks around the house that store various treasures. How did you arrive at this architectural detail?**

I have a collection of Danish stainless steel sculptures and a collection of tea services—each of my six granddaughters will one day get a [tea service]—so I had shelves added to showcase them. I love stainless steel and silver.



(top) The horse sculpture and gold willow silhouette are by Colorado artist Wayne Salge; the monotypes are by Enrico Embroli. With its sleek-lined sculptural grace, the Mies van der Rohe-designed leather and chrome chair from Design Within Reach completes the modern art-gallery feel. (above) Davis had shelving added to showcase her collection of Danish stainless-steel sculptures and the tea sets she has been collecting for her granddaughters. The timeless rosewood dining set is by Christian of Copenhagen, purchased 35 years ago. (right) The custom bold geometric rug by EMW Furniture provides a focal point for the living room while still maintaining the home's neutral palette. With her eye for timeless style, Davis purchased the chic sofas 20 years ago. They still wear their original upholstery.





(top) Ferns, boxwood, globe arborvitae and Mugo pine create a restful environment while a flagstone seating area adds composition and texture. "It is really, really nice to come home to," says Davis.

(right) As the back garden is 95 percent shade, its contents are primarily green texture with many woody elements. The benefit of so many green elements, says Davis, is that the garden "pretty much holds its own in the winter." To complement the lime green accents indoors, Davis added lime green containers on the patio table. "I'm a theme designer, I truly am," she says. (opposite) To create a balanced flow from the patio to the sunroom, Davis pulled up six rows of flooring along the windows and added river rock. Gracing the table is a recycled aluminum lamp from Anthropologie.







(above) The kitchen was remodeled in 1990. Davis's love for silver inspired her to select stainless-steel appliances and a stainless-steel top for the island, which perfectly complements the sleek white lacquer cabinetry. A sculptural metal stool from Mod Livin' in Denver adds interest.

(above, right) The kitchen cabinets are glass on both sides, allowing natural light to filter through the room. When the kitchen designer brought glass samples, Davis was instantly drawn to the dot pattern. The circles make an otherwise plain white kitchen pop with imaginative detailing.

Looking around your home, we're taken by the unusual details you've integrated into the house—especially the rocks that line the sunroom window.

Three years ago, out of the blue, I pulled up six rows of the wood flooring [to fill the space with river rock that matched a similar detail on the outdoor patio]. [My husband] Bob came home one day and found me doing it. He nearly went crazy, but I just felt like I had to do it. The concept is Asian; I have lots of Asian furniture, so I felt like adding the rock tied the theme together and also helped link the outdoor space to the interior.

Tell us what you love most about your garden.

It is lovely and shady, and especially pretty at night. I also have a water feature, which is very peaceful. Because it's a shade garden, it is ninety-five percent green texture. I have lots of woody materials, ferns, boxwoods and other green materials. It is so peaceful, and just really nice to come home to. □





### DESIGN DETAILS

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*For more information about the products in  
 this home, visit [ColoradoHomesMag.com](http://ColoradoHomesMag.com)*

(top) Shelving in the master bedroom houses yet another of Davis's eclectic art collections, while also providing a unique headboard feature. (above) A seating area in the master bedroom provides a quiet place to relax and unwind. The homeowners' son, Robert Davis, Jr., created the framed pen-and-ink drawings; he also happens to be the architect who designed the home's first remodel.