



# CREATIVE PAVING IN THE GARDEN

## Finding Innovative Alternatives to Concrete and Asphalt

Story and Photos by Alan Kettler

Creative paving – what’s that? If you want your yard and garden to look a little “different” from the conventional norms of our urban and suburban landscapes, creative paving can provide a lot of design opportunities that you could call unusual, artistic, and even a bit quirky. Creative paving is the antithesis of concrete and asphalt.

As a landscape designer, I have done my share of creative paving – Tennessee sandstone laid into a bed of stonedust to create a natural looking patio, small river rock used as a base for the parking pad in front of my house, and more. Instead of focusing on my work for this article, though, I interviewed Kate Lacouture, landscape architect in Providence, Rhode Island. As the owner of Green Circle Design, she actually specializes in this type of landscape design. (Two months ago Home Gallery magazine featured an article about Kate’s work in designing alternatives to the typical household lawn.) Kate took me on a tour of three of her paving projects. All were charming and beautiful, and full of delightful little surprises. One of her creations struck me in particular in its elegant simplicity.

Kate started with an average every day boring concrete walkway that led from the sidewalk to the front door of her client’s house and transformed it into a work of art. (See photo page 3.) How? First, she broke up the existing walkway with a jackhammer into plate-sized pieces. Then, staying within the boundaries of the old walkway, she arranged the broken pieces into a bed of stonedust, leaving spaces in between where she inserted small, rounded river stones.

It had the feel of a mosaic, and, as an environmentalist, I was very impressed that she recycled the old concrete walkway instead of hauling it to a dump and replacing it with all new material.

***Above:** A Pennsylvania whetstone is inset into an antique stone manhole cover surround. Small river stones fill the left over spaces between the two pieces.*

***Right:** This spiral shaped patio design is made of old bricks, round river stone, and irregular flagstone set into a bed of stonedust. A couple of comfortable chairs and a few potted plants make it a casual place to relax outside the back porch of this Providence residence.*

