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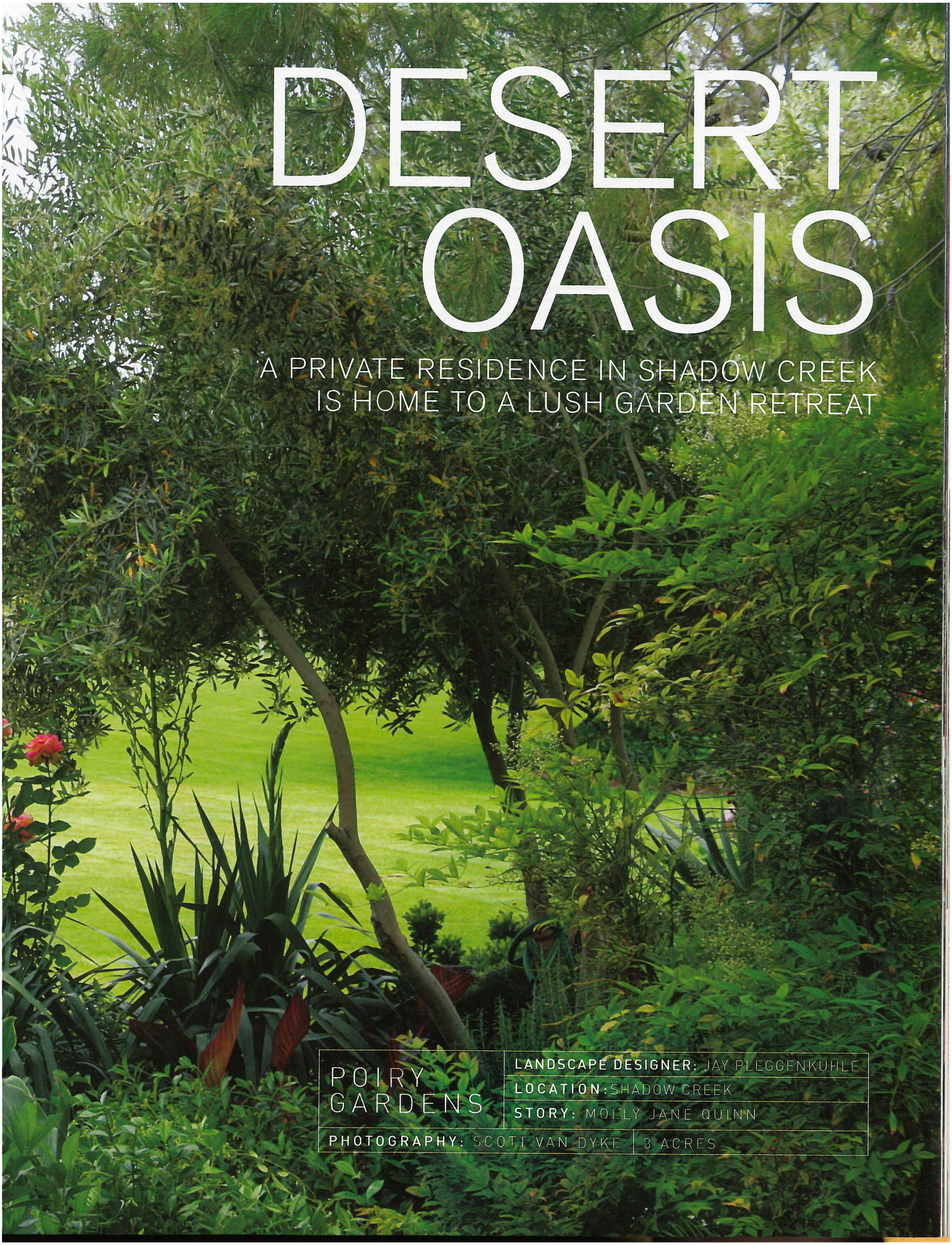


