

Linda Cody enjoys a quiet moment beneath the *Cornus kousa* tree, so magnificent it inspires a yearly party in celebration of its flowers.



white light

SOFT, SIMPLE, SOPHISTICATED, A GARDEN SHINES IN ONE SINGULAR COLOR

CAN A GARDEN be girly? There's nothing fussy pink about Linda Cody's Madison Park garden, yet its intimate spaces and pure white flower palette are as feminine as can be, in a quiet, sophisticated way. At every turn, Cody's garden reflects her sense of style and comfort.

"Linda has such a love for her garden and has created such visual richness," says landscape architect Tom Zachary, who worked on the garden for five years. The entire property was regraded, and Zachary designed a new driveway and entry for the 1936 home Cody shares with her husband, retired Boeing test pilot Richard Nelson. The old house is painted deep hunter green to set off the new, pale-barked birches and white-flowering shrubs in the front garden.

When Zachary began work on the place, the shady backyard was nothing but struggling lawn. The couple added a sunroom off the back of the house, opening to a new stone patio. "The idea was to stand in the kitchen and enjoy the garden," says Cody. "Now no one ever goes into the living room!"

Brick and stone paths and patios wrap around the house to create a series of snug outdoor rooms for parties, dining, reading or a quiet cup of tea. "My childhood garden in South Dakota was naturalistic and soft, and I wanted to get



"It's all about views to the garden," says Cody of her new sunroom with French doors that open out into the back garden.



Cody and Richard Nelson painted their Madison Park home dark green to show off the new pale birch trees surrounded by silvery hebes and white rock roses.

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by Valerie Easton |
photographed by Ellen Banner

the same effect here," Cody says.

Zachary cohort Francine Day did the planting plan, designing waves of white bloom to carry the garden through the seasons. In winter, sweet box (*Sarcococca* ssp.) and white hellebores lighten the darkest days of the year. In earliest spring, the fragrant flowers of evergreen *Clematis armandii* bloom on the front arbor. A hedge of white-flowering mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) rings the patio. Shrubby little fothergilla with its fragrant bottlebrush blooms, and the finely textured *Deutzia gracilis* 'Nikko Dwarf' run in white-flowering ribbons through the garden. From sweet woodruff at ground level to the dangling white flowers of *Styrax japonica* overhead, the garden's cool and stylish color scheme remains consistent.

The garden's romantic factor, already amped up by the conservatory's French doors and billows of white hydrangeas, continues with white lilacs and the heady scent of jasmine wrapping the arbor's columns. The garden blooms white on white from gardenias to snowy roses, tulips, pansies and gloriously scented, icy-white Casablanca lilies by the front porch in summer, echoed by white vintage furniture and white trim on the garden house.

All this choreography of
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A stone dining terrace, sheltered by an arbor draped in clematis and jasmine, runs across the front of the house.

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flower and scent, furniture and paint, culminates in May when the centerpiece of the garden, a venerable *Cornus kousa*, comes into flower, and Cody holds her annual party to honor the old tree. "We planned the new sunroom around that dogwood," says Cody. "It overwhelms the garden when it comes into bloom."

Does the instigator of all these luxuriously pale plantings ever long for splashes of color? It doesn't seem so. Cody is out there sprinkling seed of white alyssum so that in summer yet another layer of white blooms beneath the white-flowering hedges. p

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A new sunroom opens out to the garden, back terrace and white-blooming plantings in all seasons, including mophead hydrangeas in summer.