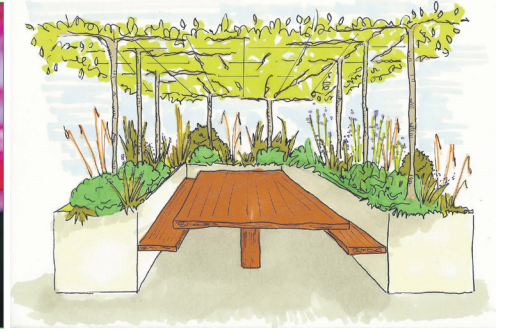


# Christine Barve Garden Design



## Christine can help to create your perfect garden space

**C**HIRSTINE Barve's love and enjoyment of gardening and plants has grown into a successful new career as a garden designer.

A qualified accountant, Christine worked for over 20 years in finance for the NHS. For a lot of that time, gardening was just a hobby, squeezed in between the demands of being a full-time working single mum.

In 2012, a small inheritance enabled her to take a sabbatical and to enrol on a Royal Horticultural Society course at Pershore College, in Worcestershire.

"I was no longer enjoying my job and needed to recharge my batteries," says Christine.

"A few months into the course I had that eureka moment and decided that now was the time to try and make my passion into my career."

After securing the Pershore Diploma in Garden Design, graduating with distinctions in the summer of 2014, 'Christine Barve Garden Design' was established, covering Birmingham and the West Midlands.

Christine's garden design services fall into three main categories:

- **Advice & Inspiration** - Ideal for solving specific problems or advising on how to make the best of small outside spaces like roof terraces or balconies.

- **Planting Plans** - From full borders to containers.

- **A Full Design Service** - To completely transform your garden or outside space.

"I love and enjoy gardening and plants - it's as simple as that," says Christine. "I also enjoy the challenge of creating different designs and planting plans."

"We all have our preferences when it comes to plants and styles and I couldn't afford to keep changing my own balcony so being able to create different designs for other people is like Christmas every day for me. I get to look and lust after hundreds of different plants, like a child in a sweet shop."

Indeed, Christine still has fond memories of her first gardening exploits as a child. "My mum was a keen composter long before it was fashionable or applauded for being sustainable and one of my favourite jobs was climbing into the compost

heap jumping up and down to compress it or turning it," says Christine.

"I think I enjoyed getting dirty as I was also a big fan of mud pies and collecting rose petals to make (probably very smelly) home-made perfume."

"I also loved my Nanna's garden and greenhouse - the smell of tomato leaves and sweet peas always takes me straight back there. She was obviously a keen gardener but it was all just a natural part of the day and never seemed like a chore or hardwork - something I believe all gardens can be if they are well-planned and designed to suit their owner."

Christine firmly believes that a well-designed outside space will add value to your home and provide enjoyment and pleasure to you, your family and visitors.

"I also want to debunk the myth that design is a luxury and expensive," she says. "It's like designing a kitchen you can spend a lot or a little and often achieve the same results - yes, the quality of materials may differ or how you achieve what you want may need some more imagination but the result can still be as pleasing."

"A good planting plan will save you money in the long term - it may feel like an additional cost but you will have expert advice on the plants that will be right for you. This includes creating the effect you want to achieve, plants that will suit your environment and the level of skills and time you have available to look after them."

"It's impossible to build a garden that requires no maintenance at all but you can create a lovely outside space which needs less maintenance than you might think."

"This is where my plant knowledge and years of experience looking after gardens comes to the fore. I want to make design affordable."

"Not everybody needs a full design service with detailed plans and construction drawings. They may just want some advice or ideas on how to solve a particular problem, maybe creating more privacy, or achieve a certain look. This is where my 'Advice and Inspiration' service comes in."

"I charge an hourly rate and after a visit or email/telephone discussion will provide a written report with my recommended ideas and solutions illustrated with sketches

or photographs and where to find additional information.

"For example, one recent client wanted to get rid of her lawn and create borders she could meander through but felt her garden was too narrow to achieve the effect she wanted and the £300 budget available for hard-landscaping."

"We agreed one day's consultancy and I was able to provide her with a simple design which maximised the space available, advice on type and amount of materials and construction method for the paths; all of which should come in well under budget and can be easily implemented by the average DIY-er."

"You have to remember that your garden or outside space is there to be enjoyed and it can be anything you want it to be. There are no rules as to what it should or shouldn't look like but a good design and the right planting will help you create your perfect space."

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