

gorgeous gardens

VERSATILE
VALLEY
BY ARIEL HANSEN

At high altitude and in high desert, the growing season is short and the climate challenging. But the landscape of your dreams can still grow here. Whether formal or xeriscaped, lush with flowers or bountiful for your salad bowl, the gardens of the Wood River valley are a welcoming place to spend time and host guests.

There's no such thing as a "Sun Valley garden." Instead, as you visit friends on warm summer evenings, you'll see formal spaces that wouldn't look out of place on a British estate—textured grassy expanses that mix seamlessly with the khaki hills beyond, flowers in every hue to attract butterfly and bee, and lush beds of vegetables for the picking.

Of course, there are challenges—the short growing season, unexpected frosts, sweeping winds, and dry climate—but with a little planning and savvy choices, the landscape of nearly any fantasy can become reality here.

"The thing that is great about this valley is there are so many different options. It's so fun to go on

PHOTOGRAPHY: JAMES BOURRET

“ A lot of people are not here to spend time in their garden; they’re here to bike and fish and have fun. But you can still have a beautiful garden without much maintenance. ”



garden tours and see everybody’s different tastes,” said Jan Turzian, owner of Sun Valley Garden Center and a valley resident for 32 years.

Turzian’s midvalley home is nestled up against a creek surrounded by trees, and she has taken advantage of the shade and the water to build a landscape of small moments.

In the front yard, shrub roses and towering columbine seem to cascade down the wide, rough-edged steps leading to the patio. Look up, and orange and red blooms explode out of planters that line every window.

Behind the log-style home, it’s just a few steps from the fire pit near the creek edge to the raised beds of vegetables and herbs, then beyond to a wrought-iron gazebo complete with a chandelier and a small pond fed by a tiny stream and surrounded by irregular stones.

Throughout there’s a feeling that everything’s right where it should be. That’s because Turzian pays atten-

tion, starting with properly amended soil, a careful layout, and foliage that is suited to the climate and the space.

“If people think that because they’re moving to 6,000 feet in the mountains, they can’t have a beautiful garden, they can,” she said. With the right planning, it doesn’t even take a lot of time and money to accomplish. “A lot of people are not here to spend time in their garden; they’re here to bike and fish and have fun. But you can still have a beautiful garden without much maintenance.”

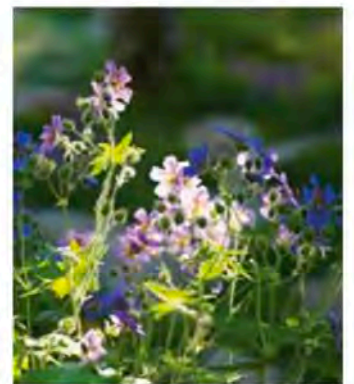
Low maintenance was definitely on one Warm Springs resident’s list of desires when she and her husband built their home seven years ago.

Featuring stacked stone that blends into the hills

beyond, the hardscape defines the living space and echoes the home by bridging the gap between modern lines and a rustic sensibility. The flagstones on the porch that overlooks an endless mountain view are grouted with wooly thyme, while periwinkle is a glossy groundcover nearby. At the home’s edges, a few planted aspens and apple trees help step down the scale and ease the eye back to the sagebrush and the grasses that lead off into the hills.

Just off the kitchen, three small raised beds offer space for tomatoes, lettuce, carrots, peas, strawberries, and a few more salad basics, with herbs filling in the odd corners.

The home’s grand front door opens into a small courtyard that provides the



Left: Arresting rockwork, a gradual climb, and a variety of grasses offer a stunning welcome to this Warm Springs home. Above, top to bottom: The view from the flagstone patio; eye-catching details of the Turzian garden.

outdoor living



Above: Colorful radishes are but a small offering from the bounteous Turzian garden.

grassy green moments demanded for croquet or a tussle with the family dogs. And in a stretch of terrace next to the swimming pool is the cutting garden, full of perennials such as phlox, hollyhocks, irises, and peonies.

“I did not want it to feel like a suburban yard. The river and the mountains are so beautiful, I wanted to

embrace that,” the owner said. “What this place is all about is amazing, and you should just go with it.”

With such versatility, it’s no wonder that gardens aren’t at the top of every Sun Valley homebuyer’s list of requirements—they know they can make whatever changes they wish after purchase.

But the garden can be that “wow”

“Outside. It’s what draws residents and visitors alike to Sun Valley, to work and play or just stand in awe.”

factor, said Suzanne Williams, broker/owner of Sun Valley Real Estate.

“It’s more of an additional amenity, a real fabulous garden; it makes buyers appreciate the home more,” she said, noting that homebuyers get excited about outdoor entertaining spaces, including fireplaces and water features. “People do like to entertain outside.”

Yes, outside. It’s what draws residents and visitors alike to Sun Valley, to work and play or just stand in awe. Creating an outdoor space that can compete with nature’s majesty is a tall order, but gardeners across the valley have proven that they’re up to the task.

FEATURED

garden properties



This AIA award-winning home borders Forest Service land and trails with exceptional gardens and outdoor spaces collaboratively designed by architect and landscape architect/owner. Stunning views, sustainable design, and warm wood and concrete interior. Privacy within a family neighborhood just minutes from town via bike path. Call Tom Drougas at 208.720.6089 for details.

\$3,500,00



This lovely home with spectacular gardens is located on the ninth fairway of the Valley Club’s south course with views in all directions. This four-bedroom home features two master bedrooms on the ground floor, an office/den with built-in cabinetry, a formal dining room, and upstairs guest suites with large game room and kitchenette. For details call Suzanne Williams at 208.720.3958.

\$2,995,00



This French country midvalley home centered on a 1.1+ acre parcel features a beautifully landscaped garden and terrace with southern exposure. With 3,150-square-feet, this residence has three bedrooms, two and a half baths, an office, laundry room, multiple storage areas and radiant heat throughout the ground level is a bit of France in Sun Valley. Call Alex Hughes at 208.720.7444 for details.

\$2,995,00