


Plant Lovers' Paradise

OFFERING AMENITIES, VIEWS AND VEGETATION GALORE,
A SPRAWLING LANDSCAPE IS A FEAST FOR THE EYES

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A photograph of a courtyard in a Santa Barbara-style home. In the foreground, there are two red armchairs with yellow cushions and a white circular table on a stone patio. A small white stone stool is also present. The background features a large black-framed glass door leading into the house. The courtyard is surrounded by lush greenery, including trees and flowering plants. A star-shaped fountain is visible in the background, partially obscured by foliage. The overall atmosphere is warm and inviting.

This page and opposite: The entry courtyard of this Santa Barbara-style home features a star-shaped fountain clad in black and gold tile, a quaint seating area and a two-way fireplace. Landscape architect Greg Trutza created a lush look to complement the design of the house by planting an assortment of trees and adding pots filled with *Scaevola*.



Close your eyes and imagine what you would do with an undeveloped 5-acre parcel of land in the middle of Phoenix. Perhaps you would fill it with a diverse plant palette to enjoy year-round, or outfit it with a meandering jogging path, or maybe install a putting green. Just such a property existed in the shadow of Camelback Mountain a few years back. It now offers all of the above amenities, and more.

Five years ago, the owners of this Paradise Valley property called landscape architect and Phoenix Home & Garden Master of the Southwest Greg Trutza to let him know they were building a house and wanted him to design the grounds on the lot. "I was amazed at all of the existing species that had thrived on the site," he recalls, noting that the plants were then boxed and kept alive for three years until the project was near completion and the vegetation could be transplanted. "Phenomenal barrel cactus clusters, large creosotes and sensational palo verdes were some of the treasures that eventually found their rightful place in the new landscape."

Trutza, who had worked with the homeowners on their previous garden, says they had definite ideas about what they wanted to incorporate into the design. These included cozy courtyards, spacious patios for entertaining, a vegetable garden, an outdoor kitchen and an alfresco dining room. "It was literally like painting on a canvas," he says of the attention to detail that went into creating this property, which was featured on *Phoenix Home & Garden's* 12th-annual Grand Tour of Gardens this past spring. He took full advantage of the space and surrounding vistas by designing a variety of usable outdoor vignettes and respecting

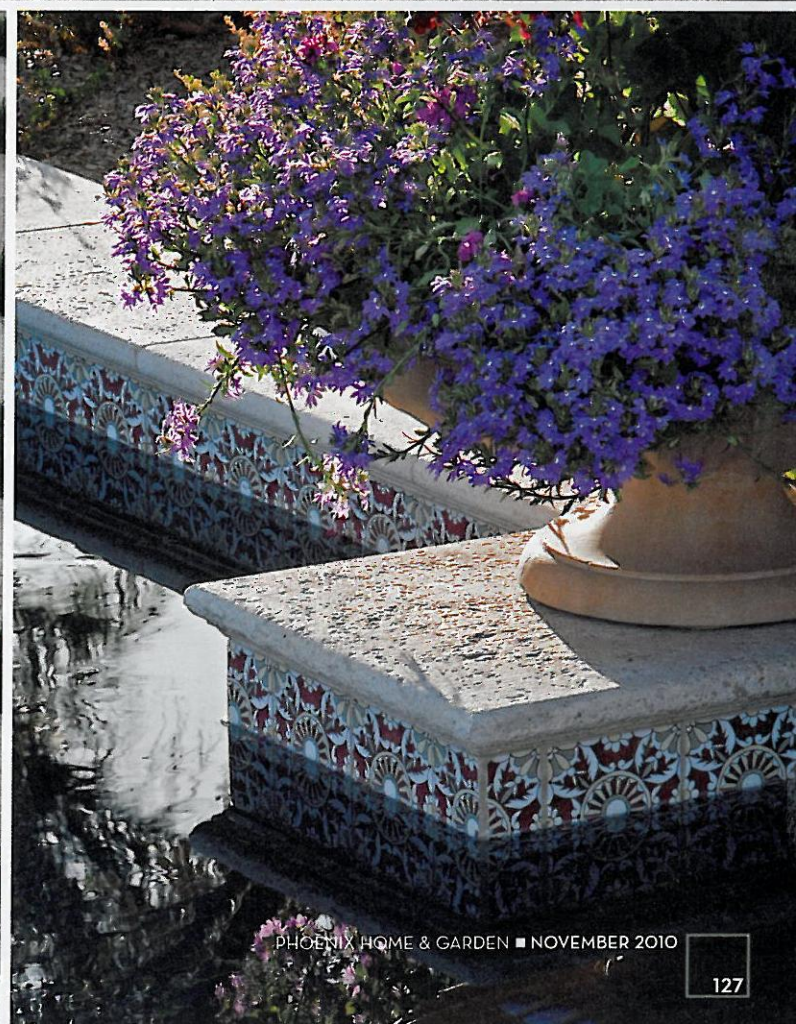
the Southwest's diverse vegetation.

