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Azevedo's gardens
exude a sense of ease
and freedom.

COLOR FIELDS

Celebrated landscape designer **Frederico Azevedo** chooses hues that calm and delight.

BY JIM SERVIN

When it comes to color in gardens, this year's theme is serenity now. To unlock botanical bliss, landscaping maestro Frederico Azevedo suggests fields of lavender and beds of daisies, set against a backdrop of soothing green. "2024 is all about colors that bring joy and calm," says the native Brazilian, who for 31 years has created some of the Hamptons' most desirable, sustainable gardens.

"I build natural palettes using native and well-adapted flowers like hydrangea, rudbeckia, alliums, echinacea and Agastache, and bulbs such as daffodils, tulips and crocus that lend different moods to the landscape, from peaceful to energetic and lively."

Soft textures such as lavender or astilbe bring movement and calm, which Azevedo will sometimes balance with vivid colors like golden yellows, stark whites and bright purples. "I find this combination to be very effective at inspiring a good mood," he says.

Balance is key. The title of Azevedo's brochure for Unlimited Earth Care, his Bridgehampton-based landscaping design firm, with its carefully curated Garden Market & Concept Store, is *The Balance of Colors*. How does he maintain harmony in a garden or landscape? "It is important to think about which hues are going to be planted next to one another, especially in more dramatic color palettes," he says. "Shape and texture must also be considered."

For guidance on choosing a palette, Azevedo recommends consulting a color wheel: "Yellow complements purple, orange complements blue—those



Frederico Azevedo

colors brighten one another," he says. "You can get creative within those boundaries. If complementary colors are too intense for what you're going for, consider using adjacent colors for a steady mood: golds, yellows and oranges, lavender and pink."

A major appeal of Azevedo's gardens is the sense of ease and effortlessness they convey. There is

a keen organizational eye at work, but also a feeling for sweeping space and freedom. "I aim for a design that feels almost natural," he says. "I call it a heightened, or elevated, experience of nature." Azevedo promotes a generous use of color, while advocating for the careful selection of compatible species. "Some plants are happy living together, such as Miscanthus grasses, nepeta and pink fairy roses," he says. "The grass provides shade for the roses, and the nepeta flowers attract insects that eat the aphids that bother the roses."

When in doubt, he says, go green. "I layer evergreens—blue spruces, arborvitae, Eastern red cedars, Japanese cedars and pines do well in the Hamptons." For flowering trees, Azevedo often uses white dogwood or crepe myrtle. Evergreen hedges and shrubs offer another way to provide strong foundations for colorful gardens. "Playing with scale and color is easier with a strong backdrop of rich evergreens," Azevedo says. "I love to design fully green gardens. There are so many hues to choose from. You can't go wrong, and together they create a very meditative, happy space." unlimitedearthcare.com