**The Secret Garden**

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Driving up to the home of Gloria and David Dick, there is little sign of a residence other than a half-circle driveway and an inconspicuous mailbox. I knew this should be the place, but I had to check the address displayed unobtrusively on the mailbox. As I approached the reclaimed Middle-Eastern half doors mounted in the center of a bark-brown wall, there was no clue as to what lay behind.

When the gates opened, they revealed a gracious Gloria Dick, who is clearly keen on showing off her “secret” garden. Gloria and husband, David, have lived in their home and gardens for 17 years. Gloria says, “We’ve been working to perfect them the entire time.” Once inside those gates, the pleasant, calming isolation from the noise outside offered welcome relief.

My first glimpse of what felt like a serene cloister was the front courtyard. The area is perhaps more accurately described as an outdoor living room, complete with fireplace, concrete sofa, coffee table and lamps, which are actually a sort of lantern that holds candles for evening gatherings. Of course, Gloria’s cherished plants were in abundance, adding color and ambience to the space.

Next, we entered the house itself through the iconic sky-blue front door that has become well known in association with this home. Gloria explained that each area of the garden, which wraps completely around the home, is divided into separate spaces or outdoor rooms that are extensions of the inside. Every room of the house, except for one bedroom, opens onto its own garden room, which has been planned and executed as carefully as most people plan their indoor space. Gloria says, “Our intention was to expand the home to the outside, which has, effectively doubled our living space.”

Gloria confesses an affinity for green, especially when it comes to living things. “I enjoy flowers in season, but I must have green – and in a variety of shades.” Along with Martina Lorey, colorist; Sally Homan, layout designer; Mark Nash, landscape design and installation; and Richard Reid, patio and home design construction, Gloria designed a garden for her and David’s particular enjoyment and their desire for relatively easy care. According to Gloria, “The garden has changed over the years to serve our needs at the time. It’s always a work in progress.”

From inside the home, we stepped out of the breakfast area onto a loggia and sat at a colorful mosaic patio table. The spectacular view included the gardens, the pool and also the peaks of the mountains beyond. Behind the bark-brown wall that continues from the front of the house and encloses two sides of the property, are more trees and plants for privacy. Brightly colored fountains adorn nearly every patio space. Between the seclusion, the view and the music of the flowing water, the outdoor breakfast area provided a blissful sanctuary.

Next, Gloria guided me through the haven of the front courtyard with its lush plantings, past the outdoor living area to her vegetable and herb garden. Gloria purchased industrial aluminum containers to plant her garden in. The corrugated metal troughs complement the one wall that is not concrete. This high wall of wood and metal has a bit of a modern, industrial feel that provides contrast to the Southwestern style of the rest of the home and gardens.

The next stop on our tour was the dining area – indoor and outdoor. Gloria and David worked with Charles and Bates Gaddy of Gaddy Homes to rework the entire area to be a relaxed, yet elegant space. The recently installed glass wall opens wide from inside onto another loggia, flanked by concrete pillars which boast newly planted ivy. Gloria said, “I look forward to the ivy meeting at the top of the loggia to provide the décor for this outdoor room.” The new table is their own creation. “I knew exactly what I wanted, and it was not your typical patio furniture. So, I started building. Then, David got involved, so it’s been a joint project.”

Gloria and David said that there are, intentionally, more windows than wall space in their home. As David pointed out, “The garden is the artwork of our home.” Gloria added, “When you’re outside, you feel like you’re part of the inside, and when you’re inside, you feel like you’re part of the outside. And that’s just what we wanted.” Mission accomplished.