

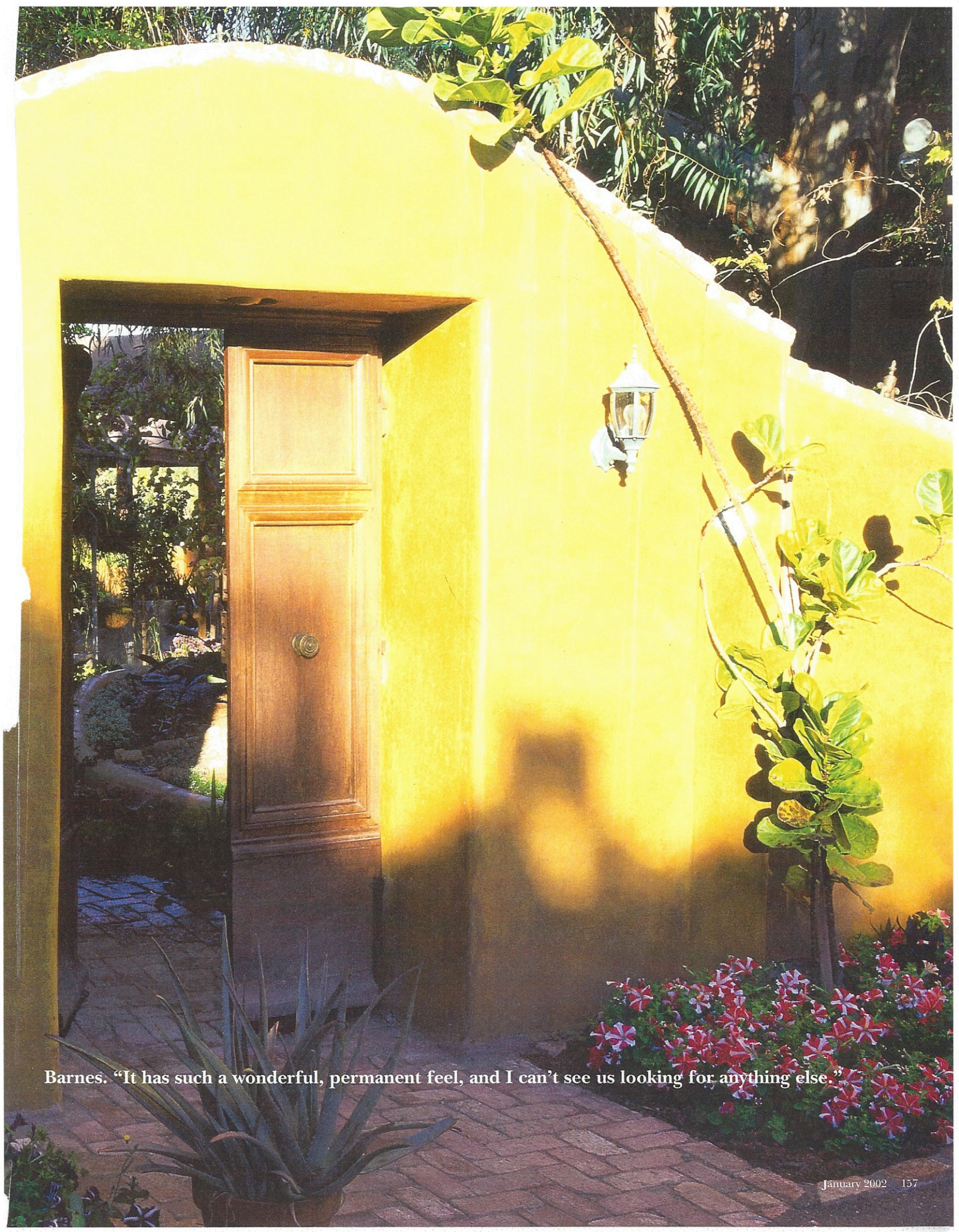
The appeal of this Paradise Valley garden begins with its entrance, where an arched wall coated in an Italian lime wash is capped with used brick. Fiddle-leaf fig plants climbing alongside antique wooden doors from Europe add Mediterranean flair.

Lasting Impression

A Valley couple savors the tranquility of their Mediterranean-style garden

Text by Suzanne Pickett Martinson
Photography by Charles Mann

“I think this garden will make this the last house,” muses Paradise Valley resident Pat



Barnes. "It has such a wonderful, permanent feel, and I can't see us looking for anything else."



Pat and her husband, Ron, purchased the neglected 2-acre property five years ago and have spent a considerable amount of time working on the home. Their most recent construction project was the restructuring of an Arizona room into a family room, and the creation of a collector's wine cellar, located directly behind the family room. To make the space even more versatile, expansive sliding glass pocket doors were added. When open, they create an indoor/outdoor environment. The landscape outside the renovated interior, however, was barren except for a couple of existing trees, a lone cactus and a newly built ramada.