DESERT OASIS

A PRIVATE RESIDENCE IN SHADOW CREEK IS HOME TO A LUSH GARDEN RETREAT

POIRY GARDENS

LANDSCAPE DESIGNER: JAY PLEGGENKUHLE

LOCATION: SHADOW CREEK

STORY: MOLLY JANE QUINN

PHOTOGRAPHY: SCOTT VAN DYKE | 3 ACRES

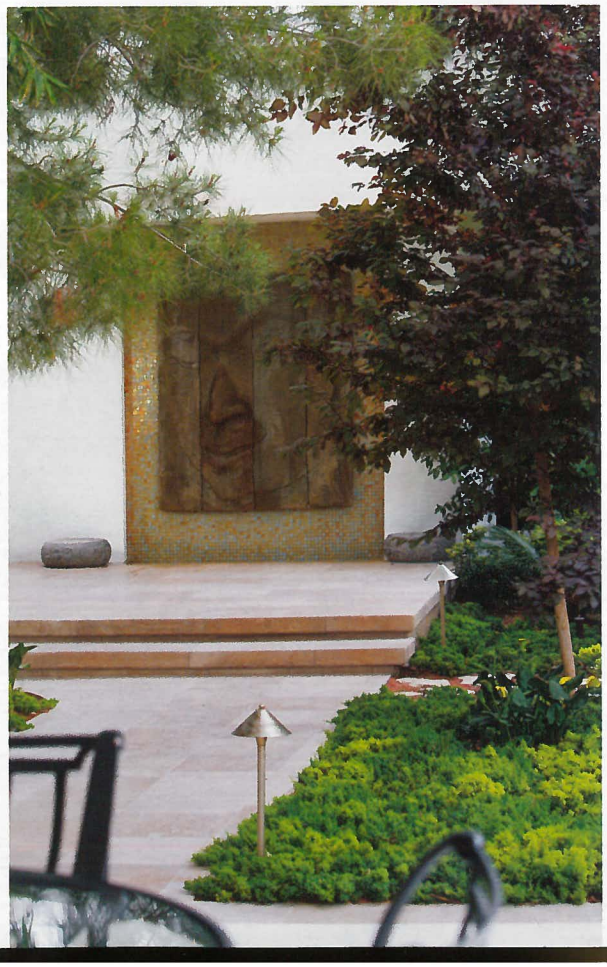
Above and opposite: The tile lining the pool is from Oceanside Glasstile, made from re-claimed glass. Victor Chiodini of Industrial Interiors created the metal spout in the water feature on the back wall of the pool. The seated Buddha is one of many collected by the homeowners during frequent trips to Asia. See Resources.

When David Poiry first saw the house in Shadow Creek all he could think of was Jurassic Park. The front door of the angular white-washed home was obscured by thick, overgrown vegetation. The mature evergreens that were seemingly scattered around the home with abandon were choking the small garden area. To the average visitor, it was a jungle. But for David, a commercial real estate investor who had spent the past five years searching for the perfect Las Vegas retreat, it was a challenge.

Built by Steve Wynn in 1989 for nearly $40 million, the ultra-exclusive 365-acre golf course has only two private residences on it: one originally for Wynn, and the other for his right-hand man, Marc Schorr. The course itself is set off by a forest of huge pine and juniper trees, a unique layout designed by renowned architect Tom Fazio. The greenery is a delight for golfers, but didn't exactly make for a picture-perfect garden. So when David and his wife, Diane Anderson, decided to purchase the house, he enlisted the help of Jay Pleggenkuhle, a well-known landscape designer, and together they turned Jurassic Park into the Poiry Gardens.

"Originally, when I met David, what he wanted to do was open up the front entrance of the house," says Jay of how they began sculpting the outdoor areas. "After we finished that first project we started looking at the rest of the house—and we haven't stopped."

David and Jay started by teaming up with Nevada Sources to move several 60-inch-wide pine trees away from the front door, opening up the entrance. Then they created a circular driveway by cutting away at the large mound in front of the home and, with the help of Parsons Brothers Rockeries, created a rock-ledge wall to retain the hillside. Maintaining David's vision for seamless-yet-natural areas was a top priority for Jay. "We were trying



