

PRESS INFORMATION

Exhibitor category:

Courtyard Garden

Stand Number:

RM14

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Exhibitor Website

www.atochoffrance.co.uk

Planting plans/plant lists available from:

A Touch of France

0208 950 2472

Images available from:

jenny.groom1@btinternet.com

Sponsors from both sides of the Channel

In true Franco-British spirit both French and English companies are sponsoring the garden. Appropriately the main sponsor is *Bonne Maman*, the quintessentially French premium preserves brand, which the British have taken to their hearts. Prepared in the heart of the French countryside with the brand's renowned care and expertise, its products are made to perfection using only natural ingredients.

'Entente Cordiale' is also supported by UK based *Clarke & Spears International*, the largest designer and manufacturer of professional plant pots and containers in the UK, and media partners *The English Garden Magazine* and *France Magazine*.



Entente Cordiale

COURTYARD GARDEN RM14

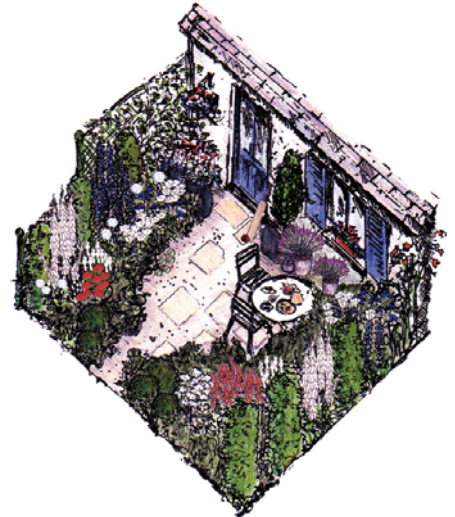
CELEBRATING THE BEST OF ENGLISH AND FRENCH GARDENING TRADITIONS

The Entente Cordiale courtyard garden brings together elements of the generally more formal French approach to gardening with the more relaxed British cottage style, using a mix of plants and typical features from each side of the Channel.

Designed by Patricia Thirion from Paris and London-based Janet Honour the garden reflects their own strong Franco/British partnership.

Traditional favourite shrubs and flowers familiar in both countries are cleverly combined, while touches of red, white and blue in the planting reflect the two national flags, set amongst shades of green.

In designing 'Entente Cordiale' their challenge has been to create a garden where two distinct styles contribute equally. "The garden is a fusion of what is best, what is traditional and what we love most about plants," say the designers. "It is simple, restful and will be strangely familiar to anyone from France and the UK."



Patricia and Janet are hoping to repeat the success of their previous and first appearance at Chelsea in 2007 when they were awarded a Silver Gilt Medal for their courtyard garden 'Le Jardin de Vincent'.

A TRUE FRANCO/BRITISH PARTNERSHIP

Passionate plants-women Patricia Thirion from France and London-born Janet Honour, have given each other a unique insight into the gardening traditions of their respective countries.

The couple met and became firm friends while studying garden design as mature students at Capel Manor College in Enfield, Middlesex. But their first experiences of gardening couldn't have been more different - Patricia grew up in a 5th floor apartment in Paris with a balcony garden consisting of a few geraniums in the occasional terracotta pot, while Janet discovered the delights of gardening in England at a very early age 'helping' her father at every opportunity.



Patricia Thirion & Janet Honour

Patricia originally came to London as an au pair and has now settled here permanently, living in Bushey with her English husband, Peter. After being a full time mother, when her son Laurent grew up she embarked on a Diploma of Garden Design course at the prestigious Capel Manor College with a view to making a career of what had become a passion.

Janet, who works part-time as a Health and Safety advisor for Aylett Nurseries near St Albans, enrolled on the same course and the two women went through the three year course together. Their friendship grew as they shared their mutual love of plants and gardening and after successfully graduating in 2006, they formed their own garden design company 'A Touch of France'.

Last year one of their major projects was the recreation, on a larger scale, of their 2007 Chelsea award winning [silver-gilt] 'Le Jardin de Vincent' garden at Capel Manor where it will remain for at least five years.

Based in Hertfordshire, they continue to develop their business, which covers all aspects of garden design and planting. They are also in demand as public speakers sharing their 'Chelsea experience' with local societies.

A Touch of France
Garden Design

Combining plants and features from both countries

The backdrop to the garden is a cottage facade rendered and painted white. The 'cottage' is a familiar sight either side of the Channel, as are the traditional roof slate tiles while the wooden shutters, painted blue, are typically French.

Three columnar *Taxus baccata* planted symmetrically either side of the garden give structure and a sense of formality as do the clipped balls of *Buxus sempervirens*. Other plants are repeated in a French fashion however this repetition is combined with a sumptuous mix of traditional British favourites such as roses, peonies, delphiniums and foxgloves.

Planted containers provide more garden style associations. The window box with geraniums is quintessentially French while the mixture of annuals in a hanging basket is so British. 'Fines Herbes' (a culinary mainstay in French cuisine), clipped *Laurus nobilis* and lavenders complete the container planting.



A small table and chairs provide a place to sit and relax. Set with china, a coffee and tea pot, croissants, scones and a jar of Bonne Maman conserve with its trademark red and white gingham lid, it reflects both British and French traditions. Copies of the Times and Le Monde placed on the table add to the scene. A cricket bat and ball by the door and a set of boules provide more traditionally British and French touches.

Manufactured exclusively by Clarke & Spears International, leading specialist suppliers of planters and the Tanker irrigation system to professional landscapers, the containers not only store collected rainwater for reuse in the garden, but selected plants can be grown in spaces that form part of the design.

The designers developed the concept of a functional yet stylish water butt after visiting Clarke & Spears to discuss their Entente Cordiale plans. Whilst discussing ways in which water could be stored in aesthetically pleasing containers, the idea of a dual purpose water collection and plant pot took root.

They produced some initial designs and showed them to the company's Managing Director, Tony Sawyer, who was enthusiastic about their idea. Now the containers, which are made using the very latest Advanced Composite Fibre [AC] technology to strict environmental and ethical standards, will be available from late May in a variety of high quality finishes, colours, shapes and sizes.

For further information contact Tony Sawyer, Managing Director, Clarke & Spears International at www.csi.eu.com or Tel: 0131 440 9804

Enduring friendship is inspiration behind the design

On 8 April 1904 the 'Entente Cordiale' agreement was signed by Britain and France. It recognized the countries' common interests and sought to find better ways of working together. Each country has a strong cultural identity, but at the same time the friendship between the two nations has endured and grown over time. The garden reflects both these distinctive identities and their enduring strong bonds through planting.

As in all good friendships one learns to appreciate differences and cherish similarities - Patricia and Janet hope that their garden emulates this guiding principle.



A CLEVER NEW WATER BUTT LAUNCHED AT CHELSEA



Unique dual purpose water butts – conceived and designed by Janet and Patricia – will be seen for the first time in the Entente Cordiale garden.

SCONES WITH THE FRAGRANT TASTE OF LAVENDER

To celebrate its association with the Entente Cordiale garden, Bonne Maman has created a special recipe [Lavender & Buttermilk Scones], which reflects the fragrant Franco British planting. Perfect for tea with a spoonful of one of Bonne Maman's delicious conserves! The recipe is printed on the garden's Planting Leaflet together with a 30p off coupon for a jar of Bonne Maman's Strawberry & Wild Strawberry conserve.

For a copy of the recipe contact Jenny Groom, Bonne Maman Press Office, at jenny.groom1@btinternet.com or Tel: 01380 860344



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