

Armed with a simple hedge trimmer, Chris Cipriano launched his landscaping career in 1989. Today, he's president of award-winning Cipriano Landscape Designs, a ►

30-person company of horticulturists, designers, carpenters, pool technicians and masons.

Based in Mahwah, Cipriano's 10-acre operation features an exclusive clientele horticultural nursery. Customers can see what they are getting, whether it's a green Japanese maple with 22-foot spread, or a weeping hemlock, measuring 18 feet across, before the plant is dug up and transported to its new home.

"The hybridizing of plants has taken off dramatically in the last 20 years. That coupled with the importation of building materials from around the world has led to endless, exciting possibilities. We're currently working with granite from India for a job in Upper Saddle River," states Cipriano, who prefers to work with natural stones.

There are no hard and fast rules when it comes to design. Cipriano points out, "Some clients like a natural setting, while others prefer a very formal application. We take the architectural character of the house and the property into account, but the final decision is client driven. In either case, we strive to express the complexities of nature's balance."

This goal is reflected in Cipriano's captivating waterfall formations that are indistinguishable from those found in nature. He says, "Whether it's a fountain, waterfall or a swimming pool, most clients desire a water feature. There's nothing more soothing than the sound of moving water to awaken the senses."

A sense of pride can be detected in Cipriano's voice. "One day, I want to be able to drive my grandchildren around and tell them, 'We built that.'"



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