

THE MAGAZINE FOR CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY
CONSTRUCTION LEADERS
TODAY

www.constructionleaderstoday.com

Architetra ▶ 8

FROM DESIGN TO CONSTRUCTION

The client-centered approach of this full-service Pennsylvania-based architectural firm keeps customers happy and coming back for more.

40 ◀ Hall & Bartley Architects

DESIGNS WITH EXCELLENT TASTE

Specializing in winery design, Hall & Bartley is making over the California wine country one project at a time.

Lake Flato Architects ▶ 86

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

With a commitment to modern and skillful design, Lake Flato embraces the natural surroundings of each building to craft an environmentally friendly project specific to each client's needs.

108 ◀ International Design Group

BUILDER OF MODERN AMERICAN CASTLES

This Pacific Grove-based company is one of the nation's leaders in custom home design of the most grand proportions.

THE MAGAZINE FOR CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY
CONSTRUCTION LEADERS
TODAY

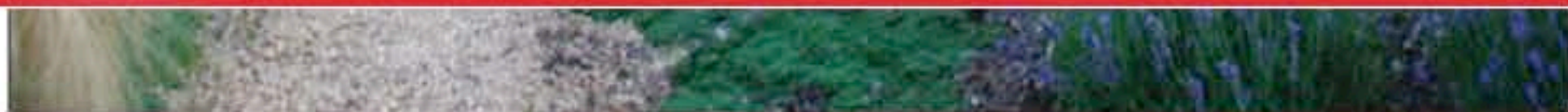
www.constructionleaderstoday.com



Grace Design Associates ▶ 56

AN ALFRESCO OASIS

Margaret Grace of Grace Design Associates combines color, texture and form to create world class gardens that reflect each owner's personal aesthetic.





Graceful & Designs



by Jane Caffrey

In Santa Barbara, Calif., blossoms cling to a trellis in an Italian inspired paradise; fountains trickle in a Zen oasis; bright colors spot a desert palette; and wispy grass contrasts with angular stones with modern aesthetic. These diverse masterpieces, state-of-the-art gardens built by Grace Design Associates, Inc., are distinct in style, color, climate, and design.

Projects range from naturalistic to urban, contemporary to traditional, sublime to whimsical, and each is reflective of owners' personalities and lifestyles. Much more than simple outdoor space, the gardens are carefully assimilated with buildings, the landscape, and the larger community.

"We're working to pull together a very well integrated project," Margaret Grace, Founder and Principal at Grace

Design Associates, said. "Something that distinguishes us is that we work very closely with our clients inside of realizing their dream garden. It doesn't have to do with what style I have at my home; it's all about what they want."

This philosophy of customization produces one-of-a-kind gardens, which are carefully tailored to the owner, architecture, site and environment, and are executed with the values of Old World craftsmanship.

Before settling in California, Grace created her own gardens in Spain, Australia, and New Zealand. An avid traveler, she continues to trot the globe as a perpetual student of the world's gardens today, bringing innovative ideas and a sophisticated design sense to her work. But over two decades ago, the gardener founded her own business in Santa Barbara, one of the nation's

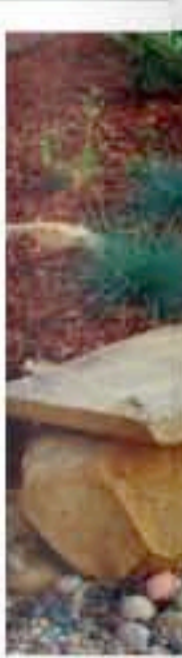
richest horticultural areas.

"It's extraordinary here in Santa Barbara," Grace said. "It's a beautiful place to be, and there is great interest in outdoor living."

Now a licensed landscape designer and landscape contractor, Grace works in a variety of garden styles including modern, naturalistic, formal, and English country. The design firm serves high-end clients, mostly working with residential homes in the \$2 million to \$15 million-price range, but also does some commercial work for California wineries and other businesses. While most of the gardens are located around Santa Barbara, Grace and a team of ten employees also serve clients throughout the western United States, particularly in California, New Mexico, Arizona, Oregon, and Washington.



2





3



4



5

"We work with clients that tend to be really high end and demand the best. We're able to deliver anything," Grace said.

