

# Planet Horticulture

1997 ~ 2017

*Twenty Years of Garden Design Excellence!*





Planet Horticulture started in 1997 by partners Roger Raiche and David McCrory. We are celebrating 20 years of creating gardens together. Roger came to Planet Horticulture after a 20-year career at the UC Botanical Garden at Berkeley, best known for managing the California Native Plant collection. Roger was also famous for his remarkable Berkeley garden at the Maybeck Cottage, featured in major gardening magazines. David traveled extensively and learned how people garden around the world. He had practical skills with a Horticulture Degree from Merritt College, years of management experience, and a California Landscape Contractors License.

Inspired by Roger's work, David suggested combining their respective skill sets to form a company that would spread Roger's vision and design; implementing it in both commercial and private gardens. Roger coined the term Planet Horticulture as a design philosophy of using combinations of the best plants from around the world in an idealized, heightened garden atmosphere. The essence of Planet Horticulture is approaching landscapes through a lens that combines the science and biology of nature with the art of good design sense and aesthetic combination. We hope our style will be a positive influence on other gardeners and designers.

Gardening is profoundly human. It marked a transition in human development where we decided to change from simply taking what was there to creating more of what we wanted and needed to thrive as a species. Plants sustain and nourish us, creating fresh air, food, medicine, fiber and construction materials. Beyond their utility, landscapes and the plants found in them offer us many emotional and spiritual rewards such as joy, comfort, wonder and sense of connection through their beauty of form and flower. The ties that bind humans and the landscape are indivisible.

The infinite patterns found in the natural world inspire us. We are also inspired by how the myriad of cultures have used plants, architecture and art, formally and informally, to approximate an ideal of beauty, to recreate paradise. These influences and ideas help us to customize every landscape to meet the needs and visions of our clientele. Our landscape improvements have practical purposes that include water conservation, edible plants, cut flowers, drainage, stabilization, access and having exterior living spaces. We see design as an organic process that requires careful planning, but that also allows the flexibility to create during the installation, indeed over the years as the landscape evolves.

**20th Anniversary Retrospective :**  
[www.planethorticulture.com/20thAnniversary](http://www.planethorticulture.com/20thAnniversary)



# New Entry Garden - SF Botanical Garden

## San Francisco, California 1997

The Board of the San Francisco Botanical Garden Invited Planet Horticulture to envision and create a new entry garden for the historic mid-century park entrance.



Before: The original beds were perfectly flat.

Below - After: The new sunny north border consisted of two parallel mounds with a welcoming path and a swale (an arroyo) between.







Detail of plantings on the interior path of the sunny border.  
Photo by Marion Brenner.



Sunny Entry Border shows an intricate mix of spectacular plants that could grow in much of the Bay Area.

View of the sunny side of the Entry Border, showing a complex mix of plants chosen for their form, texture and color. Notice how after a few years, very little of the hardscape elements are visible any longer.



# New Old-Fashion Country Home

Orinda, California 1999



Dining terrace looking up to the Mediterranean hill plantings.



# Chabot Canyon

## Oakland, California 2000



Huge specimen olive tree placed into entry court of the new home.



Entry court after planting.  
The large areas of pavement are now in scale with the plantings and welcome visitors.



# Thousand Oaks District Residence

**Berkeley, California 2006**



Front before. Originally the street front had a routine planting of ivy and juniper, and the front door didn't have a proper landing pad at the top of narrow steps.

We designed a new walled entry porch with curving steps to emphasize the front door and make the approach safer and more welcoming.



New plantings added visual interest and separation from the street.



# **Diamond Mountain Villa**

## **Calistoga, California 2010**

This rustic Italian style villa set on a 24-acre knoll was built overlooking Diamond Mt. Valley, southwest of Calistoga in the Napa Valley, California. Our Clients wanted to emphasize fresh fruit and vegetable production on the property. They also needed help in managing the native vegetation for fire safety. We created a nature trail through much of the property below the house to make the natural areas accessible and to showcase some of the unique native plants growing there.



The pool and hot tub area were planted to create a full and colorful Mediterranean style landscape that would visually blend into the summer-dry native vegetation in the distance.

The pool area looks out over native canyon vegetation and vineyards.





# Russian River Paradise Garden

Guerneville, California 2013

Same front border view but a year later in afternoon sunlight.



Above - Before: side borders. Here at the beginning of the landscaping, the side of the house was just a blank space.

Below: Side borders after. The various palms, shrubs and perennials have grown in to create an other-worldly, paradisaical landscape, with light and shadows and interplay of foliage and color.