"The homeowners are avid plant lovers," Trutza states. "When I worked with them on their previous home, two things became evident: their knowledge of gardening and their deep respect for our Southwestern plant heritage. Hence, the design beckoned the use of a rich palette." Saguaros, crape myrtles, roses, citrus, lavender, leather leaf acacia and lady's slipper plants are just a few of the more than 340 species found here.

The property unfolds as one explores the landscape. For example, a long driveway winds under blue palo verdes and past vignettes featuring a variety of succulents, cacti and desert vegetation. It ends at the motor court, which is surrounded by a lush lawn, colorful blooms and oak and ash trees.

The landscape architect likens the finished project to a small version of a desert-inspired botanical garden. "It represents the best that can happen in the Southwest," Trutza comments. "Most people who have 5 acres ignore half of it," he remarks. "When you utilize every inch of it, it's amazing." □

Above: A thick ring of petunia and alyssum plants wraps around a fountain, located just off the motor court. **Opposite, top:** Most of this 5-acre landscape features xeriscaped areas, including this secluded fire-pit conversation setting surrounded by palo brea trees, cacti and succulents. **Opposite, bottom left:** Flagstone slabs intersected with grass form a distinctive walkway in the backyard. **Opposite, bottom right:** A pot brimming with colorful blooms, including vivid bluish-purple *Scaevola*, complements the pool's decorative tiled border.