Designing the highest quality gardens has earned Grace Design Associates numerous honors. The company has been featured in several national publications and on television programs such as HGTV's "Landscapers' Challenge" and Discovery Channel's sustainable design show, "Greenovate." The design firm has repeatedly been awarded the Santa Barbara Contractors Association Builder of the Year for Best Landscape and Hardscape, and in 2009, Grace Design Associates was named International Landscape Designer of the Year by the Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD)—the highest honor that can be achieved in the field.

Along with a rich and storied horticultural and architectural history, Santa Barbara has a long-standing

commitment to conservation, and Grace supports this with sustainable design and construction practices. While Grace can also work traditionally, her design methodologies and practices were sustainable before green was in fashion. Green features in Grace gardens include water conservation, rainwater harvesting and distribution, permaculture, drought tolerant planting, fire safe landscape design, and edible landscapes. "We really care about quality, we care about the environment, and we care about the planet," Grace said. The company has completed several high-end sustainable outdoor living spaces.

A wide range of microclimates in southern California also allows for a broad range of extraordinary design opportunities, allowing Grace Design Associates to develop garden retreats that are as diverse as the personalities of the people that own them. "We are really

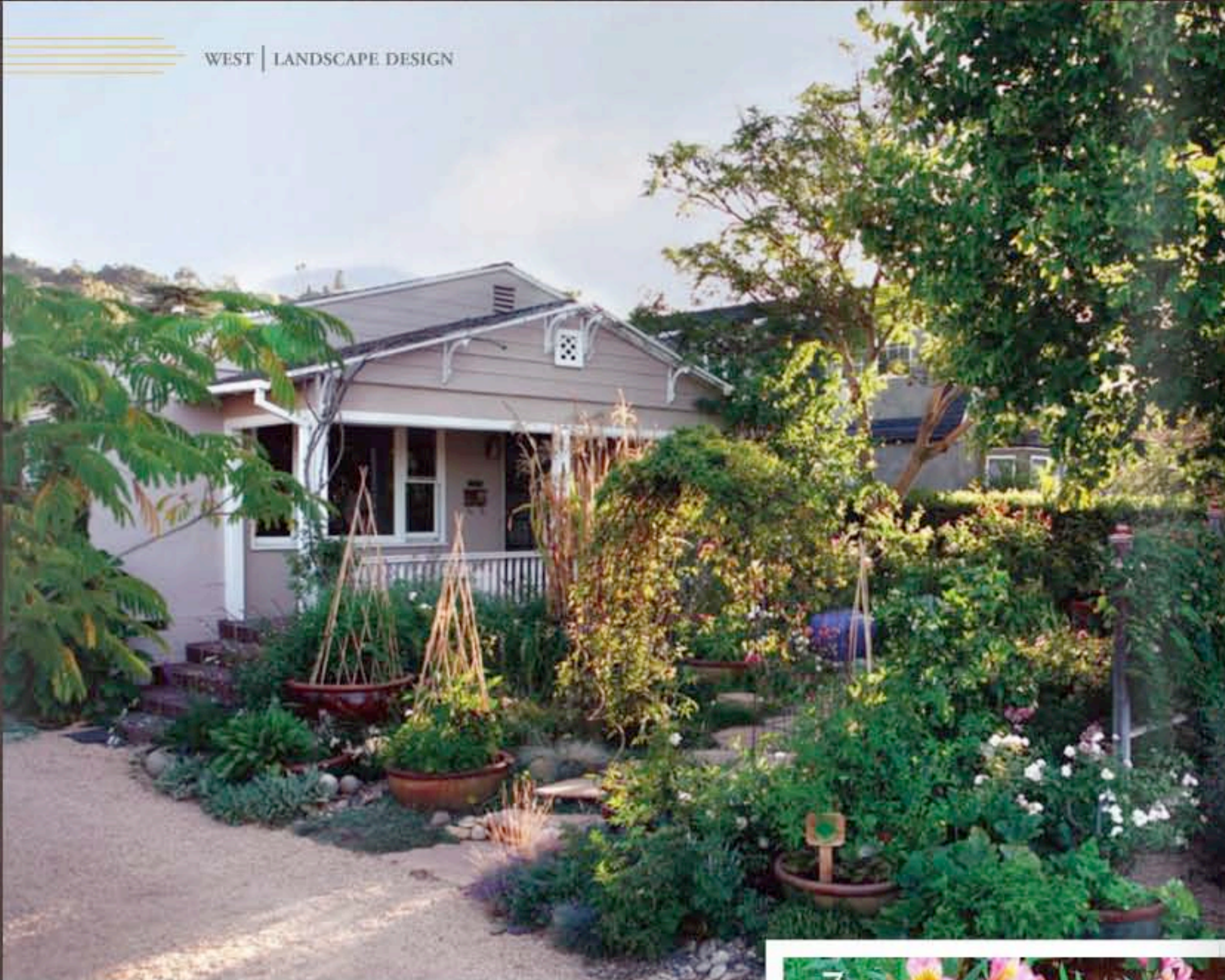
1. El Pueblo Viejo, Calif. This naturalistic landscape surrounds a \$3 million dollar modular home by architect Michelle Kaufman. Imparting drama and beauty, Grace Design Associates has since transformed the property into an ocean of movement and light. Photo by Holly Lepere Photography.

