

# Art and Nature

## An Explosion of Constant Color.

Color is a very personal thing. Whether you're drawn to a one- or two-color garden, or a riot that rivals the rainbow, there's no limit to what can be created.

Designing a one-color garden, for example, can be incredibly rewarding. At Van Zelst, we've been asked to create all-white gardens for several clients, and the results have been spectacular. Working in a single color forces us to really appreciate the vast variety of plants available. Texture and slight nuances within a single hue become even more important, and the finished garden is breathtaking.

Some clients prefer two-color gardens. These often use complementary colors—colors opposite one another on the color wheel—such as purple and yellow or blue and peach. Or you might choose related colors, such as red and yellow, and round them out with every shade of orange in-between.

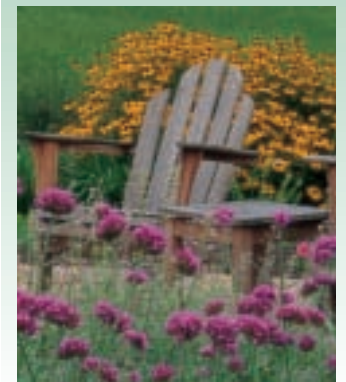
When working with flowers, it's hard to go wrong in selecting a color scheme, even if you take the "everything goes" approach. Some of our most pleasing landscapes have included explosions of virtually every hue, often punctuated by white for even greater impact. By planting in large, lush drifts, each color gets its own space and opportunity to shine.

The other secret to a knockout use of color? Understanding how plants will emerge and die back over the season. By planning for waves of color throughout the spring, summer and fall, we can ensure a garden that's in continual bloom—a philosophy that's made "Constant Color" a Van Zelst trademark.

### Choosing Your Colors.

Take a look around your home, and think about the types of colors you're drawn to. Then think about how colors are related or complemented on the color wheel.

With flowers, you can pair favorite colors that might not work indoors. Here, planting yellow and purple beside one another makes each one "pop," appearing more vivid to the eye.



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◀ **Images By Row:** 1) Stone Basin Fountain, Cosmos; 2) Tree Peony, Parrot Tulip; 3) Rhododendron, Millstone Fountain; 4) Star Magnolia, Stargazer Lily; 5) Foxglove, Tiger Lilies; 6) Flowering Crabapple, Yellow Rose; 7) Peony, Begonias flanked by Boxwood and Barberry

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## The Wonder of Water.

From pools and spas to fountains and waterfalls, water incorporated into your landscape is a delight for all the senses. Water features contribute to a gentle, soothing ambience, adding a layer of peaceful sound to the garden. Pools and spas are fun and functional, and create a focal point for family entertaining.

By including the design of water elements into your overall landscape plan, you can assure that the finished product is coordinated with plantings, stonework and the overall flow of your outdoor space, with plumbing thoroughly hidden from view.

Beautifully designed, professionally installed water features provide years of pleasure, with a minimum of effort.



## Extend the Fun with a Firepit.

A firepit—the newest addition to the well appointed outdoor entertaining space—can provide year-round pleasure, even in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin. Built of solid stone, a firepit can even tap into your home's gas line, making it easy to ignite, use and maintain.

Just throw on a few logs, and enjoy the ambience at the height of summer, as well as those not-so-perfect nights in spring, fall, and yes, even the dead of winter.



**Above Left:** Water flows over stepped Lannonstone for a rustic, natural look that adds sound and texture to the garden.

**Above Right:** Brussels block arranged in a herringbone pattern leads visitors to the welcoming spa. Smooth surfaces are easy on bare feet.

**Right:** Lush plantings lead the eye right to the water's edge, bridging home and nature.





## Presenting Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet

Van Zelst is proud to partner with Kalamazoo, which designs and hand-crafts innovative, high-performance outdoor entertaining equipment. Kalamazoo's range of gas and gas/charcoal hybrid grills offers something for virtually every outdoor environment.

We have chosen to work with Kalamazoo because of their history (100 years, in fact) of innovation, design quality, cooking performance and uncompromising durability.

Their sophisticated design and manufacturing inspired us to offer you an equally elegant grilling suggestion—a recipe for Cedar Planked Salmon—on the back page.



**Above Top Left:** Silvery flagstones in various sizes complement the cool color of the custom-shaped swimming pool.

**Above Bottom Left:** In another view, the flagstones lead off into an inviting garden walk.

**Above Right:** Carefully planned and placed boulders and stones build up the creekbed, and seem to have tumbled into place.

