

Side Yard Getaway

Narrow side yards can be a problem. A privacy fence, a blank house wall and a muddy path worn in the grass are just a few uglies you might encounter. But with a bit of creative landscaping it could become your favorite part of the yard.

What could be better than having an herb garden right outside your kitchen door? If you're stuck with a narrow space that feels like a tunnel along the side of your house, this mix of herbs, edibles and perennials is one solution. Even if your kitchen door doesn't open onto the area, you could still adapt this design to fit your own situation.

In *Garden Gate* issue 74, I shared lots of tips on how to make a narrow space work for you. Here's the planting plan for one solution. This space is 40 feet long and 10 feet wide with a 3-foot-wide path. A simple arbor with a bench gives you a private spot to relax and the small fountain across from it covers unwanted noise. Since one side of the garden, next to the house, is in shade, it's not a good spot for sun-loving herbs. I've used low-maintenance perennials, such as hostas, ligularia and ferns, there. On the sunny side of the walk, herbs and a few colorful perennials love the added heat created by the brick path and the fence behind them.

Go ahead and adapt this plan to your needs. If you prefer other

herbs or perennials, the quantities and kinds can easily be adjusted. The fruiting pears trained flat, or espaliered, against the fence will require frequent pruning, at least twice a year. If you're not into that much maintenance, substitute flowering vines, such as clematis. Just be sure to put up trellises for them to climb on.

With a plan like this, a few of your favorite herbs and perennials, a couple of simple structures and some hardscaping, you'll be able to turn your side yard into a quiet, secluded retreat. □

— Jim Childs



Code	Plant Name	No. to Plant	Blooms	Type	Cold/Heat Zones	Height/Width	Special features
A	Cherry <i>Prunus</i> 'North Star'	1	White; spring	Tree	4-8/8-1	10-12 ft./10-12 ft.	Sour red cherries ripen in summer; naturally dwarf size
B	Bay laurel <i>Laurus nobilis</i>	2	NA	Tree	8-11/12-1	40 ft./30 ft.	Tender container plant; bring in for the winter; prune for size and shape
C	Pear <i>Pyrus communis</i> 'Honeysweet'	3	White; spring	Tree	5-9/9-1	25 ft./15 ft.	Easy tree to espalier against a wall or fence; tasty fruit in late summer
D	Boxwood <i>Buxus</i> 'Green Velvet'	4	NA	Evergreen shrub	5-8/8-1	2 ft./2 ft.	Easy-to-grow evergreen; prune for size and shape
E	Ligularia <i>Ligularia</i> 'The Rocket'	1	Lemon yellow; summer	Perennial	4-8/8-1	3-5 ft./2-4 ft.	Prefers moist soil; large leaves make a bold statement
F	Hosta <i>Hosta</i> 'Dark Shadows'	4	Lavender; summer	Perennial	3-8/8-1	40 in./30 in.	Blue-green leaves with a wide chartreuse edge; fragrant flowers
G	Crested lady fern <i>Athyrium filix-femina</i> 'Encourage'	3	NA	Perennial	4-8/8-1	18 in./15 in.	Apple-green fronds all season; prefers humusy, moist, well-drained soil
H	Golden moneywort <i>Lysimachia nummularia</i> 'Aurea'	12	Yellow; spring	Perennial	4-8/8-1	2 in./spreading	Prefers moist soil; vigorous but easy to pull if it starts to get out of hand
I	Lamb's ear <i>Stachys byzantina</i> 'Silver Carpet'	6	NA	Perennial	4-8/8-1	12 in./24 in.	Nonflowering cultivar; soft gray leaves; prefers dry soil
J	Thai basil <i>Ocimum xcitriodorum</i> 'Siam Queen'	6	Dark red; summer	Tender perennial	9-11/12-1	30 in./15 in.	Easy from seed; treat as an annual where it's not hardy; fragrant, edible leaves
K	Common sage <i>Salvia officinalis</i>	3	Lilac-blue; summer	Perennial	5-8/8-1	32 in./24 in.	Fragrant gray-green leaves used in cooking; woody base
L	Parsley <i>Petroselinum crispum</i>	11	NA	Perennial	5-9/12-1	12 in./12 in.	Easy from seed; mulch heavily, or treat as an annual where not hardy
M	Chives <i>Allium schoenoprasum</i>	3	Lavender; spring	Perennial	5-11/12-1	12-24 in./12 in.	Easy-to-grow herb; onion flavor; harvest frequently to keep it looking neat
N	Thyme <i>Thymus pulegioides</i> 'Bertram Anderson'	3	Pale pink; summer	Perennial	6-9/9-1	12 in./15-18 in.	Lemon-scented gold foliage; likes well-drained soil
O	Siberian iris <i>Iris sibirica</i> 'Caesar's Brother'	2	Purple; spring	Perennial	3-8/8-1	3 ft./2 ft.	Easy care perennial; likes moist soil; good-looking foliage after flowers finish
P	Daylily <i>Hemerocallis</i> 'Happy Returns'	4	Lemon yellow; summer	Perennial	3-8/8-1	15-18 in./18 in.	Excellent rebloomer; starts in June and continues until October
Q	Rose <i>Rosa</i> 'Radyod' Blushing Knockout™	1	Pink; summer	Shrub	4-9/9-1	2-3 ft./2-3 ft.	Light pink single flowers all summer; very winter hardy; disease resistant



Scale: 1 square = 1 square foot

