



# PHOENIX H&G HOME AND GARDEN

Exploring Local  
Flower Farms  
A Landscape  
for All Seasons

# fresh

Bright Interiors  
Colorful Gardens  
Peaceful Places



Two of the homeowners' grandchildren frolic on the backyard's central lawn, an area that also serves as a spacious venue for outdoor games. At the edge of the lawn, landscape architect Russell Greey planted a line of Bradford pear trees (*Pyrus calleryana*) that bloom in the spring, engulfing the delicate trees in small white blossoms.

# *At Home in the Garden*

Part of a whole-house redo, a lush landscape beckons with a series of inviting outdoor spaces.

BY MARILYN HAWKES  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JILL RICHARDS





**OPPOSITE** A vintage iron table base with a marble top, iron chairs with mismatched cushions and an antique wine basket add to the yard's eclectic look. This space is just one of several outdoor dining areas that homeowners Bev and Brian Burch use when entertaining family and friends. A large Texas mountain laurel (*Saphora secundiflora*) shades the setting. **LEFT** White iceberg roses edge the semicircular driveway in front of the Santa Barbara-style home. Two large clay pots planted with kumquats flank the entry gate. Inside the courtyard, a mature Mastic tree (*Pistacia lentiscus*) provides shade on a sunny day.

**BEV AND BRIAN** Burch's warm and welcoming Santa Barbara-style dwelling serves as a peaceful sanctuary—a calming antidote to their full and busy lives. But when friends and family visit, including the couple's five children and many grandchildren, everyone wants to spend time outside enjoying the leafy, activity-filled grounds. "The kids love the gardens," says Bev. "There are lots of places for them to eat, sit, play, run and jump."

The Burches have lived in their home for close to 24 years. Located in the upscale Biltmore neighborhood, the house sits on a spacious lot that brims with an eclectic mix of mature trees, large manicured lawns

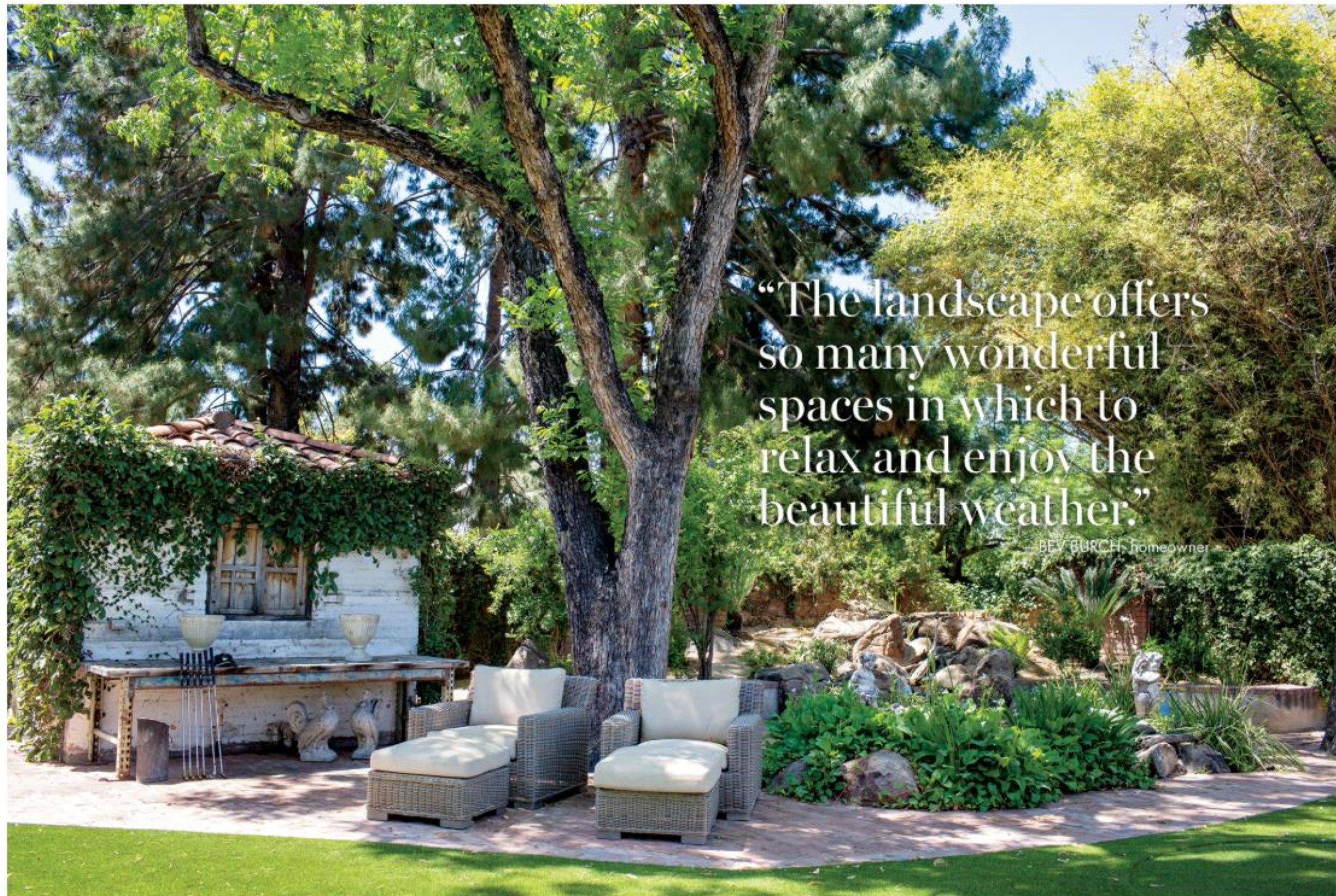
and lush foliage. A semicircular driveway lined with white iceberg roses greets guests and, in the spring, hundreds of bulbs—daffodils, paper whites, hyacinths, allium and narcissus—push through the soil for an explosion of color. African sumac trees and yellow oleanders hug the wall surrounding the entry courtyard. Inside the gate, twisted pistachio tree branches provide shade next to a gurgling fountain. According to landscape architect Russell Greey, the property is reminiscent of a grand Montecito estate.