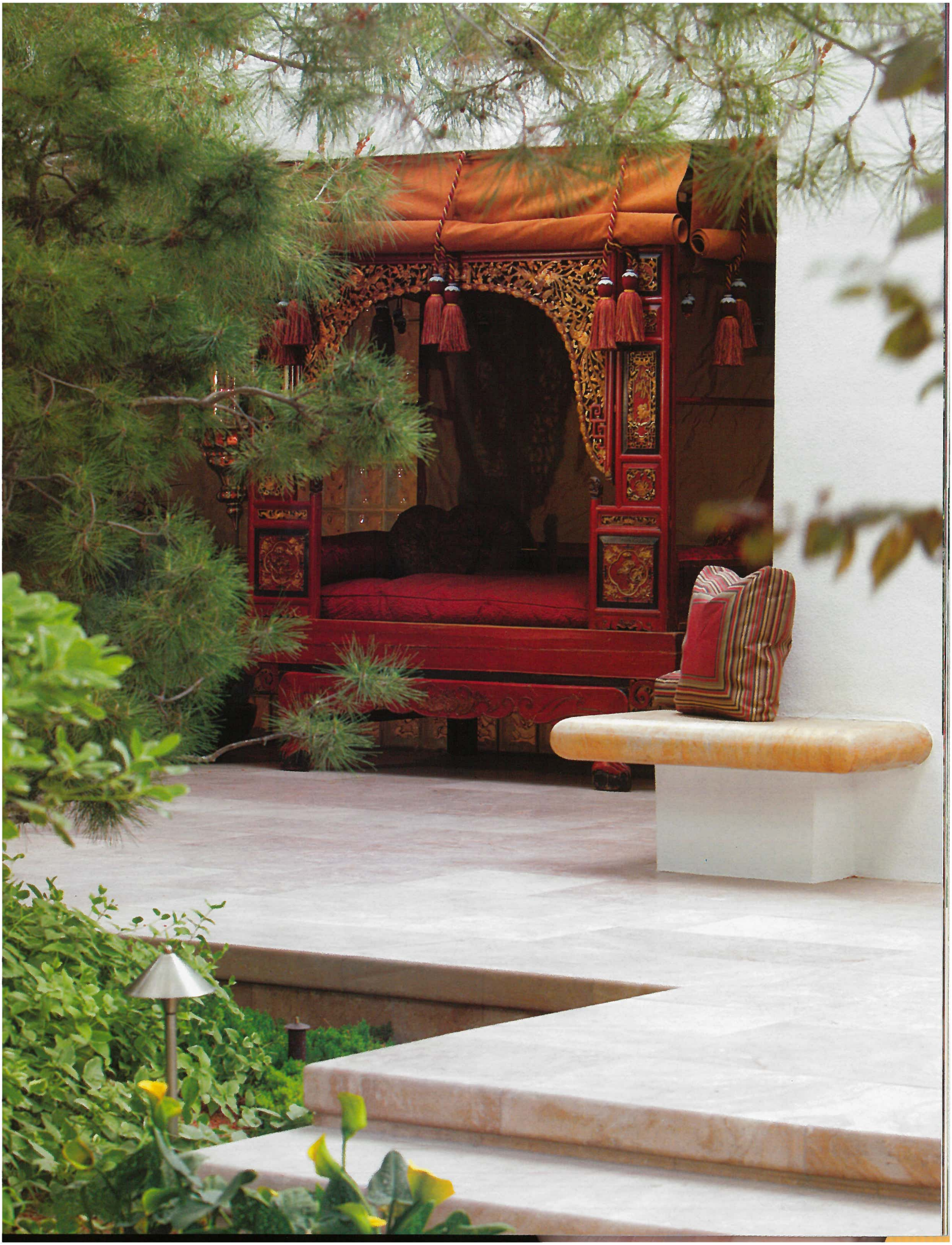
ove: Las Vegas-based erlin Contracting first built e Shadow Creek home r Wynn Resorts Ltd.'s Marc horr. To keep the same look d quality of the original, the rrent homeowners went back Merlin when it came time add their own additions. **ght:** The Buddha plaque set on a wall of glass tile was e inspiration for a private editation garden. **Opposite ige:** The antique opium bed as updated with a custom holstered down mattress eated by Interior Visions by arlies. See Resources.