# Inspiration & Relaxation



## This Summer, It's Cooking Outside.

“Outdoor entertaining” once meant unfolding the lawn chairs and firing up a kettle grill. Today's outdoor kitchens are light years ahead of that.

When designing an outdoor kitchen, first decide how you will be using the space. Are you more likely to host intimate, informal gatherings for family and friends, or do you entertain hundreds at a time? What kinds of meals will you prepare? What equipment do you find essential? Thinking through these answers will guide the finished kitchen, as well as how it complements the home and other features such as gardens, a swimming pool or a full-service patio bar.

The grill is the centerpiece of most outdoor kitchens, and taking care to choose the right one is a critical component to enjoying your outdoor kitchen for the years ahead. How large a grill? How many grills? Do you want a gas grill or a gas/charcoal hybrid for traditional outdoor flavor? In addition to grills, there are numerous

possibilities for other outdoor entertaining equipment. The sky's the limit. Choose a sink and refrigerator. Side burners and warming drawers. A pizza oven or rotisserie. Even a wood chip soaker or beer tap.

Even more important to selecting the right equipment, however, is to have it all professionally designed and installed. After all, our brutal winters and hot, humid summers require materials that can take the extremes. Stainless steel appliances, stone countertops and durable stonework surrounds will retain their looks and performance years after they're installed.

What's more, the foundation for these heavy slabs and equipment is incredibly important. That's where Van Zelst's stonework experience really shines. We don't cut corners when making sure your investment has the solid footing it requires.

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## Quality Stonework Shows

How can you identify high-quality stonework? Details such as consistent color throughout a pathway or patio are the mark of real craftsmanship, as are strict, even joints between pavers. Steps are also a giveaway—well built steps will be sturdy and you will see stone on the treads and the faces.

Poorly installed stonework becomes more and more evident over time, most likely because a low-end installer will try to save on the important layers you can't see—the foundation on which the stone is set.

High-quality stonework will have:

- Tightly installed stones and steps, for greater safety
- Level surfaces, thanks to well prepared foundation layers
- No low spots, where water can pool and erode joints
- Well matched stones, without unappealing variation in color
- Stones that stay in place over time

Not all landscape firms also specialize in stonework. At Van Zelst, we pride ourselves on quality stonework installed by our crews that is easy to maintain and continues to impress for decades to come.



# Hardscape Changes with the Season.

In a climate where so much of our landscape goes dormant for several months each year, our landscape architects like to place special emphasis on elements that continue to give pleasure when nothing is in bloom.

That's why we often recommend trees with great three-season color and fascinating architectural limbs. And why we love to paint landscapes with stone.

Stonework imparts stability, structure, variety and color to a finished landscape year-round. In the summer, stone pathways guide visitors through the garden to clusters of lush blooms. In the spring and fall, stone waterfalls and rock gardens complement emerging greens and changing reds and yellows. And in the winter, steps and walls add texture and interest to the snowy landscape.

Including a stone fountain, grill surround, firepit or even a sandbox in your landscape plan enhances the individuality of your design, as well as the value of your home.

And when it comes to the materials available, or how they can be used, the options are virtually endless. Carefully cut bluestone has a warm, polished sophistication. Rough, irregular Lannonstone forms weathered, ancient-looking steps and walls. Flagstone can seem to have emerged from the grass naturally, suggesting an English cottage or French countryside. Or pavers, from the rustic and tumbled to the precision-cut, may be arranged in an infinite number of ways.

As you consider your dream landscape, think about how stone can help bring it to life. Something as simple as a stone bench, while clearly offering a value in the summer months, takes on new life as sculpture when covered with snow.



**Above:** Massive stone slabs offer a rich, textural counterpoint to colorful drifts of flowers in summertime, and offer a place to sit and reflect.

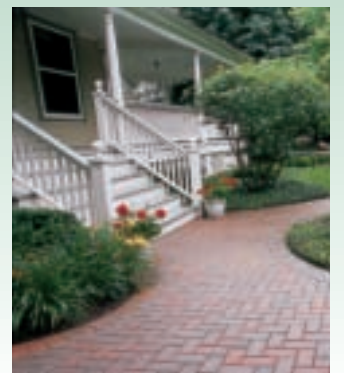
**Above Right:** In the winter, the same setting becomes a piece of natural sculpture.

