



One often pages through a magazine or watches a programme on television and sees the most awesome properties, inviting interiors or some fabulous corporate offices that are just picture perfect. Mostly they are real and not some virtual presentation of a futuristic project.

A question that might come up is: “how was it created in such a breathtaking manner that moves the viewer with such awe?” The answer is quite simple, (apart from great photography) – it was done by professionals. Architects, designers and their resourceful teams combine many years of experience and knowledge to produce these beautiful creations.

It is somehow puzzling to understand how people will hire an architect to do what architects do – come up with a plan to construct your dream home and then the builder uses this as his concrete instruction to follow. We all understand how it works and not only because of the legalities but the assurance that you have employed a professional, chances are – it will work out well. Yet, when it comes to



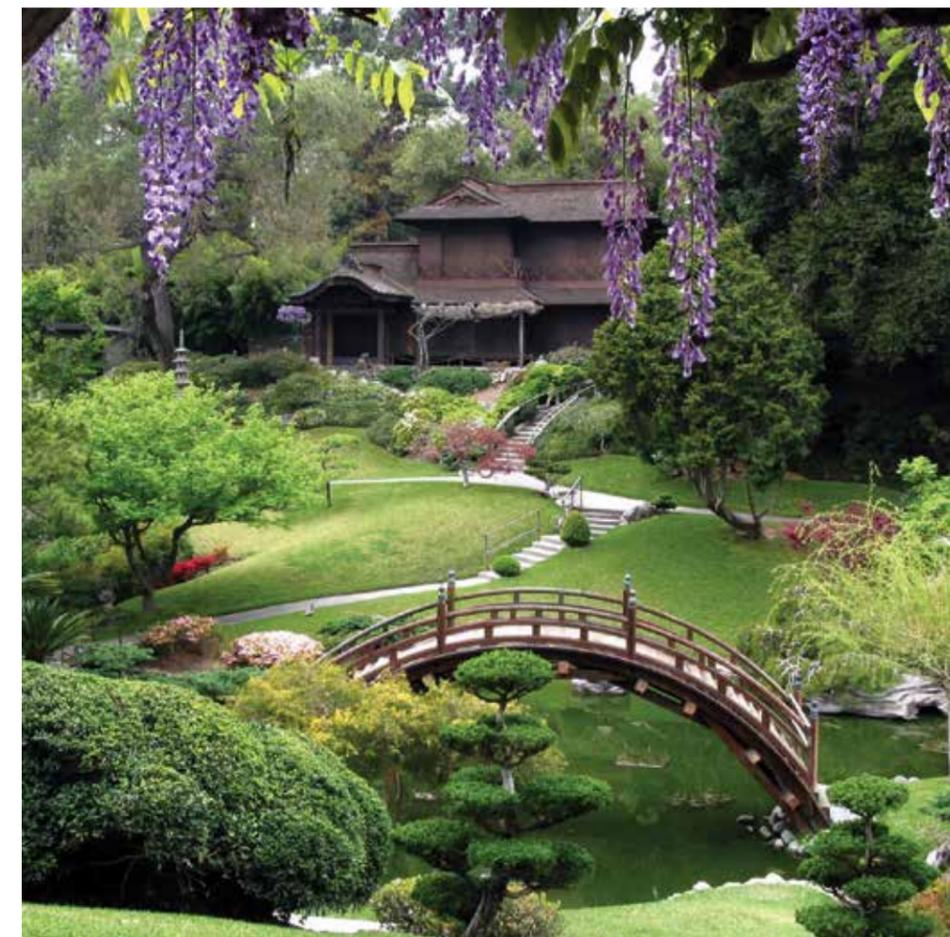
other forms of professional capacities, we still have big expectations, but we tend to skip on the professional level in order to save a couple of bucks and / or looking for some unbestowed credit and taper the project down to somebody you know, who knows someone that they think did something similar once upon a time.

Let’s take the case of landscape designers who are professionals in their field as much as any other, but not many people understand the value of the contribution they could make to your outdoor environment and the fees they charge. This is normally due to the lack of knowledge or experience or budget, or a combination thereof.

To be honest, anyone can go to a garden centre, buy some plants or a tree and get it in the soil. No sweat.

More often than not, most of it survives and you feel you have accomplished something. Nothing wrong there and for that you are not in need of a landscape designer. Just as you don’t need an architect to build a braai in your back yard.

Hiring a landscape designer is aimed at a level a notch or two up from what your sister in law’s friend who once worked at a nursery can offer, in a manner of speaking.





So what are the obvious benefits in hiring an experienced landscape designer?

It normally starts with a consultation or actual site visit to establish:

- the physical requirements of the project
- the analyses of environmental conditions
- determining the need for soil preparation
- level drainage in case of flooding
- utilisation of natural energy
- timing of planting season
- selection of suitable plants, flowers and trees
- irrigation options
- smart water saving methods
- aesthetic expectations
- collaboration of exterior and interior spaces
- cost estimates

Most landscape designers should be able to present a client with some impressive graphic plans to display their visual interpretation of the initial brief, adapting to any constraints and limitations or opportunities arising during the process as it is a work in progress. Your personality and / or level of excitement (or commitment) should assist you in making a choice if you want to be involved in managing some part of

the project, or hire a turnkey company that makes it all happen to deliver the perfect garden pictures you once drooled about.

Asking your landscape designer to include a herb or vegetable garden may be trendy at present but may soon be a welcome lifesaver as food prices are escalating almost as fast as the price of fuel.

Hiring a professional landscape designer may just actually help you save money: by selecting a professional and applying methods that have been tried and tested, and not going the experimental (nervously exciting yes) D.I.Y route

that could easily end up as an expensive incomplete job and not actually what you initially had in mind.

Another major benefit of having your residential garden or private zen space designed and created by a professional landscape designer is not just the multiple “likes” the images may get on your facebook page, but the extended value it will add to your property when you are reselling one fine day.

Thus, let the professional landscape designers do their art of “moving mountains,” as that is what they do best.

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