Central Ohio landscape designers routinely handle tweaks and transformations. But translating a Columbus icon into foliage and flowers? Now that’s a design challenge of the first order.

Central Ohio Home & Garden Show planners insisted that the 2012 gardens adhere closely to the theme “Happy Birthday, Columbus,” honoring the 200th anniversary of the city’s founding.

Designers found inspiration in everything from City Hall to city history and say visitors will find plenty of ideas, from paving to patios and furnishings to fireplaces, to transplant in their backyards.

“It was a little bit difficult, a little bit different,” says Charlie Potts of the theme. He is a residential landscape designer and salesman for Benchmark Landscape Construction. “But we’re up for it.”

Benchmark’s entry takes its cues from the Brewery District and features a fireplace and brick pavement.

Showing what a company can do for homeowners, while adhering to the theme and budget, is always a challenge when creating show gardens.

“It has to be a very efficient design,” says Nicholas Besser, a landscape architect with Riepenhoff Landscape. But this is true for any design, “every inch needs to work toward the solution.”

The company’s entry, inspired by German Village’s postage stamp gardens and cozy, colorful Frank Fetch Park, fills about 1,000 square feet — roughly the size of many village gardens.

Such concepts will give visitors ideas on transforming their boring, bluegrass back lawn — or some small part of it — into an outdoor living room.

Benchmark Landscape Construction Inc.
www.benchmarkohio.com

Benchmark Landscape Construction takes show guests into the historic Columbus neighborhood: The Brewery District. Located just south of downtown, the Brewery District was named for its role in Columbus history as the heart of the city’s once-thriving brewing culture. Columbus’ first brewery was opened in 1836 by German immigrant Louis Hoster. Others quickly followed. But Prohibition led to decline, and the neighborhood became peppered with warehouses and industrial buildings.

Redevelopment breathed new life into the neighborhood, where condos, restaurants, nightclubs, a winery, brew pubs and a lively urban feel make it popular with young professionals.

Architectural elements popular today and 200 years ago are found in this garden. A clay brick pathway defines the neighborhood that once was bustling with brick malt houses, brewing buildings, bottling plants and working-class homes.

The garden wall encompasses rectangular arched windows, popular then and now. The district’s telltale sandstone defines garden borders. Simple movement through the garden harkens back to the rectilinear street grid that characterized the Brewery District in the 1800s.

Plantings then, as now, were formal, using Evergreen Taxus, Holly, Boxwood, Juniper and Spruce. A variety of standard city-approved plantings are in keeping with the Brewery District theme. The Hoster Smokestack, still standing in the district, vents an outdoor garden fireplace.

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The Brewery District

Benchmark Landscape Construction Inc.
www.benchmarkohio.com

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Exceptional Gardens

Great Outdoors

STORY BY MICHAEL LEACH

Glorious Gardens

‘Iconic’ gardens await visitors
**Cedarbrook Landscaping and Garden Center**  
([www.cedarbrooknurseries.com](http://www.cedarbrooknurseries.com))

Cedarbrook Landscaping and Garden Center says, “Happy 200th Birthday, Columbus,” traveling Back, Now and into the Future. The garden takes a look back in time at the Columbus of yesterday, while representing the now city of today and a peek ahead into the city’s future in the year 2020.

Guests enter this dramatic garden through a representation of the old Union Station Arch, which was saved in 1976. The arch now sits in its new Arena District location at the entrance to Arch Park on Nationwide Boulevard. Walk down the street, past flowering Crab Apples and Viburnum and old lampposts. White Pines form a park-like canopy and Rhododendrons highlight the view. Graffiti art represents our urban neighborhoods, while a stroll past a water park and bridge spanning the Scioto River is represented by ornamental balustrades over the meandering river feature.

Upright Arborvitaes and River Birch mark the path to a futuristic City Hall with its telltale clock tower. Cedarbrook’s limousine feature gives a nod to the DeLorean from the movie Back to the Future, as a tunnel transports guests into the year 2020, where a copper arbor floats over a patio and bakery.

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**City Hall**

**Five Seasons Landscape Management**  
([www.fiveseasonslandscape.com](http://www.fiveseasonslandscape.com))

Five Seasons Landscape Management celebrates Columbus’ bicentennial with a nod to the city’s iconic “new” City Hall building. Replacing the original after it burned down in 1921, Five Seasons’ version of the new City Hall will feature an inviting paver pathway that leads guests into a garden marked by the large Christopher Columbus statue.

A pergola sits in front of a mammoth 8’ x 12’ mural of the downtown City Hall building. On one side of the garden, a grill counter with a wood-fired pizza oven invites guests to sit and enjoy the garden, while a small fireplace facing the grill warms and welcomes.

Large Oak trees flank the garden, while ornamental trees, such as Magnolias and Crab Apples, add flowering color to the garden’s center. Lush Rhododendrons, Azaleas and Boxwoods inject rich, green leaf foliage and eye-catching floral color to the plant beds. Pops of seasonal color and the intriguing texture of tropical plants offer added beauty throughout.

