

before

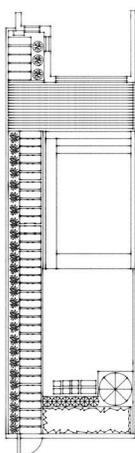


case study

problem
A DERELICT
BACKYARD

solution
HIRE PROS TO
CREATE A MODERN
ENTERTAINING SPACE

garden plan
1,260 SQ. FT.



RIGHT & OPPOSITE, BOTTOM

The kitchen opens up directly onto the cedar deck, thanks to sliding doors. The horizontal pressure-treated pine fencing was left unstained. "Over time, it'll grey and blend in seamlessly with the more expensive cedar," says landscape designer Kennedy McRae.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN, Earth Inc., earthinc.com; **black BENCH & LOUNGE CHAIR**, Kiosk Design; **orange CHAIRS**, Bend; **SIDE TABLE**, West Elm; **FIREPIT**, Design Within Reach; **UMBRELLA, UMBRELLA STAND**, Fresh Home & Garden; **TOSS CUSHIONS**, Hollace Cluny.



Backyard Bliss

Contemporary flaming orange steel walls bring crackling energy to this recently renovated yard.

TEXT LESLEY YOUNG | PHOTOGRAPHY MAYA VISNYEI | STYLING ANN MARIE FAVOT

Toronto food stylist Claire Stubbs had to wait three tedious years before she could tackle the backyard of her Roncesvalles Village semi-detached home because her focus was on renovating the interior. So the space – with little more than a 1980s hot tub and a blown-down fence – was left to languish. “Once I was happy with the inside of the house, I contacted Earth Inc. because I knew they could create the modern look I wanted,” says Claire.

The planning process “January was a great time to hire a landscape design company. Since it’s the off-season, I was the first or second one on their list to get started in the spring,” says Claire. After she gave the team her wish list for a streamlined outdoor entertaining space, they presented her with a dream design kitted out with all the bells and whistles. “We like to present the ideal garden so the client can pick and choose from what is possible,” explains landscape designer Kennedy McRae. Claire loved the team’s contemporary plan – which included a cedar deck and bench, a sunken polished concrete patio and Cor-ten steel walls – but decided to switch out a few of the elements to stay on budget. For example, instead of a water feature, she opted for a larger patch of grass for walking barefoot on hot summer days.

The design decisions Earth Inc. created a sunken polished concrete patio where Claire could entertain and incorporated her ultimate must-have – Cor-ten steel – into two walls that gave shape to an outdoor room. Cor-ten steel is a coveted material, especially in contemporary gardens, says Kennedy. Its natural burnt orange patina, which develops over time when it’s exposed to the weather, dramatically warms up cooler elements. An important consideration: Be sure to seal any surrounding hardscaping, as the steel can drip in the first year of its oxidization process. (“Don’t worry – it’s just the outer layer rusting, which then stabilizes,” says landscape designer Michael McMartin.)

The end result “I love the steel,” says Claire, adding that she installed the same material on her third-floor deck a year later.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK



The gate at the back of the yard was painted bright orange to continue the fiery warmth of the Cor-ten steel used throughout the space.

Festive Orange 2014-10 **GATE PAINT**, Benjamin Moore.



Budget Breakdown

HERE'S WHAT IT'LL COST YOU TO GET THE LOOK OF THIS BACKYARD.

Design: \$5,000

Hardscaping: \$68,000
INCLUDES CEDAR DECK AND BENCH, POLISHED CONCRETE PATIO, COR-TEN STEEL WALLS, LIMESTONE STEPPING STONES AND PRESSURE-TREATED PINE FENCING

Plants: \$18,000
INCLUDES 'KARL FOERSTER' FEATHER REED GRASS, EUROPEAN BEECH, PAPER-BARK MAPLE, CAREX AND POTTED HERBS

Total cost: \$91,000*

*INCLUDES LABOUR