

LANDSCAPING

Feng Shui Brings Harmony to a Colorado Garden

A design-oriented homeowner knew just who to ask to create a relaxing Rocky Mountain paradise. Steal the look (and the luck) for your own garden



Dan DeGrush / Lifescape

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MARCH 3, 2020



When founding publisher of [Luxe Interiors + Design Magazine](#), Dana Meacham, moved into her Castle Pines, Colorado, home, she knew cookie-cutter design wouldn't cut it. With an eye toward the natural beauty of her home's surroundings and an interest in Eastern philosophies, Meacham opted for a [feng shui](#) garden for her outdoor spaces, hiring Denver-based landscape design firm [Lifescape Colorado](#).

Also known as Chinese geomancy, the principles of feng shui seek to harmonize a person with their environment—both in the home and the garden—using the eight cardinal directions as the framework. In a feng shui garden, each section of one's yard corresponds to one of the directions and adding the right elements are thought to bring luck and harmony; for example, add a water feature to the northern section of the garden to bring wealth, and plant trees in the eastern portion of your garden to strengthen your family relationships.

Sunset



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Despite size and location—a modest lot in a dense suburban neighborhood—the landscape design for this Colorado home provides a peaceful and sophisticated retreat where the homeowners can immerse themselves in nature.

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Sunset

community.

As conceived by Lifescape Senior Designer Joshua Ruppert, the landscape prioritizes drought-tolerant material, [native plants](#), [perennials](#), and tall grasses that move and respond to the wind. A recessed basement window is lined with serviceberry trees to create a feeling of coziness and privacy without blocking the view. Strategically placed river birch (*Betula nigra*) trees provide screening and define the space. And a restrained palette of ornamentals—white fernbush (*Chamaebatiaria millefolium*), salvia, bee blossom (*Gaura lindheimerii* 'Whirling Butterflies'), gaillardia, and leadwort (*Plumbago*)—adds color and softness to the overall design.



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Corten steel wraps through the landscape of sculpture, native grasses, and a large basalt plinth water feature. The metal is popping up in lots of Western landscaping lately, marrying hard industrial edges with the terracotta earthiness of rust.

Rather than hardscape, the garden designers created pathways of delicate gravels and small pebbles that can be walked on barefoot. Not only do these make a soothing sound when trod upon, but they're also [pervious](#)—this means that rainwater can slowly percolate through the paths and into the soil beneath, instead of just running off into gutters. ([Here are some of our favorite ideas for relaxing paths.](#))

A sunken patio with firepit and seating areas provides a place for relaxation and gatherings without interrupting views of plant life and surrounding peaks from within the home—and on chilly Colorado evenings, it gets plenty of use. [Check out some other ideas for backyard fire pits.](#)

Feng Shui Principles in Your Own Landscape

A connection to nature was maximized to create a suburban refuge rooted in the principles of a feng shui garden. Here are some of the other concepts that you can use in your own garden—just approach your space with an eye toward the geographic orientation of your yard. Does it actually work? Who knows—but a feng shui garden design is certainly beautiful enough to bring harmony to your landscape.

Sunset



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North

Energy: Wealth/career

Element: Water

Colors: Black, purple, blue

Garden element: Rocks and boulders (like the basalt water feature in the photo above)

Northeast

Energy: Personal and spiritual growth

Element: Earth

Colors: Pink, yellow/ochre, earth tones

Sunset



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East

Energy: Family, longevity, and health

Element: Wood

Colors: Green

Garden element: Trees (like the river birch pictured above), wooden ornaments

Sunset

Southeast

Energy: Wealth, abundance, prosperity

Element: Wood

Colors: Green, blue, purple, red, gold (the last three being colors of royalty)

Garden element: Any growing thing, but especially red or [purple flowers](#)

South

Energy: Fame, accolades, success

Element: Fire

Colors: Red

Garden element: Fire pits, [outdoor lighting](#) (like torches), or barbecues



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Southwest

Energy: Love and romance, peace, relationships

Element: Earth

Colors: Beige, white, pink

Sunset



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West

Energy: Children, the future, joy, creativity

Element: Metal

Colors: Metallic tones of copper and silvery gray, plus white

Garden element: Metal [wind chimes](#), or corten steel boxes (like those pictured above)

Sunset



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Northwest

Energy: Travel, helpful friends

Element: Metal

Colors: Black, gray, white

Garden element: Paths to promote travel; seating areas for friendly chats (both pictured above)

Keep the elements in mind and a compass in hand, and your feng shui garden could bring you a long, lucky life!

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