Five Seasons Landscape Management invites Home & Garden Show guests to enjoy a relaxing stroll through its special version of Columbus City Hall as it salutes the city with a resounding “Happy Birthday, Columbus!”
The Arena District

M.L. Longaberger Inc.
www.mllongaberger.com

The M.L. Longaberger Inc. garden welcomes visitors to one of Columbus’ most thriving entertainment areas, the Arena District, which is home to Huntington Ballpark and the Columbus Clippers, Nationwide Arena and the Columbus Blue Jackets, Lifestyle Communities Pavilion and loads of restaurants, clubs and other entertainment offerings.

Guests enter the garden through a brick facade. “Prison bars” give a nod to the old Ohio Penitentiary, which once sat in the spot that’s now home to the bustling Arena District. Once past the weathered front, guests are invited into a beautiful park-like setting.

Among the first attractions they’ll see are beautiful Tilia trees perched in raised planters. Together with several varieties of Rhododendrons, Azaleas and Hydrangeas, they bring the streets surrounding Nationwide Arena to life.

After turning the corner, show guests will come upon a large display area paying tribute to the Columbus Blue Jackets hockey team. Here, a moving display of some of the Blue Jackets’ greatest moments and memorabilia is on parade for guests to enjoy.

M.L. Longaberger Inc. has created a unique ice rink water feature that pays homage to the IceHaus and the Nationwide Arena hockey floor. Highlighted by a cannon, which serves as a waterfall, the rink acts as the basin for this unusual fountain.

Franklin Park Conservatory & Botanical Gardens

Oakland Nursery
www.oaklandnursery.com

Columbus proudly boasts of a great historic landmark in its Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. Established in 1895, Franklin Park has a unique collection of both indoor and outdoor horticultural specimens. Oakland Nursery was proud to join Franklin Park, playing an instrumental role in the construction and development of the International Horticultural Exhibition “Ameriflora 1992.”

As a tribute to this great landmark, Oakland Nursery presents a small sampling of the conservatory. Weeping False Cypress flank the garden entry, which evokes the east conservatory entrance. Guests are drawn into the space by an overhead cupola, reminiscent of Franklin Park Conservatory’s Palm House.

Once inside, guests will enjoy an array of pots filled with a host of different palms and interior plants, much like those found in the conservatory’s Palm House. Also in the tradition of the conservatory, a formal garden is filled with stately Boxwood hedges, Hostas and assorted perennials. The garden is contained by bold Arborvitaes that shield outside views. It’s accented by flowering Bradford Pears, Rhododendrons, Azaleas, Hydrangeas and many flowering shrubs and bulbs.

A grand Walpole Trellis stands over Oakland Nursery’s unique main attraction: a lively picture wall displaying the more than 100 hundred years of Columbus history and tradition found at Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens.
German Village

Riepenhoff Landscape, Ltd.
www.riepenhofflandscape.com

Riepenhoff Landscape, Ltd. says “Willkommen auf unserer Deutschtendorfgarten,” or “Welcome to our German Village garden,” replicating a garden in one of the city’s most recognizable and unique neighborhoods, German Village, as its tribute to Columbus’ Bicentennial.

Riepenhoff’s designers have drawn on what makes German Village gardens so special. The village’s small, tight lots provide unique challenges that become opportunities when properly addressed in designing the landscape.

Typical of German Village gardens, the space focuses inward. A privacy fence and plantings surround a brick patio, while walkways guide guests through the garden. As visitors enter, attention is immediately drawn to a replica of the fountain located in German Village’s famed Frank Fetch Park. A nearby pergola is oriented to take full advantage of the soothing sound of the fountain. The surrounding plantings, nestled under a canopy of Homestead Elms, provide color and interest.

Miss Kim Lilac, Viking Chokeberry, Henry’s Garnet Wweetspire, Summer Snowflake Viburnum, Knockout Rose and Weeping Cherry provide waves of color and fragrance, while the Diablo Ninebark and Emerald Arborvitae create a green backdrop. Masses of Hostas, Coral Bells and Daisies work beautifully with annual flowers to provide color and interest.

No trip to Columbus is complete without visiting German Village. Guests are encouraged to stop by and say “Guten Tag, mein Freund!” (Good day, my friend!)

Hayden Falls Park

Seely’s Landscape Nursery
www.seelyslandscape.com

Seely’s Landscape Nursery celebrates Columbus’ 200th birthday by paying tribute to one of the city’s great natural spots and recreating the essence of Hayden Falls Park.

Like the two-acre tract located on the western shore of the Scioto River in Northwest Columbus, Seely’s garden features a natural rock gorge habitat, woodland plants and a spectacular waterfall.

When guests first enter the garden, they’re met by a rocky wall and the sound of rushing water preparing them for what’s to come. Hemlocks, Sycamores and a variety of native and unique plants make their home in Hayden Falls Park.

By following the cobblestone path to the boardwalk across the creek and through the woods, visitors eventually discover the heart of the garden, a roaring 12-foot waterfall, a re-creation of the beautiful Hayden Falls in miniature.

