



A GARDEN WITHOUT SOME SORT OF A WATER FEATURE, SUCH AS THIS DOLPHIN FOUNTAIN, IS IMPERFECT

Useful definitions

- **Landscape architecture:** the art of composing landform, water, vegetation, horizontal and vertical structures to create an outdoor space. It encompasses many different subjects, such as urban planning, ecology, landscape design and park designs.
- **Hardscape:** comprises the inanimate elements of landscape made of rock, concrete and wood, such as retaining walls, pavement, passages, pergolas, and water features
- **Softscape:** comprises animate horticulture elements in landscape design such as bushes, trees and flowers.

► the plant roots.”  
Of course, any land without water will not be able to host plants or vegetation, proving another hurdle to landscapers. To overcome this obstacle, different techniques have been adopted in Lebanon to conserve moisture, such as collecting water through drainage systems or using specific gels or clays that can absorb water up to 5,000 times their volume. A more cost effective approach, however, is in the use of sustainable plants on those properties that lack sufficient water reserves. “Another [more complicated] technique is using different species of trees, bushes and flowers, in layers so that each layer protects the other,” adds Debbane.

APPLIED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

When designing the Zaffali villa, Layla Abi Khzam and Zeina Salam had one major concern: how to combine the needs of the client to the site’s constraints. The client requested to keep the actual trees to screen the house from the neighbors, create seating space and to revamp the promenade. The problem was that the site was an existing garden with randomly planted trees, an entrance hidden by bushes and flowers, a poor use of the sea view, and a beach with a concrete edge.



Location, location, location

Learn what plants – including trees and flowers – are most suitable for your garden according to geographic location

**Mountains**

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| <u>Trees</u>   | <u>Flowers</u>  |
| <b>Cedrus</b>  | <b>Roses</b>    |
| <b>Abies</b>   | <b>Lavender</b> |
| <b>Picea</b>   | <b>Verveine</b> |
| <b>Robinia</b> |                 |
| <b>Catalpa</b> |                 |

**Bekaa**

- |                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| <u>Trees</u>        | <u>Flowers</u>  |
| <b>Prunus</b>       | <b>Veronica</b> |
| <b>Ligustrum</b>    | <b>Azalea</b>   |
| <b>Cupressus</b>    | <b>Camellia</b> |
| <b>Noce</b>         |                 |
| <b>Liquidambar</b>  |                 |
| <b>Liriodendron</b> |                 |

**Coast**

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Trees</u>       | <u>Flowers</u>    |
| <b>Lagetroemia</b> | <b>Dianthus</b>   |
| <b>Phoenix</b>     | <b>Petunia</b>    |
| <b>Arecastrum</b>  | <b>Rosmarinus</b> |
| <b>Ficus</b>       |                   |
| <b>Citrus</b>      |                   |
| <b>Chamerops</b>   |                   |



Above, an example of a tree suitable for the Bekaa. At top left is an example of a landscape architect’s plan from Latitude 33. At bottom left, a finished garden, which according to Halawi should ‘appeal to all senses.’



“We decided to combine the needs of the clients to our taste,” says the Salam. The young architects started by isolating the garden from its neighbors with a two-meter high trellis covered with bougainvillea and placed candles in the

walls perforations.  
“As for the rest of the garden, we kept the healthy trees and uprooted the dying ones, opening up the garden to the sea. We placed seating spaces in natural stones, which created a focal point to the design,” adds Abi Khzam.

The entrance was opened up by pedestrian and vehicular access, putting to use haphazardly cut stones on the grass and a pond. “The entrance was given back its importance,” says Salam. The last touch was in the recovery of the beach front’s natural look by covering the concrete slab with rocks and bougainvillea. “One thing to keep in mind is that a garden should guide a visitor’s gaze, and not the other way round,” agree both architects. With the particulars of landscape design now at hand, there is no excuse to keep you from getting the garden of your dreams. “A walk in the garden,” concludes Halawi, “should be a process of continual discovery.”

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