

APRIL 2011

VERANDA

ROMANTIC
DECORATING
RETURNS





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The best of English and French landscape design intertwine in a Cotswold manor garden.

96 ISN'T IT ROMANTIC

A grand Florida house feels anything but stuffy with James Howard's serene and airy interiors.

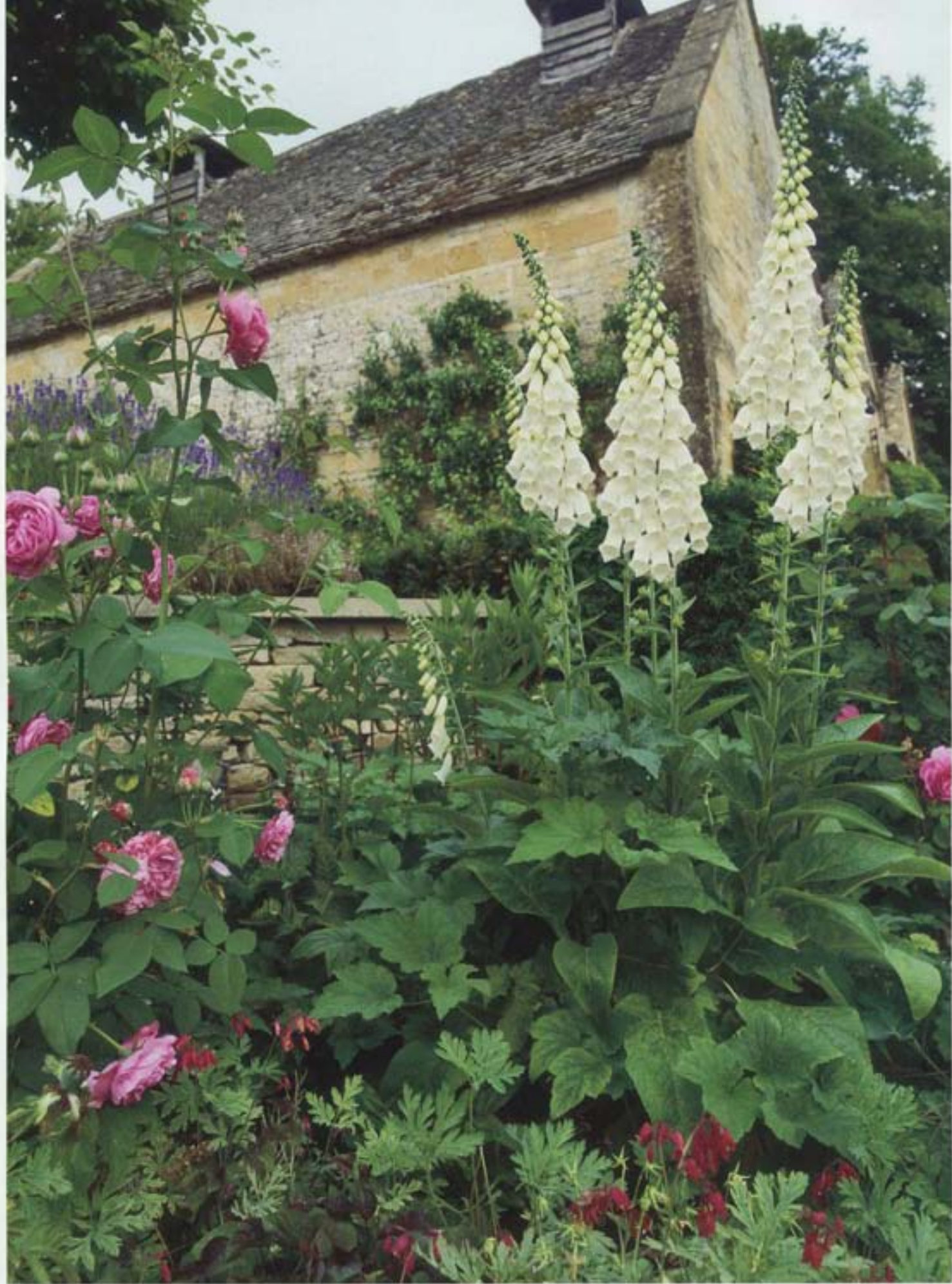
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Roberto Bergero's Parisian apartment is an artful stage set that's constantly evolving.