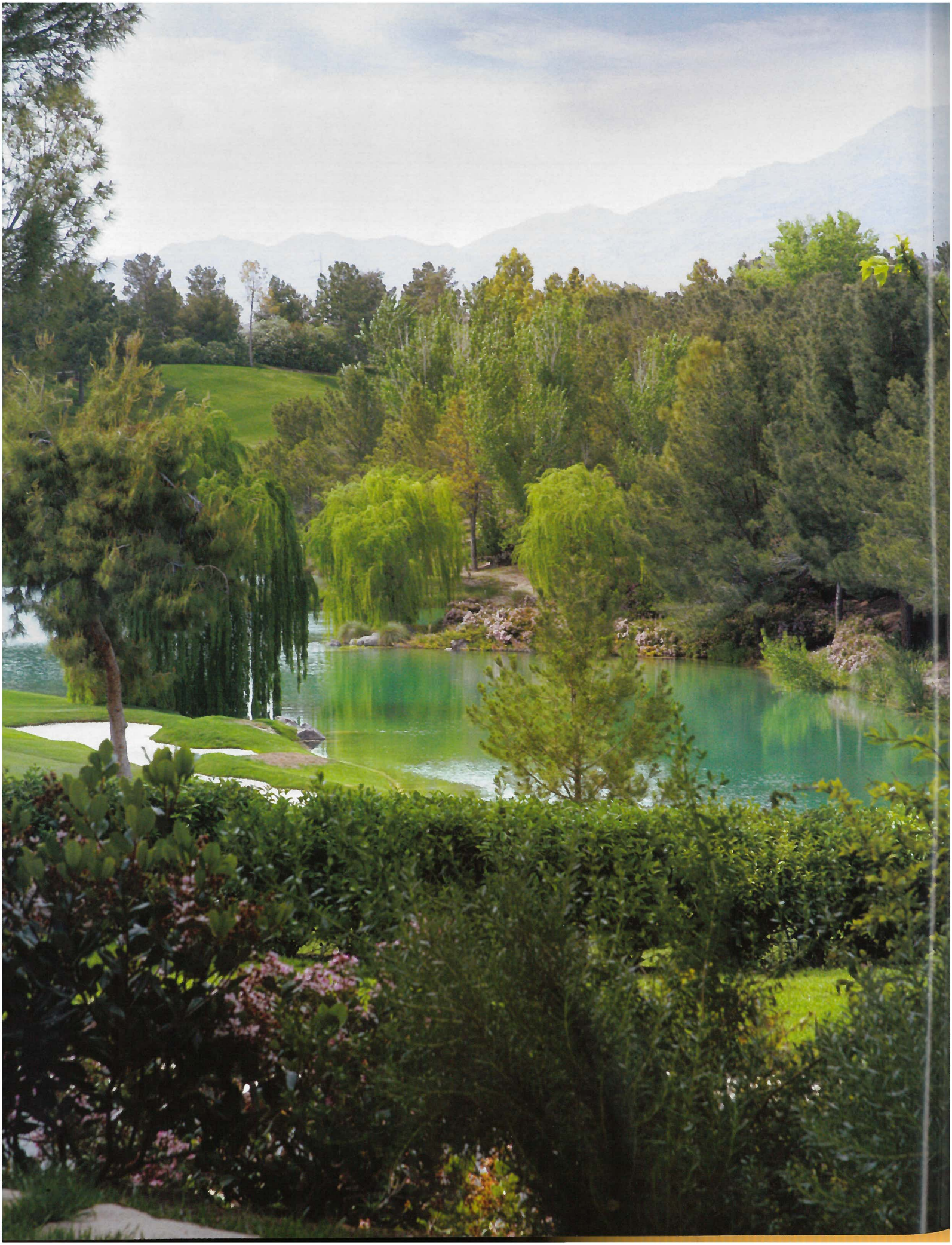
to expand the front entrance where people would feel embraced and welcomed instead of having to search to find it, but still use natural elements."

In keeping with their theme, Jay designed a water feature using re-claimed glass tile from Oceanside Glasstile and basalt stone columns from Washington State to frame the front walkway. The soothing fountains set the tone for the rest of the garden—David and his wife study Buddhism and Jay welcomed the Zen approach to garden planning.

"The gardens of the Far East, the Buddhas, the temples, the people—it all has a peace about it that's hard to capture with words," says David. "We did that throughout the property and it just adds to the serenity and tranquility of the home."

After opening up the front of the home, Jay made plans for a private meditation garden outside the master suite. He researched traditional Japanese gardens and drew inspiration from a Buddha plaque he and David recessed into an outdoor wall. However, he struggled to find plants in Las Vegas nurseries that would blend with the Zen ideal, so he looked to California-based Bamboo





ipeline to supply different plant materials.

Shadow Creek's location makes it easy to grow plants hat usually languish in the Las Vegas heat—it's a few egrees cooler than the rest of the city, and the mature ine trees that surround the property create a protective anopy. Jay brought in black bamboo, fragrant Daphne, as ell as Australian and Tasmanian ferns—all of which are riving under the unique growing conditions.

To set off the meditation garden, Jay decided to use rench limestone—specifically cut for the job—to create n outdoor patio area and as coping for water features, ne pool and risers on the steps. Custom-cut limestone, irectly from France? Easier said than done.

Working with Alisanne Frew of Source Francaise, Jay ommunicated with the quarry in France via three-way onference calls—translated by Alisanne—and drawings f the garden plans. "Somehow it all worked out perfectly, ecause [the quarry worker] didn't speak English and I on't speak French," he laughs.

ot long after finishing the Zen garden, Jay and avid started walking around the property looking for nspiration for their next outdoor room.