# California Hillside Garden

**San Rafael, California 2013**

The owners wanted to convert their sizeable back hillside into a cohesive garden that was both beautiful to look at from the house, but would also be fun to stroll through, provide space for the hot tub and provide fresh produce from a vegetable garden.

Before: A back hillside had mainly been unused as the access was steep and there was little circulation.



After: We built curved steps to unite the dining patio to the upper hill that would also provide a casual seating area. The fountain and a variety of showy and colorful flowering and foliage plants complete the scene.



# Mid-Century Modern Renovation

Berkeley, California 2014



Before: Looking south, paths cut into the steep hillside and water trough planters for veggies installed.

After: Looking south - in less than one year, the hillside plantings, vegetables, and berries are thriving and cover the once bleak slope.



Detail of colorful foliage and flowering plants covering the steep slope.





Before: lawn looking northwest.



Below - After: Looking south, the low, tough, drought and wind tolerant plantings surround the bent-grass lawn, the full expanse of the view reaches the home.





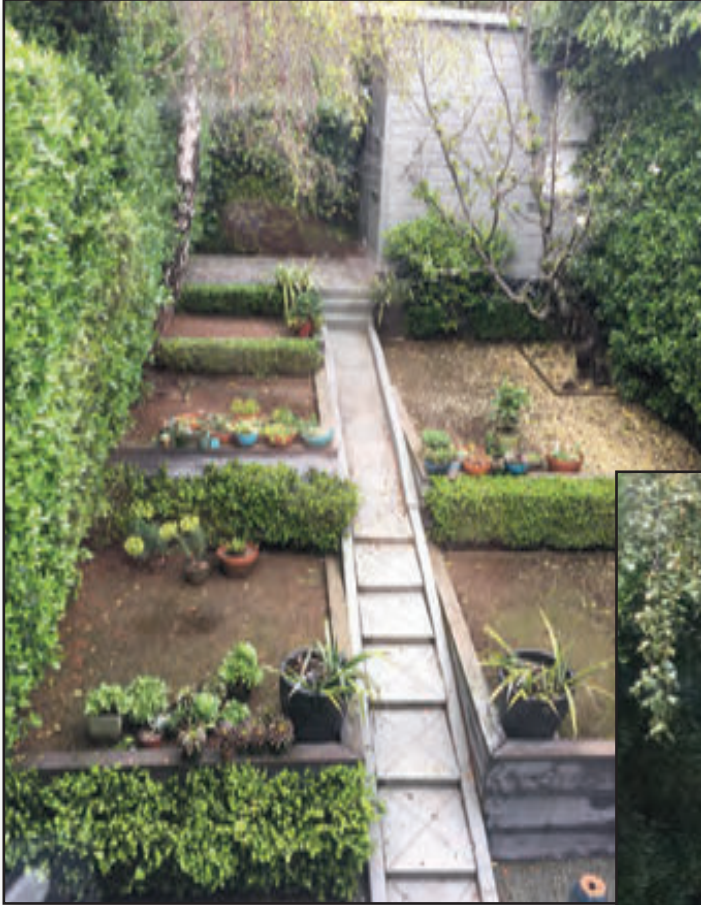
Other garden views reflecting scale of home and landscape.