**Right:** Stones can be mixed and matched for an individual effect. A flagstone post adds solidity to the entrance gate, and naturally complements the Brussels block pavers used for the drive.



## Thinking About Stone?

- What colors are already at play in the home and landscape? What will enhance the palette? Stone is available in a wide range of browns, reds, grays and blues.
- Stone helps bridge your home's interior with the garden through use of walkways, structures, walls and more.
- Do you prefer things sleek and contemporary, detailed and elegant, or rustic and informal? There is a stone—or combination of stone—for you.



**Left:** The curve of the bluestone patio creates movement and echoes the lines of the perennial beds.

**Below:** Another bluestone application, this time in combination with a geometric Lannonstone wall and insets to outline seating areas.



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**Right:** The interplay of heights is an important part of design. Ligularia, with its yellow spikes and broad leaves, reaches high above a sea of marigolds.

**Below:** A well planned landscape provides three seasons of color—looking ahead to how fall foliage will create an entirely new environment for your enjoyment.

## Achieving the Landscape You Envision.

With virtually limitless potential, homeowners can find embarking on a new landscape design a bit daunting. Fortunately, an experienced, creative landscape architect knows the right questions to ask, and how to translate your answers into a finished product that reflects your tastes and desires.

At Van Zelst, we've been working closely with clients since 1979. Each of the thousands of projects we've worked on has been

unique, yet each one begins the same way—sitting down together to fully understand how a family lives and how they expect to use a space. Lifestyle tells us a lot about how a finished landscape should feel—whether it will be a serene retreat or a lively space for entertaining. Naturally, your specific preferences will come into play—if you have favorite flowers, colors, a sculpture or a look you want to recreate.

Next, your team will evaluate and map out your site. There's a great deal of science and engineering that happens behind the scenes to make sure soil is ready for planting, and to plan any necessary grading or foundation work.

Your design team will incorporate your input, and much more, in the initial design. We'll contribute expertise with plants that thrive in our climate, knowledge of hardscape materials and creative design skills. We see this as a highly collaborative process that brings out the best of designer and homeowner.

Once the design is complete, construction begins. As a design-build firm, Van Zelst ensures continuity, as our designers and installers work closely toward the same goal. Stonework walls, swimming pools, and other hardscape features are installed first. Then plantings and sod are put in. Water features and lighting are the final step.

At this point, your initial landscaping project is finished, but it's never really "done." A landscape is alive and growing, as are your tastes and opinions. The way we see it, that's part of the fun.



# *Collaborate, Design, Create*



# Maintenance Ensures Satisfaction for a Lifetime.

How can you tell if your plants are hungry? Do you know if they're getting the water they really need? Is it really important to do all that "dividing?"

Plants, like any other living thing, require a lot of care. That's why a professional maintenance plan consists of much more than pulling weeds and putting out hoses.

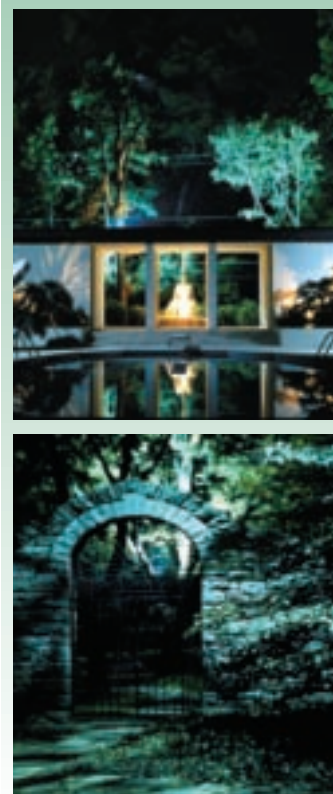
With a well planned, well managed maintenance plan, you can be assured that each type of plant gets the right amount of water at the

right time of day, flowers are divided regularly for optimum health, spent bulbs are replaced, and pruning is done correctly. What's more, soil testing and fertilization are handled by trained technicians who feed plants properly to avoid undue stress.

At Van Zelst, we love it when homeowners want to be involved in caring for their emerging landscape, and we're happy to fill in where needed, to make sure your plants always look their best.

