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Urban Oasis

HOMEOWNER TRANSFORMS GLENDALE BACKYARD INTO NATURAL RETREAT

BY JENNY REBHOLZ | PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARBARA SLANE

Only the occasional traffic noises from nearby Silver Spring Drive remind Patty Tagliapietra that she is in the city. The Glendale interior designer has transformed the backyard of her city-sized lot into a lush urban retreat. "It is super romantic and feels so secluded," she says.

Standard backyard basics — a concrete patio and some shrubs — have given way to a grilling area, private dining arbor, lounge area and fire pit. A Lannon stone path, herb garden and multitude of glorious plantings set the mood for outdoor entertaining.

Tagliapietra uses colors and textures to create drama — a weeping pussy willow, a French Espalier apple tree with green and red striped apples, dinner plate dahlias, hibiscus, creeping lilyturf, blue hydrangeas, clematis and coneflowers.

For Tagliapietra, garden design has a lot to do with timing as well as elements such as height, texture and proper placement. She attributes many of the garden's special features and unique plantings to inspired moments while traveling. "We went on a home and garden tour in Charleston and everywhere you walked you could hear water but you couldn't see it, and there were courtyards with no grass," she says. "I thought, 'Why can't I do that?'" So she invested in granite pea gravel as well as several water features to replicate what she had seen there.

"It's a small urban garden, so you have to be careful what you plant," she says. "You need to be aware of neighbors and wires as well as how things will grow within the limited space constraints," she says. "A garden is never stagnant; it is a work in progress. It is always changing, and the plants have their own agenda."



A variety of plants and flowers climb the trellis wall, creating a sense of privacy from the nearby neighbors. Rudbeckia, a topiary hibiscus and the Espalier apple tree are a few of the eye-catching plantings along this wall.



A hint of romance is achieved with the design of the private dining arbor and cozy lounge area. A trellis with draperies provides elegant details that continue to define these outdoor spaces. Whether soaking in the sun or softly lit by candlelight, these areas offer plenty of space to relax and enjoy the ambiance of this urban oasis.



A family of Chinese Button Quail inhabit Tagliapietra's yard.