



Roof Terrace in Holland Park

The owners of this terrace had bought a turn-of-the-century house in Holland Park, in part because it had a full-width roof terrace with really good views across west London. They wanted to utilise it as an additional living space.

The structure of the roof was not strong enough to withstand full depth planters, so the design had to accommodate this, using shallow rooting plants such as perennials and grasses. This did not present a problem creatively since the space would not be used between October and April. The access to the roof is through a slide-across domed panel.

Due to the nature of their lifestyles – both travel on business a great deal and work very long hours – the space had to be low maintenance and look really good at night when it would be predominately used.

The original design incorporated a reasonably tall western red cedar trellis, incorporating a Perspex screen on one side, to give protection and privacy. However, due to planning issues, this had to be cut down in height to the level of the original parapet wall.

The Ipe decking was cut into a pattern to break the space up into areas and is inset with two rows of square, frosted glass panels which are under-lit with LED lights. Around the edge is a border of frosted glass chippings which again breaks up the space visually and complements the glass panels (and the original Perspex screen). Buried into the glass chippings is a pink LED rope

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light which complements the pink and green planting palette, throwing a soft pink hue around the roof terrace. The space is further broken up by three large western red cedar day beds.

Around the edge is a series of deep galvanised steel planters, powder coated a pale buff/cream, and planted with a range of grasses including *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster', *Calamagrostis brachytricha* and *Stipa tenuissima* and perennials including *Gaura lindheimeri* 'Whirling Butterflies' and *Eryngium giganteum* 'Silver Ghost' interspersed with *Buxus sempervirens* globes. In addition to these, there is a number of opaque cream polyester pots planted with *Dianthus carthusianorum* whose pink flowers keep flowering throughout the summer, softening the overall effect.

The lighting scheme is also exciting, making the space really 'sing' at night. **GD**

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

The terrace provides an urban retreat; the initial plan; the lights come to life at dusk

RIGHT

From drawing board to reality

ABOUT THE DESIGNER

Charlotte Rowe has designed almost 80 gardens in the UK and overseas, including New York and Italy. She works closely with her clients to create a design which reflects their tastes and needs and her particular aim in the urban gardens she designs is to continue the style and look of the interior spaces into the exteriors so that the two are complementary.

The signature features of her gardens are good bone structure with strong architectural lines and rich, lush planting. She keeps the range of finishes and surfaces simple and limits her planting palette both in terms of colour and style to ensure that the garden remains a cohesive whole.

The materials she uses are sometimes unusual: limestone paving, frosted glass and brushed steel furniture, and she tries to include at least one major feature which is new and different. This includes fireplaces and outdoor kitchens. Good quality discreet lighting and water play a very important role in many of her designs.