# Urban Hillside Garden Oasis

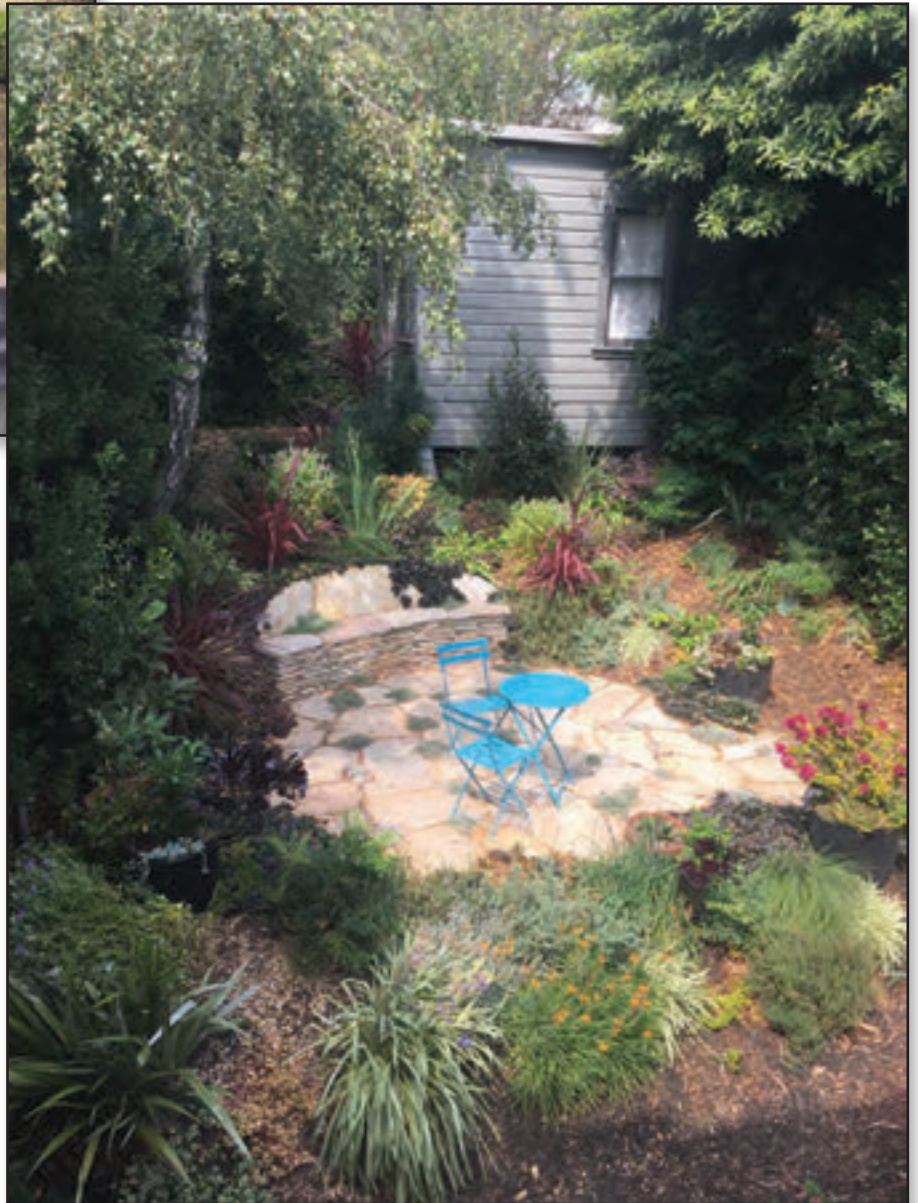
## San Francisco, California 2016

A young couple wanted to make their backyard garden more interesting with a diversity of plants. The existing landscape was a series of terraces with a straight path bisecting the narrow space which was already hemmed in with overgrown hedges on either side. We suggested scaling back the hedges, removing the stairs and walls, and creating a switchback trail with a central patio space. This created a useful gathering spot that took advantage of the limited sun and made the garden feel twice the size.



Before: View from 2nd story bedroom. The narrow back hillside was split up the middle and hemmed in with overgrown hedging, with almost no useful social space.

After: The hedging cut back, the divisive path and pointless terraces removed, the central stone patio with built-in wall seat is surrounded by mixed plantings with a naturalistic feel.





# Seacliff Garden Renovation

San Francisco, California 2017



A small utility yard was completely reconsidered with the two small outbuildings renovated and a solid rustic gate with thatch gable added to add privacy to this separate space. Barrels for vegetables provide ingredients for the kitchen.



Above: View back toward the main house with the potting shed and new vegetable barrels arranged in the cottagey space.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The San Francisco Bay Area is one of the richest horticultural hotspots in the world because of the incredible diversity of topography, soils and micro-climates. Many exceptional plant nurseries produce an amazing diversity of plants. Talented artists have contributed in giving our gardens unique flare. Roger has been diligent in documenting our landscape work over the decades, and we've been fortunate to see some of our work through other gifted photographer's eyes.

We've been promoting our work through our website [www.planethorticulture.com](http://www.planethorticulture.com) since 1997, first created by Jack Thorpe, now continuing its evolution with the guidance of Robin Monroe Design.

Owen McCrory, has been a trusted advisor from the start, guiding us in the challenging financial and legal needs of running a company today.

Planet Horticulture has been fortunate to work with many, diligent coworkers, without whom, we could not have made these achievements. We are indebted to the hardworking crew members who have worked so hard over the years to take our visions and turn them into reality. Jesus Garcia, the company manager, has been a great leader and is a craftsman of considerable practical and creative talents.

Most importantly, we offer our gratitude to our clients, our benefactors, and friends who have supported our art and our visions. We have gratitude for every job that we have had. We have learned and grown through each and every project and continue enjoying to watch these landscapes grow.

We love to connect with friends old and new!

Please visit us:

[www.planethorticulture.com](http://www.planethorticulture.com)

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***To Discuss Your Garden Design/Landscaping Project Contact Us:***

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