As they relax on the deck and enjoy the sights and sounds of this unique ecosystem carved out by Mother Nature, visitors are transported to the shores of the Scioto River — if only for a moment. Seely’s garden will inspire show guests to create their own backyard oasis and to visit the real Hayden Falls Park, which is lovingly tended to by the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department.
You’re Invited
Spellacy’s Turf-Lawn Inc.
www.turflawn.com

It’s a party, and everyone is invited! Spellacy’s Turf-Lawn is throwing a bicentennial birthday bash to wish Columbus a Happy Birthday.

Historic arches welcome guests into this garden collage, which pays homage to the city of Columbus. A scaled-down cityscape is silhouetted against the bicentennial logo wall. The path leads guests to a custom-crafted, birthday cake-inspired outdoor fireplace, flanked by Tulips, Sycamore and arborvitae.

A photographic retrospective tells the story of a growing Columbus within a living framework. Flowering trees and bulbs accent a unique garden layout. Moving along an inscribed walkway, guests will experience a menu of iconic businesses and personalities.

They’ll pass a souvenir water feature to discover balloon party favors exhibiting some of Spellacy’s finest recent work. No birthday celebration is complete without a party hat, and Spellacy’s hat canopy tops a Cake Island Outdoor Kitchen, where visitors will be surrounded by the fragrant aroma of fresh culinary herbs. Guests are encouraged to relax and visit as they view some exceptional projects celebrated on the outdoor monitor. Nearby, a bed of River Birch, Boxwoods, Rhododendrons and flowering Crab Apples adds color and texture. Before departing, everyone is invited to sign the giant birthday card saying, “Happy 200th Birthday, Columbus!”

The Ohio State University
Warwick’s Landscaping & Garden Center Inc.

Nothing says Columbus quite like The Ohio State University and its beloved Buckeyes. And a backyard Buckeye tailgate party is a great way to kick off a yearlong celebration of the city’s 200th birthday.

Warwick’s Landscaping has created the perfect setting for the backyard Buckeye tailgate, paying homage to the Bucks, the largest all-brass marching band in the land, Script Ohio and favorite songs, such as Carmen Ohio, Hang on Sloopy and Across the Field.

The Warwick’s Landscaping garden welcomes guests with its mammoth stone fireplace and inviting seating area. A built-in grill is the perfect spot to prepare tailgate favorites, such as burgers, dogs and brats. Stone walls in that trademark Buckeye gray and a welcoming stone-paved pathway lead to a pair of elegant waterfalls.

This lush garden is planted with Evergreens, White Lollipop Crab Apples, Weeping Cherries and frothy, white Rhododendrons. A Japanese Red Maple and a colorful bed of spring flowering bulbs add color and visual interest.

No proper tailgate would kick off without a big-screen TV, and Warwick’s will feature favorite Buckeye gridiron highlights, as well as Ohio State memorabilia. This “Go Bucks” tailgate party invites every guest to celebrate the city’s 200th birthday as they shout out, “O-H ... I-O!”
Columbus Museum of Art
Wood Landscape Services, Ltd.
www.woodlandscape.com

Wood Landscape Services, Ltd. presents its “Garden Gallery,” inspired by the Columbus Museum of Art.

Juxtaposing the outside in and the inside out, Wood Landscape Services brings the typical gallery room to life. Installing proportional entrance columns, flanked by ornate containers stuffed with lush foliage and brightly colored flowers, perimeter gallery "walls" frame the space and welcome show guests into the garden gallery.

Much like a fine museum, the art on display is eclectic and as varied as the color and textures of the garden itself. The detailed flooring design becomes its own canvas, showcasing modern-day craftsmanship. A centered gallery bench allows guests to contemplate the surrounding art or engage in creating your own art right on the spot.

A soothing evergreen backdrop is punctuated by summer foliage of homestead elms and river birch. Both provide a ceiling and backdrop for easels and sculpture, which rise from a colorful massing of ground cover and flowering bulbs.

Guests are invited to stop and take a moment to sense the movement of the water panel that's found tucked into the evergreens. It adds the soothing element of water into the garden and helps guests redefine their sense of beauty, as well as their own meaning of "garden art."

Goodale Park
Yard Solutions
www.yardsolutions.com

Yard Solutions says, “Happy Birthday, Columbus!” with a gorgeous garden inspired by Columbus’ first park, Goodale Park, located downtown in Victorian Village.

The Yard Solutions garden represents many of the same features visitors see when strolling through the downtown park, only on a smaller scale.

Guests entering the garden will walk under a unique arbor before noticing the historic limestone incorporated into the rich paved surfaces under their feet.

Visitors are encouraged to relax under the shelter of the gazebo or pause for a moment along the edge of the reflecting pond as they take time out from a busy day.

The garden walls and natural rock formations help define pathways and contain planting beds.

A combination of evergreen and deciduous trees are teamed with large drifts of flowering shrubs and perennials that border the garden.

The variety of plantings offer visual interest in every month of the year.

The natural materials showcased throughout the park are a nod to the natural landscape of one of the city’s most popular parks, Goodale, which has been preserved for more than 150 years.

The beauty of these elements can inspire show guests to create a lush park-like setting at their very own homes.