The *Phoenix Home & Garden* Masters of the Southwest award winner remodeled and refreshed the grounds as part of an extensive





**RIGHT** A stately pistachio tree towers over a potting shed covered in creeping fig vines (*Ficus pumila*). The recently remodeled structure now holds a playhouse for the Burches' granddaughters. Two wicker lounge chairs in front of a gurgling water feature festooned with water lilies, water plants and African iris (*Dietes iridioides*) face a faux turf putting green. "It's a great place to sit and enjoy the view while listening to the pond," Bev says. To the right, a large bamboo soars overhead. **TOP AND ABOVE** Gnarled branches of *Vitex trifolia* are the perfect backdrop for garden art that is scattered throughout the yard.



“The landscape offers so many wonderful spaces in which to relax and enjoy the beautiful weather.”

—BEV BURCH, homeowner





renovation that included the home's interior. (See "A Sense of Place," *Phoenix Home & Garden*, November 2019, Pages 128-141). The house redo helped open it up to the backyard, which was transformed into a functional and fun entertaining area with an expanded outdoor kitchen, upgraded pool area and new putting green. The couple also installed an alfresco shower by the pool that Brian uses almost daily.

Because Bev and Brian love to host large gatherings, the exterior spaces were designed to accommodate a crowd. The outdoor kitchen, which was installed beneath an existing patio overhang in order to protect it—and any chefs—from the scorching desert sun, features grills and refrigerators, a raised limestone sink, an extended bar for sitting and plenty of counter space. "We cook out here all the time," Bev says. "I can't tell you how much we enjoy this space."

Nearby, a conversation pit lined with wicker chairs and cozy couches offers a comfortable area where folks can convene for an after-dinner drink or to watch TV. Bev is the owner of an Arcadia-based home decor store, and evidence of her impeccable design touches are everywhere. A collection of straw hats flop effortlessly on a weathered wood rack. Plush accent pillows with bold brown brush strokes complement the understated wicker chairs. Stone planters spill over with white flowers.

Greey created a ramada in between the outdoor kitchen and guest house, where up to 16 people can dine alfresco surrounded by olive trees. Looking north, a spectacular view of Piestewa Peak looms in the distance.

**OPPOSITE** A mature twisted olive tree that has grown through an iron trellis shades the patio. To the left is a bar where the grandchildren enjoy having lunch. The tiled roof of a guest casita peeks through the branches. **ABOVE** Bev enjoys playing with her grandchildren in the lush backyard.



The recently remodeled pool area is lined with glazed porcelain tiles. White iceberg and red roses soften a new security fence. A magnolia tree stands next to the house while, in the background, a mature Chinese pistache (*Pistacia chinensis*) and Texas mountain laurel overlook the setting.

“The grounds have this eclectic feel. It’s all part of the character of the house.”

—RUSSELL GREEY, landscape architect





**LEFT** Iceberg roses bloom throughout the property. "I generally only plant white flowers, because I just like the color. It's so clean," Bev says. The pathway was fashioned from bricks reclaimed from other parts of the backyard, and the pea gravel was added to tidy up dirt areas. **OPPOSITE LEFT** An outdoor shower sits just outside the home's master bathroom. A driftwood curtain provides "some privacy," Bev notes. **OPPOSITE RIGHT** The great lawn offers plenty of space for activities. At the far end, the Burches installed a dining area that seats up to 16 guests.



High on Bev and Brian's wish list was ensuring that the backyard be open, low-maintenance and child-friendly. "They might have 15 kids here at a time, so it can't be fussy," Greey explains. The existing pool was given an upgrade with taller safety fencing and new decking, which Bev and friend, business partner and interior designer, Susan Rose, picked out. "At the tile yard, I asked Susan to lay down on the stone to see if it was hot," Bev recounts, adding with a laugh, "We still ended up going with hot because we liked the scale and texture of the limestone pavers." Adds Rose, "We selected the outdoor stone for the pool area because it was a beautiful contrast to the house color." The addition of a Baja shelf lets the Burches' younger grandchildren enjoy the pool. "They can hang out on it and pretend that they're swimming," Bev says.

Flowering Bradford pear trees line the pool fencing and connect the hardscape to an expansive lawn where children and adults can play volleyball, croquet or football. "Originally, there were a lot of beds and hedges, but we decided to install wall-to-wall grass and keep it very simple, like something you would see in a vintage estate," Greey says.

To that end, Greey left all the mature trees intact, including towering Arizona ash and Aleppo pine trees; a massive jacaranda, Hong Kong orchid and lofty ash; several prolific citrus trees and an immense Texas mesquite bean that has grown up and through a metal gazebo. He also replaced loose dirt areas with pea gravel for a fresh look and cleaned up dormant hedges and flower beds. "The grounds just have this eclectic feel, and I tried not to make anything look too prescribed," he explains. "It's all part of the character of the home."

The garden's new look is soft and ageless—and it creates a welcoming ambience that the Burches desired. No matter the season, Bev and Brian can be found enjoying their outdoor living and play areas. "This is where we entertain," Bev says. "We're out back all the time, even in the summer. The landscape offers so many wonderful spaces in which to relax and enjoy the beautiful weather." □

INTERIOR DESIGNERS: Beverly Burch and Susan Rose, Willows Fine Goods and Design. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Russell Greey, Greey | Pickett

For more information, see Sources on Page 158.