

Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

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Debbie and her husband are the ultimate recyclers and repurposers. With their barnyard of adopted animals – pigs, goats, donkeys, chickens, even Texas long horns at one time – all the weeds and garden cuttings feed the animals and the manure is then recycled back to the garden. They collect rooftop rain runoff in used wine barrels then pipe it to a storage tank to help with summer watering. It's never enough, but every drop helps. Their garden art includes rusted plows, wooden swings, a plethora of homemade birdhouses, multiple fountains made from found objects, wagon wheels, antlers, the cutest country chicken coop you ever did see, and a sleeping shed outfitted with a bear hide, antique fishing gear, pinecones, and found treasures of every sort. From their patio they watch the wildlife on their hillside property – deer, bobcats, raccoons, turkeys, skunks, and the occasional mountain lion. It's a playful, restful garden setting, albeit with a watchful eye for the rattlesnakes that enjoy this oasis as well.

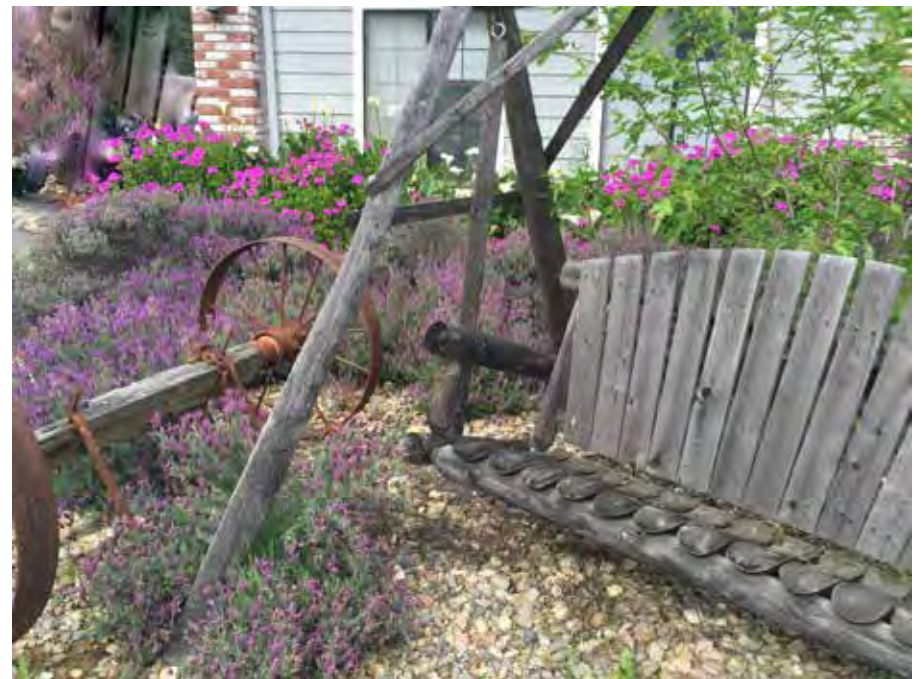
What I love about Debbie's garden is how it reflects her unique personality, her love of the land, and her admiration for the history of the Wild West. As we ambled around the property with her happy dogs in the lead, the songbirds sang, a bevy of butterflies delicately landed on her flowers, and the koi in the pond swam to the surface to greet me. This time together immersed in this sustainable landscape nurtured my soul and brought our childhood memories to vivid life. Although we grow the same plants, shrubs, trees, and succulents in both of our yards, our designs and esthetics are completely different. And that's the beauty of creating a garden, making it your own special paradise where you can find peace, tranquility, and restoration in tandem with the wild kingdom.



A winding gravel path dotted with bearded iris, lavender, and fruit trees leads to the bucolic hillside view.



Aeonium succulents



Photos Cynthia Brian An antique plow with a recycled wooden swing is a special place to enjoy sunsets.