

Opposite Design and structure balance harmoniously with the planting.

This picture A raised walkway dries with wisteria and clematis.

Inset Those all essential focal points.

Colour, form and fragrance

The enormous limestone Grotta di Colleparado in Italy is renowned for its great beauty. By contrast, 'Colleparado', the town garden of Betty and Don Frampton at 3 Keyberry Park in Newton Abbot, although also known for its beauty, covers a mere quarter of an acre. This is a garden where design and structure are harmoniously balanced with the planting. Betty's horticultural knowledge is combined with a keen sense of colour and structure, and she knows all about her plants and their seasonal attributes.

When they retired, Betty and Don moved to Newton Abbot from Cheriton Bishop, where they had a small garden and a one-acre nursery. In the ten years that they have had the garden, they have achieved an incredible amount, fitting their plants into a series of cleverly interlinked garden 'rooms', entered by archway 'doors' and with meandering gravel paths edged with recycled roof slates. In some ways it's like entering the Tardis!

Steps lead down to the house and from here the main path entices you on between mixed shrubs, with tempting views into the centre of the garden, an area dominated by pinks, greys and blues.

You can get a good feel of the garden from the conservatory at the front of the house. Here a paved terrace, complete with picnic benches and sunshades, is used for serving cream teas, and overlooks the centre of the garden, rich in herbaceous geraniums. There's a *Buddleja* 'Lochin' attracting the butterflies, a silver pear, a large beauty bush (*Kolkwitzia amabilis*) and a purple-leaved maple. Here too you can see a raised wooden walkway dripping with wisteria. The wooden

The garden at Colleparado may be small, but it's packed with interest. Terry Underhill goes to visit



balustrade of the terrace is softened by climbers such as *Clematis texensis*, the delightfully shaped, pink and white *Clematis* 'Etoile Rose' and *Akebia quinata*.

At the bottom of the main path is an arbour. It's made of triple arches of the vigorous *Rosa* 'Kiftsgate' and large Portuguese laurel crowned by the equally vigorous *Rosa banksiae*. Here you can mount a few steps into little woodland garden enjoying the shade of the raised walk and the wisteria.

A *Magnolia x soulangeana* and a *Hydrangea aspera* also add to the shade, and natural moisture provides the right conditions for the hellebores, ferns, geraniums and astrantias. This light shade also tends to reduce the burning of the yellow-leaved *Acer shirasawanum* 'Aureum'.

The path meanders past a fine-leaved *Asphodel luteus* with a background of *x Cupressocyparis leylandii*, which Don dramatically pruned to bring it under control when they first arrived at Colleparado. It then skirts an unusual water feature – a circular pond with a brick pillar central fountain. Little shelves house elfin-like terracotta figures, and glass marbles add extra shine to the fountain's gentle flow. Dragonflies flit from the nearby shrubs to the moisture-loving plants that have been chosen for their colour and architectural form.

Here the tall *Inula magnifica*, massed with yellow daisy-like flowers, contrast with the fragrant *Primula florindae* which stands in a bed of *Myriophyllum*. The native greater spearwort (*Ranunculus lingua*) fits well with the Bowles golden grass (*Milium effusum* 'Aureum'), hostas and ornamental rhubarbs. One unusual combination is *Hosta sieboldiana* 'Elegans' with the

Gardening

arching stems of *Gentiana asclepiadea* while a nearby bank sports a purple-flowered mallow mingling with the variegated grass *Miscanthus yakushimensis*. Passers-by are also tempted to stroke the stripey bark of a young snake-bark maple (*Acer pennsylvanica*).

Where the path divides, there's a mini trough planted with alpine alchemillas and the very dwarf Himalayan Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum hookeri*) whose little lilac flowers appear at ground level during May.

Betty and Don are keen members of the Alpine Garden Society and have, therefore, incorporated alpinists into their scheme, principally in a semi-circular rock garden on the north and west sides. Near this is a circular bed with a green and white theme. Here there are palms and bamboo as well as a weeping *Juniperus recurva* var. *coxii*, and *Aruncus kneiffii*, which this month blooms with arching racemes of creamy white flowers. The centrepiece of this bed is a big *Exochorda giraldii* which in April and May is a spectacular mass of paper-white flowers. If you want to pause to enjoy the tranquillity, there's a nearby seat in the shade of a young tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*).

The rock garden bank contains a mixture of both strong-growing groundcover types like *Helianthemum*, *Silene*, *Geranium* and *Thymus* species, well-known plants like *Anemone*, *Dianthus* and *Sisyrinchium*, dwarf shrubs such as *Lavandula* 'Baby White', and a mix of *Daphnes*. Dwarf bulbs also add interest to the scheme.

Herbaceous plants aren't ignored either. *Geranium psilostemon* 'Anne Folkard' provides ground cover under a bushy amelanchier, and Betty has a particular interest in herbaceous geraniums, which make spectacular patches of colour in the summer. Some of the new double



forms do exceptionally well, as does the tall *Campanula lactiflora* which needs watching or it will spread everywhere, a problem that can also occur with aquilegias. One of Betty's favourite herbaceous plants is goats' rue, *Galega* 'His Majesty', a giant vetch-like plant with masses of rosy-mauve pea flowers. It's one of the mainstays of herbaceous borders.

In the far corner of the garden is an arbour, hiding under a wealth of intermixed climbers. *Lonicera x americana* (Syn. *italica*). Clematis 'Broughton Beauty' flowers during the latter part of April and most of May, followed by the highly perfumed *Rosa* 'Paul's Himalayan Musk'.

The border that leads from the arbour back to the house is another mass of delightful planting. Here you can find the strong variegated foliage of *Ceanothus* *Phlox* 'Norah Leigh', golden leaved balm, the blue-flowered *Borago laxiflora* and a *Cytisus*





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battandieri with large pineapple-scented blooms. A clump of herbaceous *Phlomis russeliana* and a silver birch bring this border to an end at the potting shed.

Climbers and wall shrubs make use of the house wall, and an abutilon grows in combination with the tall herbaceous *Verbena bonariensis*.

The name 'Colleparado' came from the previous owners and refers to that small area of Southern Lazio in Italy, admired for its natural beauty and interest – and a locality that tourists return to again and again. It's a most appropriate description for Betty and Don's garden. □

Keyberry Park is near Sainsbury's at Penn Inn.

'Colleparado' is listed in the National Gardens booklet, and is open from 11am-5pm daily from 25th-30th June and from 1st-3rd July, admission £2. Cream teas available.

Above The unusual circular brick fountain.
Far left Double-flowered herbaceous geranium.
Left A mixture of moisture-loving plants.