
Gardens

A Designer Garden

When you are the owner of a beautiful home on Jumeirah Islands and also the founder of a successful landscaping firm, the results in the garden are impressive.

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Khalid Kaluti, founder of Dubai's Better Gardens, designed an ultra-shallow pool end, so that chairs can be placed in the water

With an unusually shaped plot, the garden has been designed so not an inch of space is wasted



This ultra-modern seating area, surrounded by water, is bang on trend this year



A more traditional dining area provides tranquility with its encircling green foliage

Jumeirah Islands house a host of meticulously landscaped gardens. The home of managing director of Dubai-based Better Gardens, Khalid Kaluti, is no exception. His garden features an inviting infinity pool overlooking some of Dubai's best water views. This 11,000 square metre garden simply begs you to sit outside and admire the landscape.

It was this fantastic view that initially inspired Kaluti's plans for his garden. "I think this is one of the nicest locations in Jumeirah Islands. Because of this, when we designed the garden, we wanted as many seating areas as possible so that we could capitalise on the view."

Kaluti continues, "I also wanted to put in a home office, a barbecue and entertainment area and then to make a grand entrance from the front of the house. However, as I have

a company that builds pools, I wanted to be as creative as possible. I put in a complete wraparound pool with an infinity edge. We also built one area of the pool to be 15 centimetres deep so that we could put sun loungers in this part. We designed the pool in a way that fits the plot. I wanted to add all the elements that I really like so we have used every inch of the garden and have left no space wasted."

Kaluti admits that, due to the shape of the plot, it was very difficult to design. However, with his pool measuring 18 metres in length, he has definitely used all the space to good effect – not an inch is wasted.

Although Kaluti went to the same school in Washington as famed landscape architect Vladimir Djurovic, it is pure coincidence that he is in the landscaping business. Kaluti explains, "I knew nothing about landscaping.

However, when I came to do the landscaping for my own villa, there were only a handful of really good companies, and they were all too busy. The idea of a landscaping company came into my head. I started to learn more about it and decided to start my own firm. I hired a very experienced team of mainly Australian designers and project managers and we are very lucky to have Elton, our fantastic general manager and lead designer. My background is in business management from retail to food and beverage, so I did the marketing and hiring and the design and implementation was up to Elton. We complement each other very well!"

From small acorns, big oak trees grow and, just like any other fledgling company, Better Gardens started with baby steps. "We started by taking small projects on as we were testing the market," admits Kaluti. "The projects got bigger and bigger and we got more and more

referrals. "Today Better Gardens have designed gardens at most of the popular developments in Dubai, including Emirates Hills, Arabian Ranches and Victory Heights. Better Gardens are also opening a branch in Abu Dhabi to meet with the demand coming from the capital.

With so many homeowners using Better Gardens services it is up to Kaluti and his team to stay abreast of new trends, which right now are ultra modern gardens.

"Dubai is such a new place and mostly people here like modern designs, so I would say that modern style gardens are on trend. Overflow systems in swimming pools are popular, they make such a visual difference.

"Also really popular is designer mosaic such as those offered by Bisazza, who do many different styles, colours and substances." And, ♣



Water features which line the path to the doorway are lit up at night, welcoming guests

just like Kaluti, currently many people also have a penchant for a shallow part of the pool to arrange their sun loungers.

“Generally, everybody is very interested in combining their swimming pools with their entertainment areas,” suggests Kaluti. However, as the harsh summer sun is fast approaching, we may not be able to spend as much time outdoors as we would like to.

In order to keep your garden in tip-top condition so that you can enjoy it once again after the summer, Kaluti has some advice. “Be very involved in your garden. You know it better than anyone else. Because you live there you can see when something is about to be

damaged and when you need to take action. We really do dread July, August and half of September, as we get a lot of sun damage. However, you just need to give the plants plenty of water and mostly, a lot of attention. Give your plants as much shade as possible if they need it. Date palm trees don’t really care about the sun, but exotic plants will need special attention.”

And, if all else fails and you and your garden are feeling slightly frazzled, then help is at hand. “The right paving products such as limestone can help reduce the temperature slightly,” concludes Kaluti. In the steamy hot months, anything that cools down the heat will no doubt be a welcome addition to the garden. ■

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