

# DECOR MAINE

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*Grilling,  
Argentinean-Style,*  
**ON THE  
SHEEPSHOT  
RIVER**

*Sowing Seeds at  
a 260-Year-Old*  
**FARMHOUSE IN  
CAPE NEDDICK**

*PLUS, 11 STOPS  
IN LIMERICK AND  
CORNISH*

*The*  
**LANDSCAPE  
ISSUE**

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**SPRING AWAKENING:**  
Three Landscape Designers Create Oases with Plants  
(and a Bit of Pure Magic)



# GREAT ESCAPES

Three landscapers share the magic of good design

By Allison Paige

For centuries, escape artists have astonished audiences with their abilities to break free of their binds and thwart man-made captivity. Think of the great Houdini himself, shedding winding ropes and chains and maybe even a padlock or two to achieve an exhilarating freedom. Here, we share with you some of our favorite landscape designers, magicians in their own right, who perform similar feats, crafting environments that help us slough off the shackles of our confinements by beautifying our surroundings, expanding the senses, promoting a sense of well-being, and creating, you guessed it, great escapes.

*opposite page* Fieldstone walls and a walkway of ipé are bordered by native plants such as sweet fern. “They wanted it to blend in with the natural surroundings and feel like it was always there,” says Mike.



## Balancing Act

PHOTOS BY  
Michael D. Wilson

Ted Carter, the ornamental horticulturalist and designer behind Ted Carter Inspired Landscapes of Buxton, has a deep interest in shamanism and the ways in which nature and spirit align. His employee-owned company serves southern Maine and coastal New Hampshire, creating spaces that promote harmony and connection with nature.

*spread* In this Ted Carter Inspired Landscape, paving stones wend toward a terrace made of Windham Ridge flagging by Genest. At left, a fire torch and Japanese “pom pom” pine complement the kinetic sculptures from Maine Art Paintings and Sculpture of Kennebunk and are kept company by the handsome bronze pig.

**TED CREATED THE LANDSCAPING** for the home of an art-loving couple in Kennebunk with balance in mind.

“I always think about the interplay between masculine and feminine energies,” shares Ted. For example, the first thing he did on this project was move the driveway farther from the house, to allow for more room to plant. “Masculine energy is the driveway and the house and the cars, and the feminine energy, of course, is all the landscaping.”

A Schoodic dwarf jack pine, windswept and graceful (“an extremely slow-growing species,” notes Ted), is

featured in a planting near the front door, as are colorful annuals.

"Annuals fill a definite purpose. They're habitual. They're not fickle," says Ted, who speaks of plants' personalities as though they were people.

"All of these plants have been very good friends of mine for 40, 50 years," he laughs. "I've been in the business a long time. You know, you go in the nursery and say, 'Oh, hi, I forgot about you!' I think of them archetypically, almost."

In the backyard, a stone walkway framed by indigenous boulders leads to a terraced dining area and firepit. "We installed it to experience the garden. To connect the firepit and terrace to the lower lawn," says Ted. "It gives it a sense of flow."

The property features unique stonework that could double for art. "Dryscapes are more about texture and form," Ted explains. By the side of the house, a dryscape inspired by Japanese ishi gardens mimics a mountain

and winding path. "What we are doing is expressing the sacred feminine in stone," he notes.

Likewise, a rock riverbed created with Mexican beach rocks and pea stones wends its way beneath the deck. "Those are problematic areas in the landscape because they usually have low water, low light," notes Ted. Creating the rock bed served a dual purpose—to beautify and to utilize an unsung space.

Ted chose an undulant planter by Marie Khouri for Cristae Architectural Planters to complement the straight-back rockers and linear clapboards of the traditional Colonial-style home.

A bronze hog sculpture by Sandy Scott has been given a seat of honor, surrounded by plantings, a fire torch, and kinetic sculptures. The handsome porker, entitled *Eat More Beef*, is an example of the owners' lightheartedness.

In a surrounding that includes masculine and feminine, whimsy and tradition, Ted Carter achieves a perfect balance.



**left** Underneath a deck, Ted created a dryscape out of Mexican beach stones and pea gravel that mimics a wending riverbed. **below** Steps lead from the lower lawn to the terrace and firepit. Stone walls and indigenous boulders are balanced by a soft lawn of Kentucky bluegrass and fescue. **opposite page** The gas firepit and walls alike are made of Pennsylvania fieldstone. Ted points out that the firepit can be readily seen from the house, a conscious design. "Creating destinations in the landscape for the mind's eye to wander is very important. That's the power of design."

