

# Perennial BEAUTY

The owner of this garden in Kenilworth, Cape Town, plants perennials to keep it colourful and fresh from spring to autumn

One of the delights of visiting the gardens at Stellenberg, home of Andrew and Sandy Ovenstone in Kenilworth, Cape Town, is to see what Sandy has chosen to plant in the walled garden that season. “Gardens should adapt and evolve, and while it’s important to maintain the

character and structure, I like to try out new and interesting plants,” says Sandy.

When Sandy started the walled garden nearly 30 years ago, there was such a wide choice of new hybrids that she wanted to try them all. The result was busy plantings with mixed varieties and colours. “Over the years, I’ve become more discerning and now focus on my personal favourites, using more of these in greater quantities.”

Over time, she’s refined her use of colour, but adds that the colour schemes in the walled garden aren’t cast in stone, and the many shades of pink have given way to burgundy. Similarly, the white garden has evolved from white and green, to white,

cream and green, and the pool garden is now planted in blue, purple and green.

Designed in 1987 by David Hicks, the renowned English interior and garden designer, the walled garden on the site of the old tennis court is divided by an arched, rose-covered walkway.

The left side is more masculine, where the planting in the hedged beds is kept to a minimum and restricted to the greys and blues of catmint (*Nepeta faassenii*) and Russian sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*).

The planting in the four large squares on the right, also hedged with *Myrtus communis*, is more informal and feminine.

The colour palette on the feminine

side changes with the seasons. In early summer, there are blues, mauves and a hint of yellow, but darker shades like the maroon from *Lychmis coronaria* and *Lobelia x speciosa* ‘Tania’ are included. Then the colours lean towards strong pinks, rich blues and the purple and red of *Lobelia cardinalis* in the late summer months when *Sedum spectabile* and Michaelmas daisies come to the fore.

Over the years, Sandy, landscaper Athol McLaggan, her gardeners and Doreen Dauberman, who runs the Stellenberg nursery, have refined the planting, always including perennials to ensure there’s colour and interest from spring to autumn. ▷

TEXT: MARIANNE ALEXANDER PHOTOGRAPHS: MARIANNE ALEXANDER PORTRAIT: LISA DAUBERMAN PHOTOGRAPHY



## Who lives here

Andrew and Sandy Ovenstone.

## The garden

A formal walled garden designed by English garden designer, David Hicks. On the site of an old tennis court, it’s divided by an arched walkway.



**THIS SPREAD, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** ● A view across the garden to the Lutyens-style bench. Soft lilac *Penstemon digitalis*, tall purple scabious, *Penstemon* ‘Purple’, *Lysimachia atropurpurea* ‘Beaujolais’ and delphiniums grow in profusion. ● On the main axis, ‘New Dawn’ roses are trained over arches at the base of which are *Geranium dolomitica*. ● One of the four squares in the softer, more feminine side. The water feature at the end of the path is surrounded with roses.