

# LIVING

ESSEX

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## SUPER STAYS

Best Essex hotels for 2023 revealed

# 95

County faces inside... Are you one of them?

## LIGHTS, CAMERA... ESSEX

County scenes on our screens

*Inside*  
HOMES & GARDENS  
ARTS & CULTURE  
STYLE & WELLNESS

# *Let there* BE LOVE

Wondrous venues to get wed from Braxted to Harlow



# GARDEN DESIGN DIRT

Romantic gardens for two, by **Katrina Kieffer-Wells** of Leigh-on-Sea-based Earth Designs

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **BETTER PERSPECTIVE PHOTOGRAPHY**

**W**hen you think of the perfect romantic experience, your garden may not be the first place that springs to mind. You're more likely to think of weekend getaways in boutique hotels, sunset walks on the beach or a romantic tropical island paradise. But many of the essential elements that make those experiences feel so romantic – subtle lighting, sumptuous colours, sensuous sounds and smells – are things that gardens excel at. Which means, with some interesting design details and materials, you can get that boutique hotel or tropical paradise feeling and go there whenever you want.

Create an air of romance and intrigue in your own back garden so you can share it with the one you love every day. Here's how...

## Bring the boutique chic home

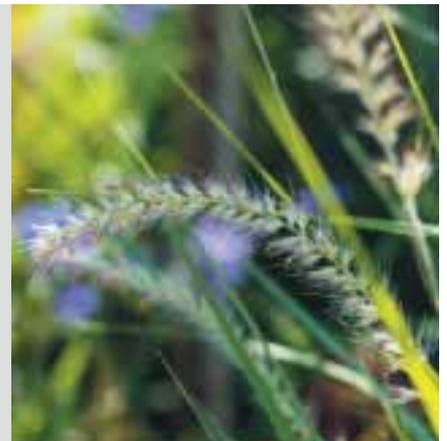
Romantic weekends in boutique hotels are lovely, but why not bring the boutique chic to you and enjoy it every weekend? Play with lighting, colour and furniture to emulate that fancy boutique hotel look and feel. Cool blues on fences and walls, for instance, will create a feeling of luxury.

Accents of yellow, hot pink or lime green alongside brilliant whites look delicate and chic. While pale, porcelain paving will bring clean, modern lines and an air of poolside glamour to your outdoors. Introduce neon signs, uplighting or dramatic spotlights to add to the drama.



## Curvaceous lines and cottage gardens

If you're more of an old fashioned romantic then try a more traditional look. An English cottage garden, for instance, filled with soft leaves and flouncy petals. Add secret love seats under arbours, secluded benches and private dining experiences for two. Use decorative pergolas and screens for more privacy. Alternatively (if you've got the space) add sensuous curves in your beds and borders to create romantic hidey holes and places to cuddle-up.



## 'Play with lighting, colour and furniture to emulate that fancy boutique hotel look and feel'



## Sensuous spaces and tropical feels

Gardens are great for stimulating the senses. From the sound of water trickling into a pool or rill, to the scent of jasmine or roses, there are multiple ways to make your garden more sensuous. Create a romantic tropical paradise with palms and use natural materials like wood and stone to emulate beachside bliss.

For more design inspiration and advice, contact award-winning garden designers Earth Designs. Earth Designs are members of the British Association of Landscape Industries and the Association of Professional Landscapers.  
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