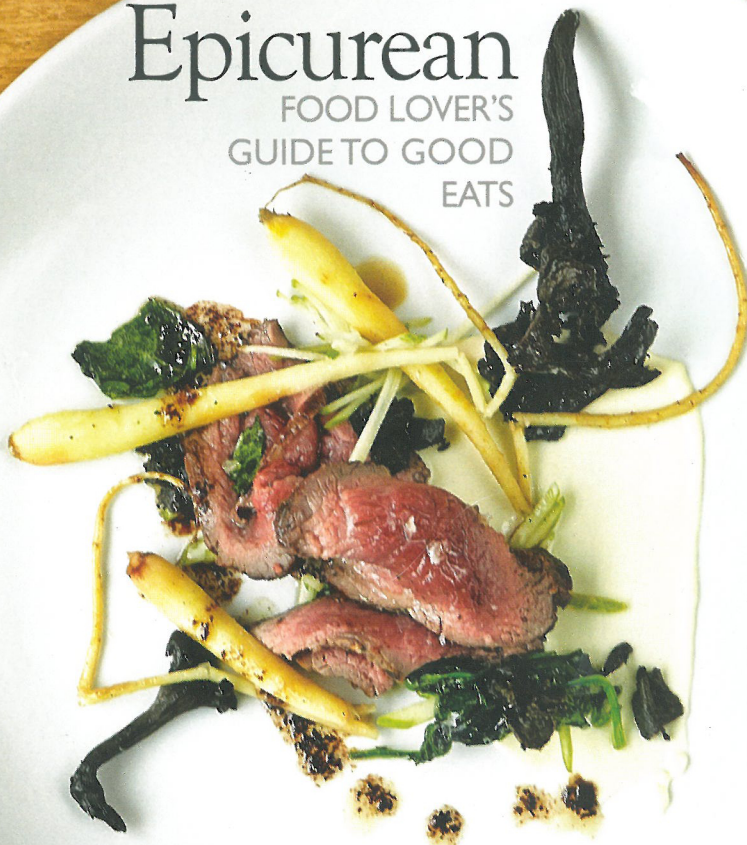


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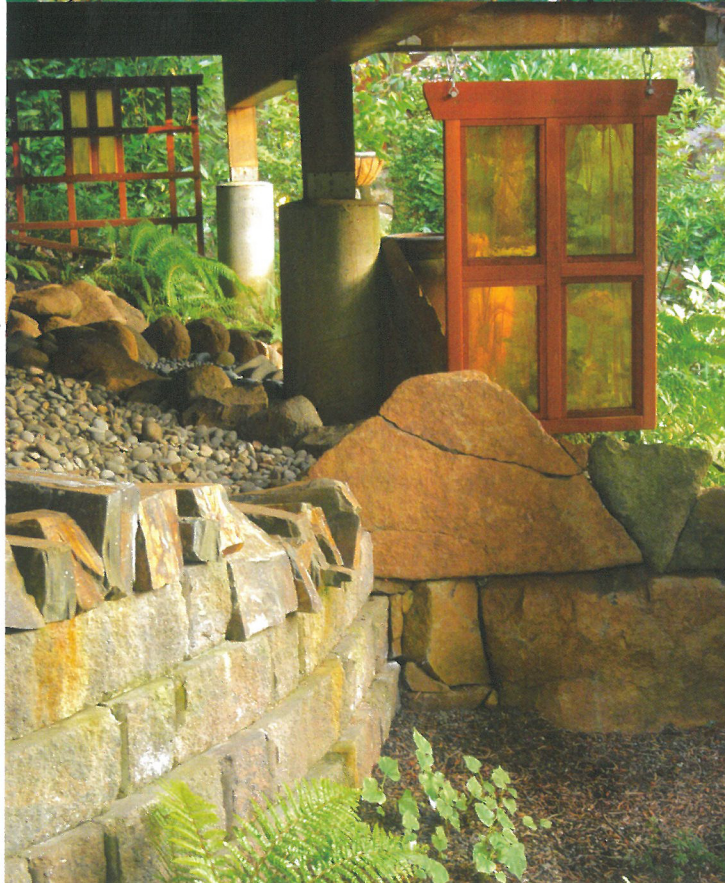
# A Garden to Enjoy Year-Round

Eugene garden is studded with artistic focal points and shade plants

BY RENATE TILSON • PHOTOS BY ALICE RITARI

**G**ARDENING OPPORTUNITIES IN SOUTHWEST Eugene vary immensely. But would you consider a hilly, dry terrain laced with deer trails, blackberries, and some poison oak as an optimal place for your garden? Hardly! The artistic, creative owners of a quarter-acre site decided to do just that, however, and they do it very successfully. This suburban woodland hillside home and garden are designed to respond to long-standing deer circulation, steep pitches, and minimal sunlight filtering through a stand of Douglas firs towering overhead.

Surprisingly, their private lot, set in the middle of their development's shared space, is circular in shape. The geometry of this round lot led to the construction of a network of thoughtfully designed pathways and steps. Each is lined with hand-selected and carefully placed stepping-stones, edged with river rocks and granite. Boulders seem to happen naturally everywhere on this site and are woven into the patterns of retaining walls and edgings.



The owners have created an art garden studded with eye-catching objects, benches, interesting sculpture, birdbaths, and pots of all sorts. Arbors, tuteurs, and artistic focal points bring life to the garden and enhance the enjoyment of the pathways. The dry stack stone walls, arbors, benches, and pathways define ample vistas as viewed through the plantings.

Some of the very least desirable aspects of the site—the areas below the deck or in a deer path—have been reconfigured as unique, surprising features.

As I stroll through the garden, I am delighted by the view under the deck. Window frames have been repurposed and hung using mirror glass to attract and reflect light. A sculpted dry stream bed surprisingly emanates from the previously unappealing empty and dark space. Overhead, recycled heating grates are sunk into the deck floor, allowing light to pass below and further illuminating the area under the deck.

Some native plantings flourish here with the least of effort; they tolerate the dry, shady zone best. Bright foliage colors and silver and yellow variegated plants lighten up and provide sparkle in the dappled shade. The owners find that some full sun plants will grow happily in partial shade. They are not afraid to relocate a plant if it does not thrive in a given lo-



cation. Many plants are artfully paired in large pots and planters of terra cotta, metal, or wood. They are moved around freely until they arrive at their perfect location and thrive.

The boundaries between inside the home and outside in the garden are not always clearly defined. Beautiful stained glass pieces hang artfully, each placed to catch and dramatize morning sunlight filtering through the firs. Outdoor vistas feature indoor furnishings. Window boxes, draperies, and container plantings, both inside and out, frame distant views and screen out undesirable ones. Colors used indoors are repeated in similar tones outdoors. Thoughtfully placed indoor mirrors bring the light and colors from the garden inside. This makes for greater year-round enjoyment of the lovely surroundings.

It is important to the owners that the garden can be enjoyed all year and be appreciated from the indoor spaces. The use of LED lights enhances these views during long winter evenings. A timer turns the lights off after peak use. Outdoor lighting is always placed with consideration for the neighbors.

This garden is certainly a compliment to the owners, a garden designer and book editor. It is inspiring to see how they saw beyond the natural challenges presented to them and created this space of beauty in so many forms. ■■■