

GARDENS

DESCRIPTION: The Gardens at the Springs Preserve is designed to be a creative, innovative learning environment for visitors to explore native and non-native desert-adapted plant life through interpretive stations and hands-on activity, as well as learn about landscaping techniques and different ways to enhance outdoor space with water-smart landscaping. Themes represented include: Understanding the Mojave, Water Smart Landscaping, Shaping Your Environment, Using Water Wisely, Outdoor Living, Planting and Maintaining. The Gardens contain more than 1,200 species of native and desert-adapted plants on display. More than 400 mature trees and plants, some 20 years old and over 30 feet tall, were transplanted to the Gardens and throughout the Preserve. The Mojave native plants on display were grown from seed collected in the Las Vegas Valley, making the plants genetically true and better adapted to the climate. Almost all of the native cacti and Yucca species were salvaged from local lands that were being developed for residential or commercial use.

KEY FEATURES:

- Activity Center –visitors of all ages can learn about nature and the world around them, gardening and more, at one or a few of our weekend classes. Find out all about living in harmony in the desert in the Activity Center – a truly green building – with rammed-earth walls, passive cooling towers and solar-generated power.
- Gardens Center - sign up for weekend classes, have basic gardening questions answered and even get a diagnosis for a sick plant.
- Tool Shed Theater - a teaching area featuring molded, mushroom-shaped stools with an outdoor vegetable garden, compost, and gardening tools display.
- Enabling Garden - demonstrates options for people who have physical challenges. Features a vertical wall garden, shallow pan gardening, raised beds and specialty tools.
- Frame House - a partially-enclosed area featuring a kitchen with cook-top for outdoor cooking demonstrations, among other uses.
- Watering Can Theater - an intimate outdoor amphitheater, featuring iconic irrigation components atop a shade canopy.
- Design Demonstration – outdoor exhibit that illustrates the principles of design using mirrors and interpretive elements.
- Landscape Retrofit – compares water-smart landscaping to that of inappropriate landscaping for the desert, examining turf, irrigation and plant material selection.
- Created Wetlands – an overlook rest area contains information about how the aquatic flora species (rushes, sedges and grasses) planted here clean wastewater from the Springs Preserve for non-potable reuse on site for irrigation and toilets. The wetland is also an ideal wildlife habitat.
- Gardens Amphitheater - approximately 250-seat outdoor amphitheater for garden instruction and demonstrations.
- Mulch Exhibit - Display of various organic and inorganic mulches.
- Sun Exposures - miniature houses represent different sun exposures and different microclimates.
- Edible Gardening - Fruit orchard in individual containers, herb garden demonstrating useful plants.
- Rose Garden Trellis – beautiful shaded bench area. Favorite for weddings.
- Cactus Gardens - organized by collection, such as native cacti and cacti from different regions.
- Palm Oasis - representing a dozen different Palm species that grow well in arid climates.
- Landscape Lighting Display – various outdoor lighting options on display.
- Weather Gathering Station – generates real-time weather information for local broadcast station.
- Erosion Control Display - demonstrates water quality and conservation.
- Caliche – demonstrates layers of caliche rock and its relationship to desert soils.
- Hardscape Examples – display explores many options such as brick, stone and treated concrete.
- Turf Options – compares six different types of turf side-by-side, all watered by subsurface drip irrigation.
- Pathways – walkways throughout the Gardens are paved with decomposed granite.