

edenhouse

ORINOCO VALLEY · MOTUEKA · NELSON · NEW ZEALAND

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The May 2007 edition of UK House & Garden contains a supplement called “Hotels by Design” and is advertised as “featuring the most stylish hotels in the world”.

Edenhouse is featured over 4 pages and is the only New Zealand property included. The article and photos are below.

HOTELS BY DESIGN

HOUSE
& GARDEN



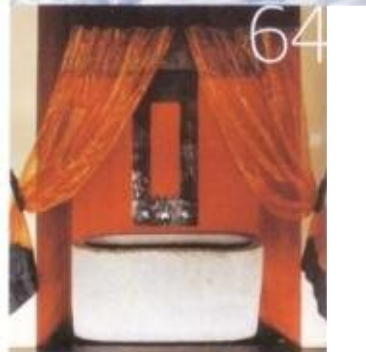
China, Ireland, New Zealand, England – great hotels,
gorgeous gardens + Pools on the edge + High style in the
Alps + Haute couture meets hotel design + Going green

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Garden of Eden



The garden of this pretty South Island lodge combines a love of English tradition with the wild landscape of New Zealand,

Says Nicky Adams

PHOTOGRAPHS STEVEN WOOSTER

The front terrace at Edenhouse lodge (above), in Orinoco Valley in the South Island, has views across the garden towards fields and distant mountains (above top). The garden, like many of the rooms in the lodge, contains works by local artists and sculptors; beneath a stand of native totara trees (this page), for example, is Family Gathering by Graham Snook, which is made from recycled totara fence posts



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Chairs are arranged on the veranda. Trees shade the front terrace. A vase of freshly cut roses from the garden. Undulating hills encircle the garden. Artichokes are grown for the kitchen. A cluster of trees lines a bank of the pond. This rustic bench was made by the builder of the house from salvaged totara fencing. Bobbie gathers crops from the raised beds in the vegetable garden. A hedge of *Photinia x fraseri* 'Red Robin' is crested by bright red new growth. An ornamental pool(centre) makes a focal point in an enclosed area of grass

When Bobbie and Peter Martin first laid eyes on the 48-acre neglected farm in Orinoco Valley, near Nelson in the South Island, both knew without a doubt that they had found the piece of land that they were looking for. 'I loved the contours of it' says Bobbie. After living in the UK for 18 years, the couple decided in 2001 to return to Bobbie's native New Zealand. Their aim was to find a place where they could build a house large enough to accommodate holidaying friends.

The location where they have chosen to settle is one of outstanding natural beauty, even by New Zealand standards. Edenhouse is perfectly positioned just half-an-hour's drive from Abel Tasman National Park. This pristine coastline of turquoise waters, golden beaches and acres of bush is idyllic for walking, kayaking and sailing. Although Bobbie and Peter originally designed and built their piece of heaven for themselves, their desire to share it prompted them to turn a germ of an idea into a tangible reality. The transition from private house to 'boutique luxury lodge' - with accommodation for a maximum of six guests - was easy. Bobbie and Peter wanted to offer visitors a 'hosted experience', and in addition to their roles as charming hoteliers, Peter a former financial trader, now farms the land - and Bobbie is responsible for the gardens.

When she lived in the UK Bobbie studied at the Inchbald School of Design and the English Gardening School. She subsequently ran an interior design business in Knightsbridge, and later studied art for two years. As a result, she relished the prospect of designing Edenhouse. The lodge itself is luxurious, with paintings adorning the walls, fabrics by Colefax and Fowler, and mostly English furniture that has been collected over the last 20 years. It is neither ostentatious nor stuffy: classic items are juxtaposed with quirky sculptures and work by New Zealand artists. 'I want people to feel at home,' says Bobbie. 'I didn't want a Mayfair drawing room.' In addition to pretty things, each room has great views.

The design of the grounds has been determined by the site. The land sits in a valley with snowcapped mountains in the distance and undulating hills in the foreground. The front of the house has a dramatic outlook across these mountains. Bobbie recalls that what is now an immaculate area of lawn 'was once farm paddock. I just mowed and mowed.' Beds are jammed with a mix of Japanese anemones, euphorbias, ajuga, a variety of salvias, veil-like fennel, clematis and pleached limes - with areas of box hedging.

When in bloom, the roses form what Bobbie calls 'a big white froth' outside the windows. Established trees dot the near landscape, in which locally crafted wooden sculpture takes centre stage. Other creations can be found elsewhere in the gardens, some of it proper art, some of it improvised by Bobbie from nature or scrap. In one border sits an old, rusted piece of farm equipment, and in the vegetable garden, a metal bed frames the seating area. The vegetable garden is a delight, supporting rampant strawberries, curly kale, ruby chard, blueberries, red onions, broad beans, gooseberries and artichokes. Whatever produce is left after the birds and Annie, the Labrador, have taken their fill is enjoyed by the guests.

Throughout the grounds native plants are interspersed with European varieties. The terrace at the back of the house is used mainly for breakfast and lunch. When the doors are flung open on each side of the house there is an unimpeded view through the centre of the lodge. This was a deliberate move by Bobbie, 'so that you don't feel closed in - New Zealand is such an open place.' The beds near the back terrace are a mix of perennials, evergreens and shrubs such as hostas, hydrangeas and lots of clipped pittosporum. Close by is a delightful spa area, sheltered by wisteria - covered pergolas, and just below is a small terrace that looks across to an ornamental pond. Enclosing this section is a 'hedge' of pampas grass, which existed before Bobbie arrived.

Guests who prefer seclusion invariably choose to stay at the cottage, which is surrounded by a soft - coloured, cottage - style garden. Drifts of day lilies down the bank grow alongside dogwood and strawberries that have self seeded. It is diversity like this that makes the garden a pleasure - although Bobbie has undoubtedly been inspired by the formal English gardens she loves, this land has distinct characteristics of its own. Nevertheless, her passion for flora is evident in every border: 'I love flowers,' she says. 'I just can't resist them' □



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Edenhouse. New Zealand (tel: 00-64-3-5268174 website: www.edenhouse.co.nz) Double rooms cost NZ \$850 per night, and include breakfast and dinner (with wine). **Turquoise Holidays** (tel: 01494-678400, website: www.turquoise-holidays.com) arranges bespoke holidays throughout New Zealand. For further information about New Zealand, visit www.newzealand.com





◆ **Steven Wooster's** first career was as a book designer. 'Some of the titles were garden related and I would take pictures to fill in any blanks.' He then worked as an art director, 'picking up' photography proper while directing shoots. 'I chose to specialise in gardens because I admire the work of people like John Brookes and Beth Chatto.' His pictures of the 'beautiful' grounds at Edenhouse on pages 60-63 were taken during a month-long trip to New Zealand □