



CREATING AN Outdoor Paradise

Designing a dream landscape that reflects the individuality of the homeowners, the architecture of the home, and pays homage to the natural surroundings, is no easy task.

How do you transform a 100-acre country estate situated on rolling farmland with extensive views of sprawling vistas into a well-defined outdoor paradise without compromising the integrity of the Escarpment environment? This was the challenge that Bill and Donna McEwan offered The Landmark Group when they contracted the company to take on such a massive landscaping assignment.

Perched atop a wonderland of wildlife and natural phenomenon, the custom-designed home, built by Absolute Craftsmen, was already perfection personified.

But outside, the surrounding area still needed professional attention in order to ensure all of the landscaping elements dovetailed according to the home's original design concept.

Gary Nordeman, President and General Manager of The Landmark Group, explains that homeowners today anticipate spending more time outdoors

and to this end a pleasing, well-designed setting is necessary to accommodate family and social functions. "To achieve this," said Nordeman, "a lot of variables must be considered, such as shade, dining, water, privacy, unique focal points in the landscape, views, outdoor kitchen, and so on."

Naturally, a project of this magnitude is not without its challenges. Firstly, multiple outdoor spaces needed to be defined without taking away from the farmland and openness of the 100-acre property. The harsh elements of gusty year-round winds and a Canadian winter limited the choice of plant materials to anything hardy to Zone 5b-Zone 6.

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In addition, the homeowners wanted to maintain their view for “farm watching” which they look on as a live broadcast of foraging deer, spirited turkey vultures, harvesting rituals, blazing sunsets, an ever-changing congregation of birds and, the highly coveted, copious amounts of quiet.

To adapt to this rural landscape, low-maintenance perennial gardens, shrubs and native trees were chosen to complement nature’s own design. The multi-zone irrigation system was tied into the farm’s well and battery backup infrastructure.

Hardscapes, varying elevations, the pool-scape, fireplaces and perennial gardens hug the custom home and complement the interior architecture, including the themes of colour and materials already in place. A unique pool cabana with full bar, shower, bathroom, shade and seating areas was designed for different times of the summer day.

A natural stone wall, capped in limestone, surrounds the main patio and pool areas. Together with trees and shrubs they help block the extreme winds of the farm hilltop. A large, limestone boulder was found on the property and became an art piece in the patio area, adding sentimental value for the homeowners.

The subtle use of stepping stones formed a meandering pathway from one garden and seating area to the next, including a footpath to the fire pit.

The large, custom, double-sided fireplace features an overhanging roof shelter utilizing local natural stone, and includes in-ground up-lighting, timber beams, lighting and sound.



As well, the creative, but simple fire pit was built using square-cut stone and a “camping-style” boulder pit for the grandchildren’s entertainment.

It’s safe to say, no stone was left unturned as The Landmark Group set about creating and completing the award-winning landscape design for this awe-inspiring property.

“Their reputation precedes them,” said Donna McEwan. “They are creative, responsive, and they have great taste. From design to long-term maintenance and follow-up, they are just great to work with.”

The relationship continues now with after-sales service and a proactive approach to ongoing grounds maintenance. ■



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