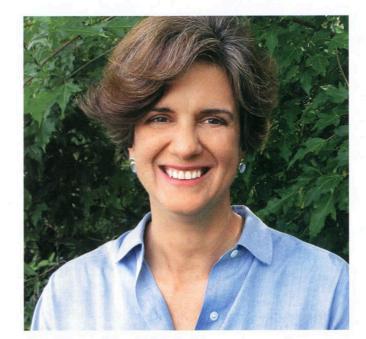
House Call garden state



Landscape architect Silvia Erskine creates garden rooms with a view in Southport

7hen Virginia Cargill bought her waterfront property in Southport eight years ago, she knew that it needed some work. The white clapboard house needed an addition, and the garden, as she describes it, "was just grass."

Luckily, Virginia, an entrepreneur and a founding editor of Caring Today magazine, was used to start-ups. She turned to Wilton landscape architect Silvia Erskine to create a garden that didn't compete with its imposing view, drew attention away from the driveway and linked the garage to the house. The result is a series of garden rooms (a perennial garden, an herb garden, a barbeque terrace and dining patio) that encircle the house and provide complementary outdoor living spaces. "I think about how interior and exterior spaces affect one another," Silvia says.

Another consideration in the design was the garden's exposed location — ten feet above the Long Island Sound. The plants had to be hardy enough to withstand the drying winds and be adaptable to the site, and Silvia had to avoid tall trees or formal stone walls that might block the neighbors' view. She framed the space with hedges of Green Mountain boxwood, which is known for its hardiness, small leaves and short stature (it won't grow higher than six feet tall). Creating gorgeous year-round views, Silvia chose plants that bloom in spring, summer and

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