## Shedding Light on the Landscape.

Garden lighting has evolved beyond a few hanging lanterns (although they still have their place at many parties). Today's lighting is built-in, and can be strategically placed to illuminate plantings, hardscape features and gathering places. Van Zelst often hides light sources in flower beds or bushes, to ensure that the focus is on the effect of the light, not its source.



**Left:** Bright white Cleome stands out against a backdrop of pinks and reds, featuring tall, plumes of Astilbe.

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## Recent Honors

Awards for Landscape Design, Construction and Management presented by the Illinois Landscape Contractors Association (ILCA)

- 2006 Gold Lake Geneva Residence
- 2006 Gold Glenview Residence
- 2006 Silver Wilmette Residence
- 2005 Gold Wilmette Residence
- 2005 Silver Glencoe Residence
- 2005 Merit Kenilworth Residence
- 2004 Gold Glenview Residence
- 2004 Silver Lake Forest Residence
- 2004 Merit Lake Geneva Residence
- 2003 Gold Kenilworth Residence
- 2003 Silver Wilmette Residence
- 2003 Merit Lake Forest Residence
- 2003 Merit Glencoe Residence

For a complete list, visit [www.vanzelst.com](http://www.vanzelst.com).

## Springtime, and Everything's New.



In the landscape business, winter is quiet. Like the plants themselves, our office goes a bit dormant (if that's even possible). We get to be our own client, catching up on in-house projects and looking to the new season.

One of my favorite parts of the winter to-do list is selecting new plants to introduce the following year. This year, we've added more than 50 to our palette—hybrid flowers with more vivid colors, new versions that inject life into old standbys like hostas and daylilies, and surprises like echinacea “Double Decker,” which looks like the purple coneflower you know, but with a whimsical cap of extra petals bursting out of the cone. You'll see a few of these new introductions below.

We always select plants based on how they'll fare in our climate and soil, as well as how they enhance the selection already grown in our nurseries. New plants, new ideas and new people to work with. Spring is an exciting time around here.

Regards, *Dave*

### Glorious New Plants for 2006.

Below are just a few of the dozens of exciting new plants we're introducing this year:



**Echinacea “Double Decker”**  
a second set of petals sprouts from the cone



**Coreopsis “Creme Brulee”**  
larger, bright yellow flowers



**Carex “Ice Dance”**  
dark green grass with bright white borders



**Astilbe “Visions in Red”**  
intensely colored, feathery flowers



**Hydrangea “Endless Summer”**  
repeat blooms through the first frost



**Hosta “Dream Weaver”**  
wide, blue-green border with creamy white center



**Heuchera “Plum Pudding”**  
plum leaves with darker plum veining



**Brunnera “Jack Frost”**  
almost completely silver, heart-shaped leaves

## Ideas for Your Midwestern Landscape.



Order your copy of *Transformations: Ideas for the Midwestern Landscape* today. In each chapter, David Van Zelst describes a project's challenges and solutions, while photographer Linda Oyama Bryan captures its essence in lush color photography.

For your copy, visit [www.vanzelst.com](http://www.vanzelst.com) and click on Book Order.

## What Happened to My Trees?

Last summer's drought isn't over yet—some trees may show its effects this year. Even if a tree or shrub looked fine in the fall, it may not bounce back this spring.

Watch for yellowing leaves, premature leaf drop, leaves dying from the bottom of the tree upward and outward, or leaves that look wilted or burnt along the edges. If a tree has severely declined from drought stress, usually nothing can be done to bring it back.

Keep this in mind in future dry spells. Trees need a long, slow soak each week to avoid a vulnerable, shallow root system and drought stress. Young trees are at the greatest risk.

There is some good news, however. The Chicago Botanic Garden predicts that there may be fewer Japanese beetles this year, so grub damage may be lessened in 2006.



### CEDAR PLANK SALMON

Here's a simple but delicious way to inaugurate your new outdoor kitchen.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cedar plank, soaked in water for 2 hours
- 2 pounds salmon fillets
- Salt and pepper
- 1/4 cup Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup brown sugar

#### DIRECTIONS

Remove skin and any bones from salmon. Rinse and pat dry. Season with salt and pepper. Lay the salmon (on what was skin-side down) on the cedar plank. Spread the mustard over the top and sides, then sprinkle with brown sugar.

Place plank directly on preheated grates. Grill, covered, over indirect, medium-high heat until cooked to 135 degrees F (20 to 30 minutes). Serve right off the plank.

Makes 8 servings.

