

pinecrest

MAGAZINE

BEING BOSH
GLAMOUR GAL GIVES BACK

**CASTAWAYS
AGAINST CANCER**
160 MILES FOR A CURE

**IVAN THE
IMPRESSIVE**
FROM FOUNDER TO
FRANCHISOR

+ PLUS:
7 QUESTIONS
WITH MARY SCOTT
RUSSELL



*Secret
Gardens*
A PEEK BEHIND OUR
HEDGES & GATES



Secret Gardens

A PEEK BEHIND
PINECREST'S
HEDGES & GATES

BY KAREN F. BUCHSBAUM



The private gardens of Pinecrest reveal hidden gems such as a private putting green (top) or a bamboo forest (bottom).

Behind every stone wall, ficus hedge and ornate fence there lies a hidden world. With lush tropical vegetation, rare and ancient plants and a palette of vivid colors, our private gardens are often some of our best-kept secrets.

This spring, there was an opening in those hedges and gates to showcase six fabulous local gardens during the 24th annual Villagers' Garden Tour.

The Gardens are as diverse as their owners. The formal symmetry of the Palladian-style home of Fernando and Marisa Toledo, *Le Bon Vivre (The Good Life)*, translated into a very private pool area and garden. A crowd favorite is the dramatic walkways on the property. Using oversized, authentic Florida Keys coral rock pavers bordered by faux turf, the effect was one of natural perfection, but without the maintenance headache of setting the stones in real grass. Visitors marveled at how well it all blended together.



One of the gardens incorporates the pool and stone decking into the design and landscaping.

A Touch of Tuscany was the inspiration for Marc and Patti Silverman. Their garden is filled with treasures brought back from their world travels. Massive Italian pots filled with citrus trees are displayed along with more than 200 orchid plants and a magical Bougainvillea-draped pergola. A cute Westie (dog)

with the raised kitchen garden filled with towers of cherry and heirloom tomatoes, lettuces and herbs. Fulfilling every golfer's dream, a separate area features a serious putting green.

South Florida's own "Bamboo Man," Gary Rich, lives in Pinecrest with his wife Cindy and his prized collection of bamboo, 20 years in the making. In

The Villagers always have a stop on their tours featuring homemade refreshments and a boutique filled with Attic Treasures, plants and other special goodies. The Garden of Hope offered a peaceful respite for participants, and a chance to share one more fabulous, expansive garden. An entire article could be written about the re-purposed treasures rescued from others' trash, which now have an honored place in this beautiful setting.

statue, bought at a City of Pinecrest charity auction, shares the spotlight with a collection of animal statuary ranging from whimsical to elegant. If they love Italy, they must love to cook, and the evidence is right in sight

A Bamboo Growers Garden, visitors were awed by the huge stands and amazing variety of bamboo, including three species of prized black bamboo. Gary is a well-known authority on bamboo and teaches classes about



Los Robles uses mature live oak trees with a wide variety unusual plants from around the world.



A unique pair of statues representing the energy of life the garden gives.

tropical bamboo for Fairchild Botanical Garden.

Mature live oak trees proved the centerpiece for *Los Robles (The Oak Trees)*, and a good starting point for a compromise between owner Luis Segredo's desire for a lush, natural landscape and his wife Gisela's desire for a more formal, manicured look. Regardless of any compromises, this garden is really all about family, and before any work began to create the design in place today, Gisela put up colorful swings for the couple's two little girls. Even after the garden's completion, the play area is still her favorite part of the yard. The pool area features colorful custom mosaics, with sea-life designs inspired by the girls. There is an open, grassy area perfect for games and plantings selected to attract butterflies and birds.

When Lelis and Robert Vernon bought their Pinecrest home, they also got an extraordinary garden filled with plantings brought from around the world (all with permits, we're told). As Lelis describes it, she told her husband, "We have the house, and another house outside." On this lush property, everywhere you look, you spot a surprise, an unusual or rare plant. Massive leopard trees, with their distinctive mottled trunks, are by the entrance gate and 67 varieties of orchids add splashes of bright color throughout. A crowd favorite, the Zen garden, features a goddess sculpture Lelis has named Silvia, after her mother, who loved the area the minute she saw it. ■

Who Are The Villagers?

The Villagers, Inc., founded in 1966, is Miami-Dade County's oldest historic preservation organization. The hands-on, grassroots, volunteer group was originally formed to save historic Douglas Entrance in Coral Gables, Florida.

Since their founding, The Villagers have worked diligently, by educating, advocating, fundraising, and documenting in their support of historic preservation in Miami-Dade County. To date, more than 56 projects have been funded, many with multiple grants, and college scholarships are awarded annually.

The Villagers' raise funds through annual House and Garden Tours with boutiques featuring homemade items, collectibles, plants, and more. Other fundraisers include the annual Quilt Raffle, Historic Hunt and auctions.

Garden Book Available Soon

A coffee table book *The Gardens of Miami* is currently in production and expected to be available for purchase by the end of the year. It will feature more than 250 pages of color photos and descriptions.

For more details about The Villagers' new garden book, accomplishments, history or membership visit: <http://thevillagersinc.org>.