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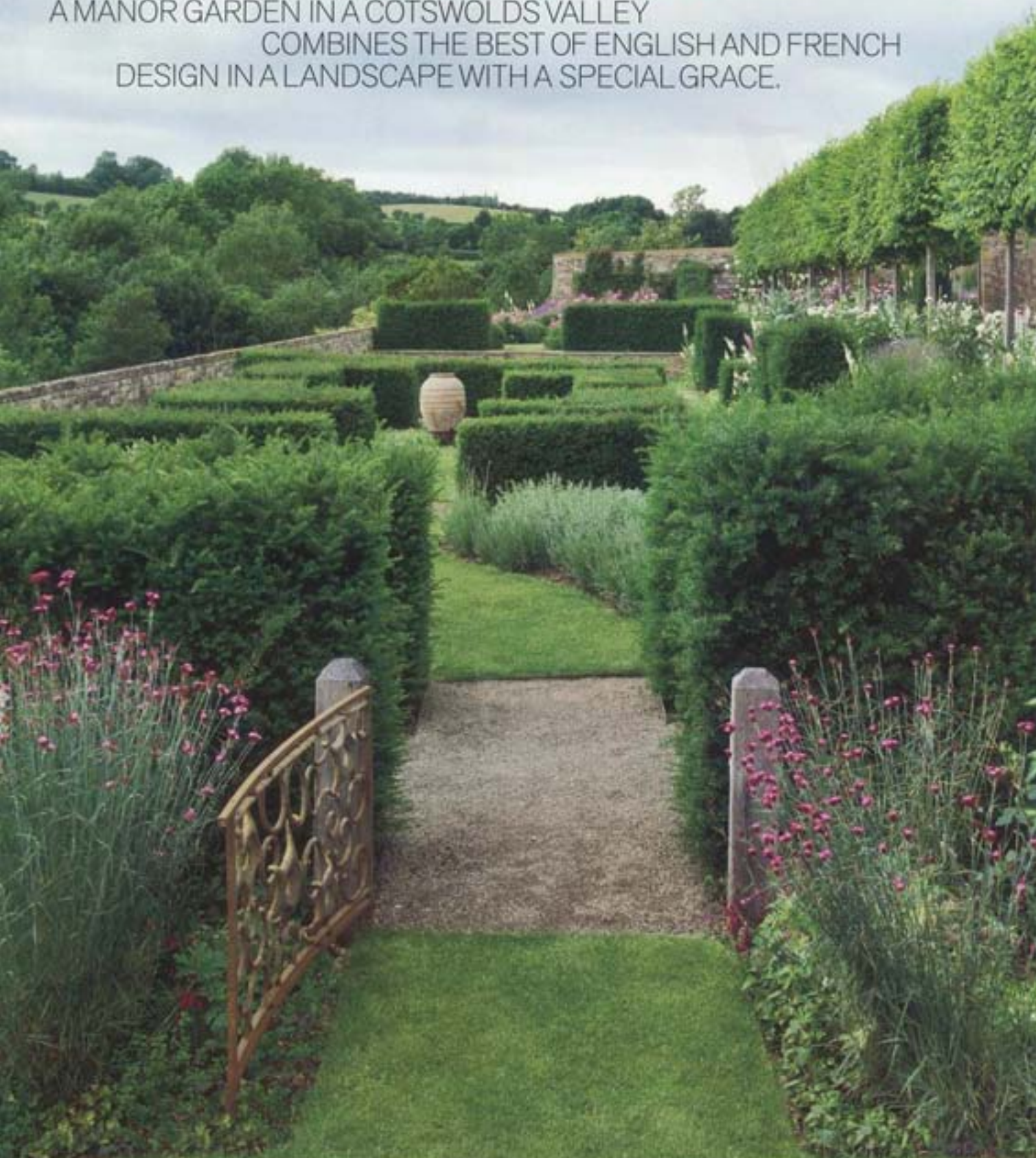
Peggy Stone's antiques look just right in a new, Normandy-style house in Atlanta.

ON THE COVER
A laurel-leaf painted ceiling and a canopy bed are grace notes in a Florida house by James Howard.
PHOTOGRAPHY
BY MIGUEL FLORES-VIANNA



A Wild Order

A MANOR GARDEN IN A COTSWOLDS VALLEY
COMBINES THE BEST OF ENGLISH AND FRENCH
DESIGN IN A LANDSCAPE WITH A SPECIAL GRACE.



