

# Sitting Pretty

## GRAND DURAND GARDEN TOUR

Photographs by Mike Davis  
Written by Gloria Hildebrandt

**E**very three years, selected homeowners in the historic Durand neighbourhood of Hamilton, welcome visitors to their yards and properties located beneath the Niagara Escarpment, for the Grand Durand Garden Tour. Last year, 12 very different properties were on display for the June 17 event.



This gorgeous little Georgian cottage has two tidy, well-mulched, beautiful low beds in front, containing boxwood, ferns, peonies, hydrangeas and lavender.



**F**rom the grounds of Central Presbyterian Church on Charlton Ave. to a small garden off a downtown condo, a large variety of garden styles complemented the beautiful building exteriors. Garden lovers gathered from Port Dover, Kitchener, Toronto and towns in between, to study the designs and plantings.

We know that pandemic lockdowns made people appreciate their yards, gardens and pools more than ever. One noticeable theme in most of the gardens on this tour was the inclusion of attractive seating areas. Nothing invites lingering in a garden quite as much as a simple bench or a couple of chairs or a table and umbrella.



▲ Many sponsors on the minimalist sign pointed the way to the gardens.



▲ Purple, green and white are the signature colours of this formal garden of cedars, grasses, hydrangeas and salvia surrounding the pool. Five fountain spouts pour water along one side. Two loungers invite sunbathing.



▲ Sun or shade? With the green ridge of the Niagara Escarpment beyond, plenty of seating choices create a resort atmosphere in this secluded yard. Gardens were redone since 2016 and feature boxwood edges, a corner covered seating area with couches, armchairs and planters. An umbrella offers shade for tables and chairs. Four lounge chairs give a view of the pool with two square spill bowls at the side providing waterfalls.



▲ Wood decking surrounds the pool. Wide steps lead down to comfortable loungers beneath a large offset umbrella. Low stone walls provide more seating.

*Continued*



▲ The curving pool beckons during the heat of the day, while comfortable armchairs near the fire feature offer relaxation after the sun sets.



▲ Plenty of brightly coloured seating options are sprinkled throughout this delightful small rear garden. Peonies and roses were blooming for the tour.



◀ Mature gardens at Central Presbyterian Church are maintained by volunteers. A stone bench brings people close to masses of roses in June.

▼ A bright red bench provides a pop of colour in this charming corner of a garden. Gravel and paving stones form the base while a variety of pots and plants adds interest to this quiet spot. *Continued*



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▲ Even the smallest area can offer garden comfort when it is this well dressed. A black iron table and chair is framed by a black window box and corner unit. Potted flowers and green plants bring the garden to the back porch.



▲ Dark umbrellas define resting spaces in this small urban oasis. Lush greenery softens the fence which gives private seclusion.





▲ Pea gravel marks this corner zone with contemporary furnishings. A mulched, low-maintenance bed is defined by stone edgers. Hanging annuals draw the eye upward.



▲ A treehouse-like structure towers over this native rain garden that features Wild Columbine, American Pawpaw, Wild Geranium, among others. The owners created this garden in their small back garden over the last couple of years.

The next Grand Durand Garden Tour is scheduled for Saturday June 20, 2026. **NEV**

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