



CASE STUDY

City garden
in Zoetermeer

**A CITY
GARDEN,
BURSTING
WITH
CONTRASTS**



Whimsical greenery with modern elements combine to create a luxurious, atmospheric oasis.

When you think of city gardens, you often picture ample patios surrounded by fencing. The odd tasteful border and a potted plant here and there are meant to provide the feeling of greenery. But it can be so much greener, even in a city garden. It provides more biodiversity and a garden that's a great place to be, also on hot summer days. So Franklin van Fessem of Lex van Wijk Hoveniers likes to start from the plants, rather than the paving. And from this vision, he designed an attractive city garden in Zoetermeer, with a modern look and the luxury of lots of greenery.

'The home-owners wanted a contemporary, luxurious garden, but also lots of plants,' Van Fessem tells us. 'In order to fulfil that wish, we had to bridge a considerable difference in height. There's a drainage ditch nearby, so the difference in height between the house and the end of the plot is a good two metres. That was quite a challenge.'

So how do you create a garden here that is modern, easily accessible and still cosy? Clean elements now bridge the height difference, while the greenery flows naturally through them.



VARIATION IN COLOUR AND FORMAT

This garden is an excellent example of how diverse the applications of Schellevis® products are. Not only is the slab you walk on a Schellevis® slab. The kerb stones and borders are also made of Schellevis® products. Faithful to the material but varying in colour and format. That makes the garden contemporary but with a playful touch. There's no lack of combinations here but it's never a mish-mash. The Schellevis® slab has a clean yet rugged appearance. That's a good match with this modern garden and it will be timeless in the future too. The suspended elements make the paving look less dense. The difference in height is no longer a challenge - it has become an eye-catcher.

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The patio attached to the house is paved with an anthracite grey, 120x60 cm Schellevis® slab. The same colour of slab was used for the paving of the veranda at the bottom of the garden, but in a different format - 200x50 cm. The path there was laid with the 60x60 slab. Suspended stairs connect the two patios. For the suspended elements, Van Fessem used the large format of Schellevis® slab in grey. By varying in colour and format, a playful effect is achieved. And that effect is enhanced by the suspended steps. The solid elements are in the darker colour and the stairs in the lighter one.



Van Fessem explains his decision: 'The dark colour absorbs sunlight, while the light colour reflects it. That softens the look of the solid elements and at the same time, actually illuminates the stairs.' The borders in this garden were constructed using Schellevis® stacking elements. Van Fessem chose to construct them in the same anthracite colour as the patios. That brings a nice balance and unity to the garden where the greenery seems to embrace the paving. That effect will only become stronger through the years. The greenery will grow fuller and the garden will come to life even more.

The variation in format is not always a decision based on aesthetics. The border walls are 15 cm broad but the kerb stones of the upper patio are 20 cm, a bit thicker. 'The feel is the same but the burden from the patio requires a bit more mass than that of the borders.'




SHADOW PLAY CONSTANTLY CHANGES
THE LOOK OF THE GARDEN



GREENERY IS AMBIANCE

Van Fessem's design has made a hidden oasis of this garden. It was a huge metamorphosis. The maple tree in the middle of the plot remains from the old design. It gave the garden a sense of maturity from the very start of the makeover. Any plants that fitted well with the new design were also allowed to stay. 'If it's good, you don't throw it away.' Hardy perennials, ornamental grasses and trees now form an impressive green whole. And there too, contrasts have been introduced. Variations in colour and size of foliage and above all, the differing heights, make the garden interesting. 'Flowering periods vary and some plants are evergreens, for year-round interest; greenery is ambiance,' says Van Fessem. 'The alternating high and low areas of the garden give shade throughout the season and change the look of it throughout the day too.'



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