

Designer Manoj Malde and contractor Dan Riddleston will be keeping Pro Landscaper in the loop as they each prepare for their Chelsea 2017 gardens



## MANOJ MALDE COUTURE GARDENS

Debut Designer at RHS Chelsea 2017

**Garden** Beneath a Mexican Sky

**Contractor** Living Landscapes

**Sponsor** Inland Homes & Living Landscapes



As the show draws closer, plants have started to become an issue, with some refusing to produce flower stems. The risk was too great to wait in hope, so we had to look at alternatives. The worst part was when plants that I had personally tagged in Italy



arrived damaged; they had just been shoved on a truck with no packing. Anger would be an understatement. Nothing prepares you for crop failures – I have had to run around nurseries looking for plants to uphold my vision.

I'm grateful that the construction side has run smoothly. The steel frames for my steps came out of the ovens beautifully powder-coated. They were delivered to the Living Landscapes workshop, where the frames were filled with



Lytag, a layer of self-levelling compound was poured on top, and then they were left to cure for a few days. The next step, which I couldn't wait to see, was watching the Topcret team apply the zinc microcement.

I held a planting team meeting with wine and nibbles

so that they could get acquainted, and to get the team spirit going. I ran through all the images of the plants I was proposing to use, and shared some pictures that would help them understand the planting scheme's 'look'.

Filling in the final brief was a nerve-wracking experience. I kept editing the draft for three days, constantly questioning how the judges would interpret every word, sentence or description.

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