"We were standing to the side of the house looking own into this canyon and thought, 'Wow, this is like eing in the Sierra Nevada Mountains,'" says Jay.

So they created the Alpine garden, planting aspens and nstalling a polished granite table for watching the sunrise ver a cup of coffee. Jay experimented by adding a few ingko trees, in a nod to the homeowners' spiritual side.

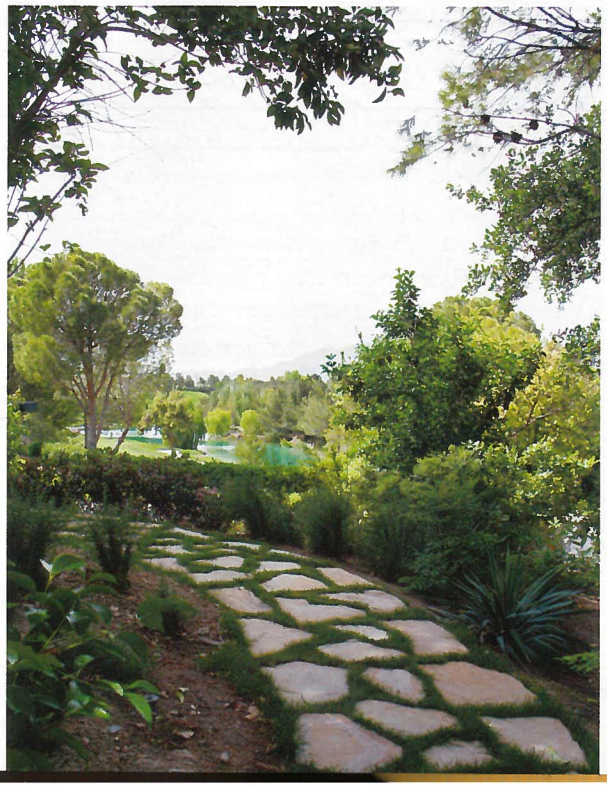
But as quickly as Jay designed new garden spaces, avid was onto the next project. One day Jay showed p at the house to find David, chainsaw in hand, cutting own every last juniper tree on the west side of the house.

"He got really bored and when I came out there all of ne trees were gone," says Jay. "He was in a bit of a panic."

"Eventually my chainsaw was taken away," adds avid with a grin. "The strawberry bush was my last act ith a chainsaw."

On the fly, they decided to re-create a walkway from a ook about Monet's gardens that David had been reading. sing the expansive 90-foot long area, Jay recruited Victor hiodini from Industrial Interiors to create metal arches r the trellis and planted a variety of roses and poppies so nat when one plant dies out another is always coming up.

After finishing Monet's walkway, David and Jay ntinued to add to the home's outdoor rooms: A 50- ot-wide formal rose garden with more than two dozen



Above: The walkway above was modeled after a similar one the homeowner saw in a book about master gardener and painter Claude Monet. **Left and opposite:** The stone path leads to a spectacular view of a lake at Shadow Creek framed by Sheep Mountain.

varieties, each quadrant of which is framed by topiary junipers. A flagstone paved path—guarded by a hand-carved teak Buddha set off by sweet smelling lilacs and angels' trumpets—leading up to polished granite table with a breathtaking view of a lake framed by Sheep Mountain, now David's favorite spot for watching the sunset. An antique opium bed with custom upholstery by Marlies Gass of Interior Visions situated in the Zen garden near an outdoor fireplace for meditation and lounging. And a shady nook with a wooden bench looking out to the snow-capped peak of Mount Charleston.

Three years after they began, David and Jay are still excited about the next outdoor room in the works. David and his wife are on the hunt in China for a ten-foot high Buddha statue to place opposite the tennis courts, framed by Monet's walkway, while Jay is planning yet another Asian-inspired garden complete with Japanese plum trees. Beyond that, David hopes to include more water features on the property. "I can even see taking the volleyball court out and making that a lily pond and building a footbridge over that."

"I also want to do a stone meditation maze," says Jay. "It's still a work in progress, you know? I only hope that five years from now, we're still creating spaces and doing new things." HD

ove: David Poiry, left, and / Pleggenkuhle sit on the gstone steps leading up to vid's favorite spot on the operty. Right: The formal rose rden is centered around a ter feature created by drilling les in basalt columns from ashington State.