



IMAGES: JOHN TIZZARD

# HILLTOP HAVEN

Working with natural elements

Creating a garden to complement a newly built house is a mixture of challenge and reward — the opportunity to develop a blank canvas from the most unpromising of conditions. This was the case for Tizzard whose first impression of the exposed hilltop site was of a “recently dynamited stone quarry”. The plot had virtually no topsoil and few existing trees and shrubs, but did have good views over the surrounding landscape.

The client, a professional couple with two children, employed Tizzard to design a low-maintenance, family friendly garden. The challenge was to work with the brutal raw elements and turn them into an advantage.

A digital survey of the site was used as a base plan for the new design, drawn up in AutoCAD Light 2004. The design uses the modern architecture of the house as the basis for a subtle mix of materials: granite, concrete and timber. Natural rock outcrops have been retained and neutral grey concrete paving opened up against this to form planting niches. This is interrupted to one side of the house by a wooden deck offering a social space.

The difficult slope up to the house entrance has been accommodated by a step and ramp arrangement with planting running through.

Plant choice is heavily influenced by the prevailing conditions and includes conifers such as *Pinus mugo* var. *mughus*, grasses and prairie-style perennials, and spring bulbs such as crocus, wild tulips and alliums. The garden was never going to become a green oasis but has evolved into a cohesive mix of materials and plants.

Natural granite outcrops merge with light grey concrete paving in this private Swedish hilltop garden by John Tizzard.

## GARDEN FACT FILE

**Designer:** John Tizzard Trädgårdsarkitekt Tel: +46 521 63913 Web: [www.tizzard.se](http://www.tizzard.se)

**Location:** Gothenburg, Sweden **Size:** 0.2ha

**Aspect and soil:** exposed site; no topsoil

**Project started:** September 2005

**Project completed:** April 2006

**Cost:** over £25,000

**Design fees:** 10 per cent

**Hard landscape:** 80 per cent

**Soft landscape:** 20 per cent

**Contractors:** Trollhättans Trädgård and Miljö Entreprenad AB