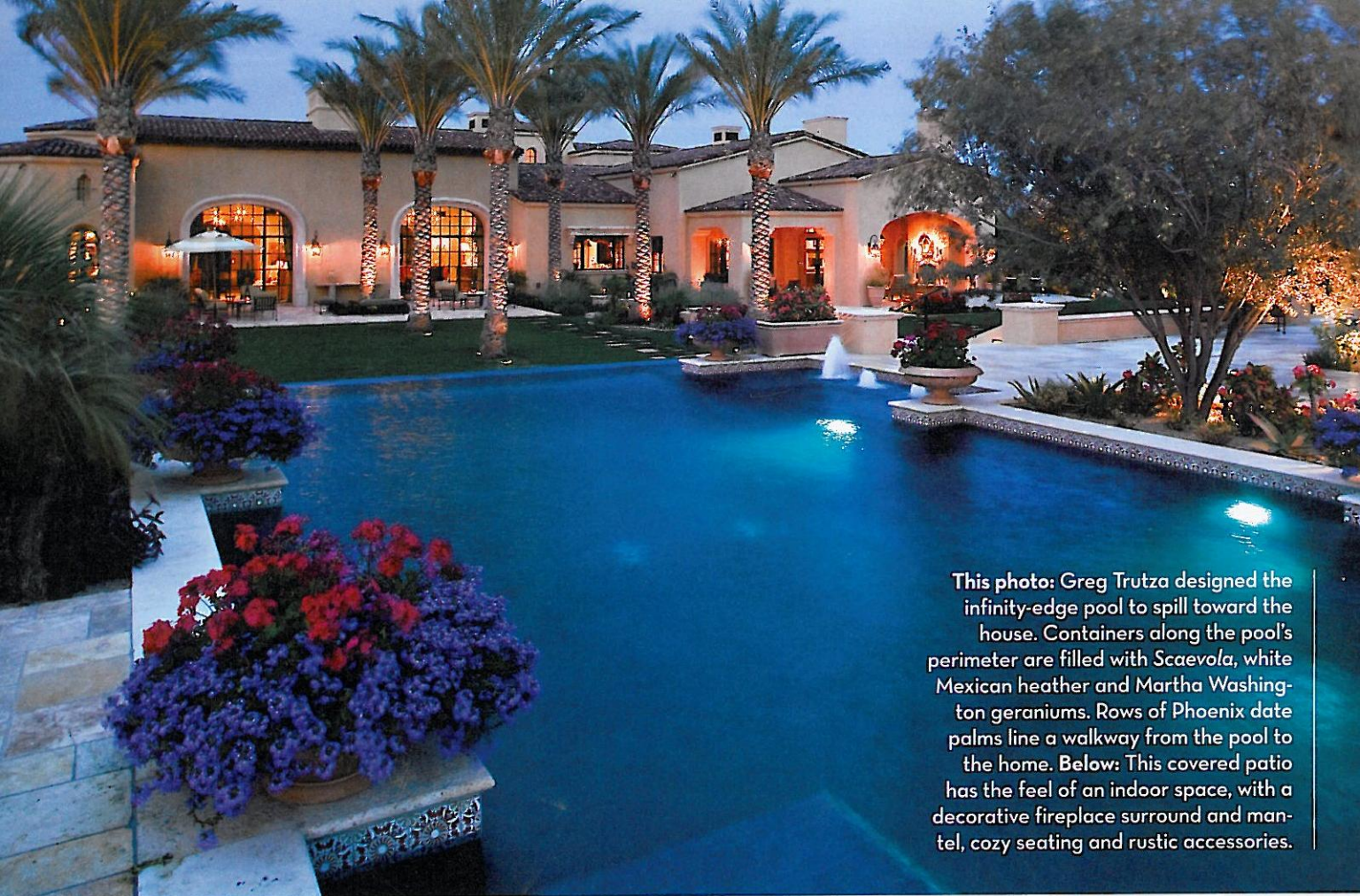
Above: Two raised vegetable gardens offer room for growing fresh produce, such as peas, broccoli, carrots and an assortment of herbs. The beds are built at bench height for easy access and filled with organic soil. Custom trellises feature removable shade cloths. **Left:** A pairing of coreopsis and sea lavender provides a shock of color. **Opposite top:** The guest house overlooks a lush lawn and row of 'Iceburg' floribunda roses. Landscape architect Greg Trutza notes that the grounds were designed to present layers of texture and color. "It is a landscape that will keep getting richer and more natural-looking as it grows," he states. **Opposite bottom:** A carpet of *Ruellia* 'Royal Carpet', a purple-blooming ground cover, plus yaupon holly, Japanese yew and sago palms line the entry courtyard, which features a tiled star-shaped fountain.





Garden beds stretching across the backyard are planted with pink petunias, alyssum and coral fountain. Adjacent to the pool is a covered area with an outdoor kitchen and dining and living rooms that boasts a two-way fireplace. Greg Trutza explains that he positioned trees around the lot's perimeter to shield views of nearby houses. "This, coupled with the elevation of the property, created the unique experience of being in a country estate far removed from the bustling city, as the far reaches of the McDowell Mountains and Four Peaks can be seen over the treetops," he comments.





This photo: Greg Trutza designed the infinity-edge pool to spill toward the house. Containers along the pool's perimeter are filled with Scaevola, white Mexican heather and Martha Washington geraniums. Rows of Phoenix date palms line a walkway from the pool to the home. Below: This covered patio has the feel of an indoor space, with a decorative fireplace surround and mantel, cozy seating and rustic accessories.





This photo: The color palette found in the outdoor furnishings is repeated in the red and purple plantings used in pots at the pool's edge. **Above:** Patios off the main house offer plenty of space for entertaining and relaxation. Here, a trough is filled with crown of thorns plants in pots.

See Sources.

