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Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

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GARDENS TAKE SHAPE

Display Until June 14, 2018



MEET THE DESIGNER

 AS SEEN IN
CTC&G
 Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

Lisa Delplace

Landscape architecture company Oehme, van Sweden (OvS) created the New American Gardens aesthetic that brings the meadow to the yard. Meet OvS CEO Lisa Delplace, who heads the firm founded by her late mentors Wolfgang Oehme and James van Sweden. —*Sharon King Hoge*



Attracted to the OvS trailblazing focus on sustainability, Lisa Delplace applied to the Washington, DC, company right after obtaining her masters in landscape architecture. After being asked in her job interview if she minded “getting her hands dirty,” she signed on enthusiastically, delighted to join a firm that worked against the grain in an innovative hands-on approach that followed the designs through construction—grading, installing, supervising. “We were doing it all,” she says. “It made for immediate gratification.”

Known for work that combines a knowledge of ecological processes with artistic execution, she has created parks, memorials, malls, rooftop terraces and vertical green walls across the country. Since 2003, Delplace has guided the firm, which is currently working on an active family’s coastal beach home in Delaware and an urban residential garden along the shores of Lake Michigan. Married for 30 years, the DC resident considers the gardens her children. ovsla.com.



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1. What role does water play in your landscapes? It’s so reflective, you can bounce light off it to amplify the scale of a small garden. And the sound mitigates exterior noise, it’s a calming factor, a wonderful tool to use in any garden.

2. What is it about New American Gardens that resonates with you? The old standard clipped hedges and evergreens look the same in March and June, they’re static. Humans respond to seasonality, to fluid horticulture in their cities.

3. How is OvS pushing the borders of sustainable design? In a 10,000-acre sculpture garden in Montana, cows and sheep occupy the space with the artwork. We bring visitors to an outdoor art venue with sustainable ranching practices.

4. What garden memories do you have from growing up? My mother had an incredible hedgerow of hydrangeas, big and fluffy.

5. Do you have a go-to gardening outfit? I always wear long sleeves, even in summer, linen blouses, because mosquitoes eat me alive.

6. What’s your favorite garden tool? There’s a trowel—its handle is almost six inches long—that was originally designed for planting bulbs, but I love it for almost everything in the garden.

What’s a quality of Connecticut you appreciate? The landscape is ruggedly beautiful, you really feel the historic and cultural aspects.