

# Garden PARTY

After months of isolation, create your own talking point, says *Randle Siddeley*

Now that we can all gather in our gardens, I've noticed things becoming a little competitive out there. If you want to host a garden party to remember, it won't suffice to produce some lanterns or a pretty parasol – it's time to think about your garden's wow factor. You need some unique features to start a conversation, so here are one or two innovations guaranteed to add intriguing originality to any outside space.

## ADD SOME DRAMA »

Originally, I placed five of these beautifully textured shards by Andrew Moor in a Hong Kong garden against the sweeping backdrop of Discovery Bay. Seeing how they became talking points and added instant theatre to the space, I decided to design one into a central London garden, where it had an equally dramatic and elegant effect. The highest shard rises to about two metres and each one suggests a beautiful sea-cold flame or giant blade of translucent grass, thrusting up towards the sky and evoking immediate curiosity. [andrewmoor.com](http://andrewmoor.com)



## « TAKE AN (AWARD-WINNING) SEAT

I was with Simon Burvill at Chelsea Design Centre when we spotted Nina Campbell's beautiful upholstered three-seater love seat. We joked about it being the perfect set-up for a contemporary ménage à trois. Soon we were imagining a garden version – with a table in the middle for the champagne magnum of course – and the Gaze Burvill Meander 3 was born. It was extraordinarily difficult to master this chair's balance, but the expertise of Gaze Burvill's craftsmen prevailed to create its thick flared bends and clever demountable system. The Meander caught the approving eye of RHS judges at the last Chelsea Flower Show, where it was shortlisted for the Product of the Year Award. It's the perfect antidote to our hectic digital age, designed for non-confrontational but close conversations and convivial debate.

Guests might never want to leave. £6,960, [gazeburvill.com](http://gazeburvill.com)



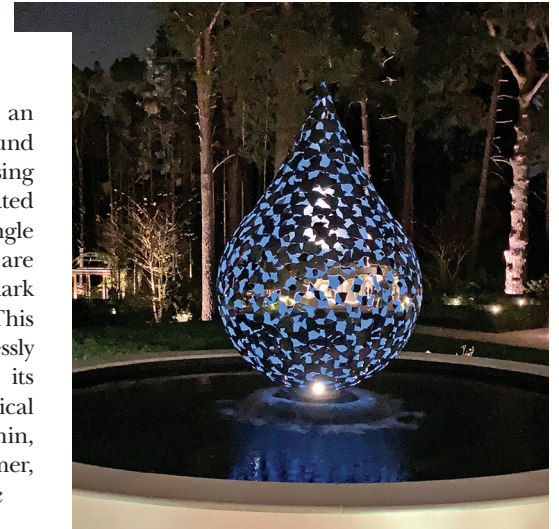
## « THE POWER OF GREAT LIGHTING

Dusk can descend all too fast on al fresco entertaining. We talk about bringing the outside in but as the sun sinks we need to draw some interior cheer outside. Invest in lighting that will seamlessly flow from house to garden, creating one big entertainment space. Never underestimate the transformative power of lighting to create atmosphere. For this LG Chelsea Flower Show Garden (left), I worked with Sally Storey, award-winning creative director at John Cullen Lighting. She linked the garden room with the sunken seating area, creating atmospheric punctuation by uplighting the multi-stemmed trees with key spotlights. Sally lit the path from the kitchen with Guida path lights, which skim across the paving. She gave the seating area a soft glow by underlighting it with Contour LED strips and then added solar lanterns for decoration. The result was a stunning backdrop, a welcoming, glamorous stage for a memorable evening. [johncullenlighting.com](http://johncullenlighting.com)



## MAKE A SPLASH »

We were commissioned to re-landscape an entire six-acre garden in Wentworth and found an ill-construed water feature comprising an unattractive stone lily pad. I collaborated with artist David Harber on designing a single Teardrop sculpture. The elegant curves are a wickerwork of stainless steel, painted dark blue inside with a skirt of water around it. This formidable centrepiece transitions effortlessly between day and night – in sunlight, its reflective surface turns the pond a mystical deep blue, while after dark it's lit from within, making the Teardrop appear to shimmer, suspended above water. [davidharber.co.uk](http://davidharber.co.uk)



## » PIZZA TO GO

I dread someone arriving at a picnic with a pile of soggy pizzas wilting in their cardboard boxes. I'm fussy and I like my pizza crisp. To ensure the perfect crust, I intend to use my Ooni Koda 16", a gas-fired pizza oven that's portable – great for picnics – and creates superb pizza in seconds. I love seeing good design paired with functionality and this oven embodies both – it's the ultimate in innovative culinary chic. £499, [ooni.com](http://ooni.com)



## « A PAEAN TO PEONIES

At this time of year my flower of the month has to be peonies. Much of their beauty lies in their luscious globular buds prior to bursting, but once they emerge like extravagant butterflies, nothing competes with their transient grace. Their very appeal lies in the fact their blowsy heads are as fragile and short-lived as blossom, so admire them while they last. Plant them in groups of a dozen or more (they like sun or partial shade and rich soil), then leave them to die back. Avoid cutting them because their petal-cluster heads add sensual splendour to any herbaceous border alongside spiky salvias, feathery fennel foliage and sparkling Astrantia stars. I love the semi-double, creamily pure Immaculée, the big, fragrant Percher with a red thread outlining its soft pink petals and the robust, reliable, best-selling Sarah Bernhardt with its enormous heads of dark rose petals.

So – invest in a garden talking piece, start partying among the peonies and have a wonderful al fresco summer. [randlesiddeley.co.uk](http://randlesiddeley.co.uk) ■