LANDSCAPE DESIGN BY JINNY BLÖM PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEXANDRE BAILHACHE
PRODUCED BY CAROLYN ENGLEFIELD WRITTEN BY ELIZA MCCARTHY

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DURING HIS EAST-END LONDON BOYHOOD, THE CURRENT OWNER OF TEMPLE GUITING MANOR DREAMED OF OWNING TWO THINGS: A BENTLEY CAR AND A HOUSE IN THE COTSWOLDS, THE ROLLING PASTORAL REGION IN SOUTHWEST ENGLAND KNOWN FOR its hedgerows, country lanes, storybook stone farmhouses and thatched-roof cottages.

He eventually achieved at least half his fantasy in the relatively unknown North Cotswold village of Temple Guiting (pronounced "guy-ting"). The centuries-old limestone manor house he bought as a weekend retreat was mentioned in the Domesday Book, a property survey commissioned by William the Conqueror in 1085, and has been inhabited since at least the fifteenth century.

By 2002, the manor's fourteen acres were wild and dotted with the ruins of stone walls, so the owner brought in British designer Jinny Blom to create a series of user-friendly yet historically respectful gardens—a sometimes tricky task. Since hanging out her shingle in 2000, Blom has fast become a star for just this type of horticultural sleight of hand. Her creations, frequently surrounding storied houses, manage to be dramatic and often lighthearted but also highly structured and timeless. Blom, a former therapist, is self-taught: "My hobby got out of hand," she jokes. With nearly two hundred projects under her belt—from Oxfordshire farms to remote lodges in the Scottish Highlands—she was undaunted by the challenge.

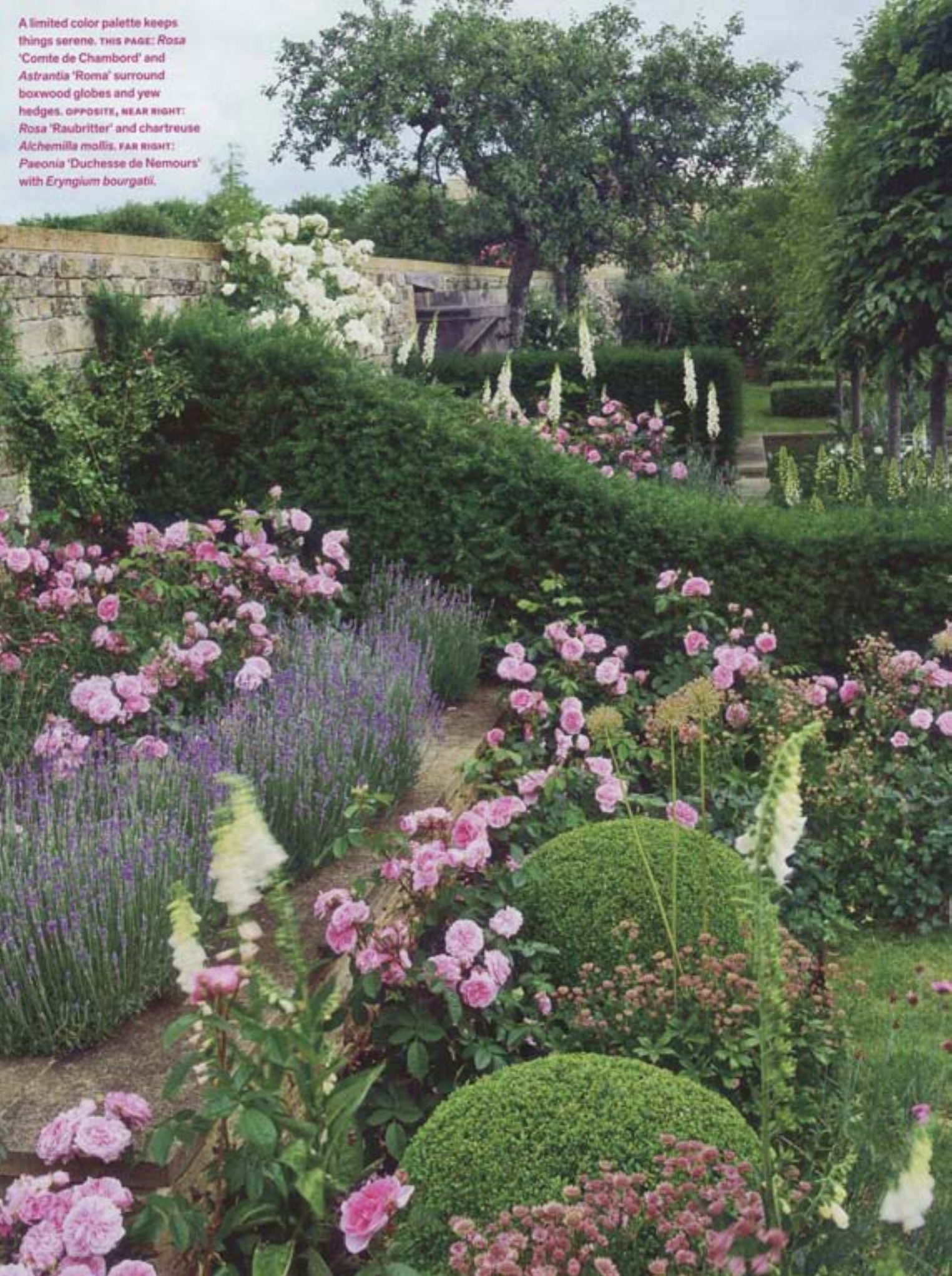
After walking the property—much of which has idyllic