In January 2000, to celebrate the millennium and officially start work on their outdoor space, the couple hired landscape architect Greg Trutza of New Directions in Landscape Architecture to design their dream garden. "Greg is wonderful to work with," says Pat. "He is a great listener and was able to translate our overall vision into reality."

Although several initial ideas—including the addition of a pool and Jacuzzi—were discarded, the couple knew they wanted a place that looked and felt cool and cozy. They were particularly drawn to the style of Mediterranean villa gardens, such as those

they had seen on their travels. They also wanted to create places where they could spend time dining and socializing with friends and family. A pond was added to Pat's wish list after she had gone on a local pond tour. And although the couple loves animals, they decided to enclose the area. This would protect certain plants from native critters and enable Ron and Pat to cultivate open spaces beyond the garden walls into a natural desert habitat.

With these goals in mind, Trutza was inspired to find a piece of outdoor art to use both as a focal point and to set the tone for the garden. Coincidentally, a friend mentioned having found an 8-foot by 9-foot bas-relief in the Della Robia style. The piece, once outside a 1930s Kansas City theater, had escaped the wrecking ball. Although the bas-relief had been shipped in pieces, Trutza recognized that the sculpture would make a perfect masterpiece for Ron and Pat's garden. They agreed.

"Ron added three antique wine spouts to the sculpture. These signal the water's journey to the stream and pond," explains Trutza. "The overscale size of the sculpture and the running water immediately capture the viewer's eyes and ears from anywhere in the garden or family room. The piece truly cele-

Left: A Della Robia-style frieze, the yard's focal point, was outfitted with wine-keg taps that now serve as fountain spouts. Guided by landscape architect Greg Trutza, the homeowners lime-washed the surrounding walls themselves.
Below: A view toward the ramada reveals a stone scupper incorporated into a raised garden bed. Water from the pond below is recycled through the scupper.





brates life and bounty.”

To enhance the tranquility of the garden, Trutza chose tropical foliage and flowers to “swoon the senses.” He also used a wide variety of bulbs and perennials similar to Mediterranean species found in Italy or the south of France. These include anemones, *zephyranthes*, calla lilies and ranunculus. *Acanthus* and bird of paradise lend a contrast of textures to the water hyacinths, lilies, cannas, irises and water lettuce that float in the pond.

The couple commissioned Cavaliere Blacksmith Shop in Scottsdale to build a spacious Monet-style metal arch that would serve to guide visitors from the garden’s entry to the gurgling fountain. Now generously covered with wisteria, assorted jasmine

and climbing roses, the arch immediately transports the mind to a place of peace and beauty. Tucked throughout the yard are quaint seating areas, and also cherished sculptures, wall plaques and garden art brought back from the couple’s travels. A pair of antique wooden doors discovered on a trip to France now resides in the garden’s arched entryway and provides the perfect starting point to this hidden garden.

Following Trutza’s advice, Ron and Pat made it a family project to apply an Italian lime wash to garden walls, which are reminiscent of those in an old villa garden. “The rich ochre and olive shading of the walls completes the vision,” notes Trutza.

Throughout the garden, canopies of mesquite and Chinese

This photo: Just beyond the entry gates Trutza staged a series of arches styled after those in Claude Monet's garden in Giverny, France. Today the supports are covered with Queen's wreath, wisteria, jasmine and trumpet vine. • Right: A koi pond planted with water lilies, water lettuce and water canna can be enjoyed from the ramada, which is cantilevered over an existing wash. The homeowners painted the structure's ceiling cobalt blue accented with stars.



tallow trees double as umbrella shades, yet allow needed sunlight to reach the crimson fairy dusters, yellow lantana and vibrant roses. A flowering pear tree and an orchid tree thrive in the setting and bloom with colorful, fragrant flowers when in season. Even the couple's parrots seem to enjoy the serenity when they accompany Pat or Ron as they putter in the garden or enjoy a meal under the ramada.

Pat confesses that she became an avid gardener while raising her five children. "I learned to be a good weeder when I had the kids," she laughs. "Our yard was never more weed-free than when the children were young. Funny as that sounds, I think that is when I became passionate about gardening."

Ron, too, is a devoted gardener. His specialty is orchids, and to cultivate these rarest of plants, a greenhouse has been added onto the side of the home. Vegetable gardening is another favorite pastime of Ron's. His vegetable patch is located beyond the garden wall among mesquite and palo verde trees, and a variety of cacti and other native plants.

The couple has enjoyed their hobby of buying homes and remodeling them over many decades. But the more time they spend in their new garden, the more the desire to move on wanes. As if on the same wavelength, one of Pat's friends recently presented her with a large inscribed rock that now sits at the front of the driveway. It reads, "The Last House." 🌿

See Resource Guide.