Cottage staples meet a French sense of geometry. *ORENINA*
PAGES: Damask roses, white
foxgloves and 17th-c. dovecote.
THESE PAGES: Canal bordered by
pleached hornbeams, Paeonia
'Duchesse de Nemours' and
Campanula persicifolia 'Alba.'



A limited color palette keeps things serene. THIS PAGE: Rosa 'Comte de Chambord' and Astartia 'Roma' surround boxwood globes and yew hedges. OPPOSITE, NEAR RIGHT: Rosa 'Raubritter' and chartreuse *Alchemilla mollis*. FAR RIGHT: *Paeonia* 'Duchesse de Nemours' with *Eryngium bourgatii*.





“I DO ABSOLUTELY BULLETPROOF PLANTING,
BUT I WANTED TO MAKE IT *theatrical*.”

views of the lush Windrush River valley beyond—Blom sketched out a network of eighteen walled plots on three hillside levels. “I wanted to make it theatrical,” she says. A major first undertaking was the restoration and addition of limestone walls—the bones of the place, which originally surrounded the medieval manor’s pastures and vegetable beds to protect flocks and food. It took a crew five years to rebuild them, carefully employing a traditional drystone method that uses no mortar—and is the farm world equivalent of haute couture. (The completed project earned a Pinnacle Award that was handed out by noted rural-phile Prince Charles.)

A focus on shape and form also dictated Blom’s choice of plants. At first glance they seem quintessentially English—there are long, mixed borders and many cottagey flowers, such as peonies, iris and foxgloves. But they are hemmed by geometric greenery that feels distinctly French in

inspiration: simple yew hedges, lines of trees, and clipped and unclipped boxwoods and topiaries that Blom brought in full-sized. Yet despite these formal elements, Temple Guiting requires only two part-time gardeners to keep it presentable. “I do absolutely bulletproof planting,” says Blom, knowing as she must that, too often, designers leave inexperienced owners with beautiful but extremely high-maintenance creations.

Walking through the grounds, a few dramatic highlights tend to stand out. There’s the narrow, hundred-foot canal in the main garden, lined with a “hedge on stilts,” made of pleached hornbeam trees. Or the Granary Walk, which follows the old road of the estate and looks out onto stands of ancient beech dotting the countryside. In this newly revitalized space, it doesn’t seem silly to imagine, as Blom does, that it all might stay intact for the “next four hundred years and look as beautiful as it does now.” □



Full-grown trees were imported for instant patina. THIS PAGE, TOP: Clipped boxwood squares surround fruit trees in the orchard. BELOW: A sweep of informal plantings. OPPOSITE, TOP: Lavender, foxgloves and others beneath hornbeams. BOTTOM: *Philadelphus 'Belle Étoile'* along the Granary Walk.