2. El Pueblo Viejo, Calif. Using stone harvested from site, Grace Design built a stone amphitheater seating 20, an outdoor gas fire pit and a hot tub. Photo by Holly Lepere Photography.

3. Santa Barbara, Calif. Stone pier caps were repurposed into the fountain alongside the hard-carved "tinaja" bird bath; stone bench, boulders, cobbles were salvaged from site. Photo by Holly Lepere Photography.

4. Santa Barbara, Calif. Drought-tolerant plants contrast nicely with the varying sizes of river rocks and pebbles, creating a pleasing colorful and textured composition. Photo by Holly Lepere Photography.

5. Santa Barbara, Calif. Arroyo runs under the walkway leading to the walled garden dining area. Photo by Holly Lepere Photography.



working on having the owner be visible, and creating a garden that expresses who they are," Grace said.

One of the firm's landmark projects that received international acclaim is an outdoor space complementing a modern home on Pedregosa Street in Santa Barbara. Grace collaborated with the homeowners to create a naturalistic garden that would be an extension of the home's living space. The owners wanted a place for quiet contemplation, meals, and evenings of musical performances and social gatherings. Grace responded by placing a stone amphitheater and fire pit at the heart of the garden—a space suitable for intimate gatherings, yet also expandable for an audience of up to 40 people.

At the owners' request, the site is also completely sustainable, with low water use and drought tolerant plants, landscape mounding to enhance site

drainage, permeable hardscape, and local landscape materials. The clients, originally from Iowa, also wanted to recall their prairie roots. A variety of grasses were planted to evoke a prairie ambience, as well as to minimize landscape maintenance requirements.

"It was about light, composition, texture, and movement," Grace said. "It is a site that is green, that grows them some food, and reminds them of home. Amazingly, it only requires a mere half hour of maintenance per month!"

Another high profile project completed by Grace Design Associates is a Asian-style garden in the Hope Ranch area of Santa Barbara, adjacent to an Italianate villa with spectacular views of the coastline. In the project of just over \$1 million, Grace married the disparate styles of the Italianate and the Asian-inspired garden. Working with texture and form, she implemented





the repetition of understated plants to serve as backdrop and a unifying element throughout the space. Grace also chose a soft tone of gray for the hardscape so that the garden would appear aged instantly, allowing the clients to host a black-tie event just two months after completion.

In addition, Grace incorporated an impressive array of garden objects that the homeowners had collected from around the world, including a six-foot high Buddha, a 12-inch prayer bell, and a 1,500-pound stone urn. Subspaces balanced the garden, while a classic Japanese style exaggerated perspective and created the illusion of a much larger space.

"It's an extraordinary Asian garden," Grace said. "We wound up with quite a few gardens really; besides the Asian garden, we designed and built a sunken garden, a moon garden, a theatre garden, a whimsical *Alice in Wonderland* garden with a giant chess board, a woodland garden, Mediterranean garden, a vegetable garden, an herb garden and a

vineyard." Grace Design Associates has a strong giveback policy, and anticipates increasingly undertaking commercial projects in upcoming years with more projects in the community, winery, and hospitality sectors. The firm is additionally collaborating with Habitat For Humanity, and Grace dreams of creating a blueprint for developing outdoor sites that can be built time and again to complement the organization's housing structures.

Yet giving back also translates to individual families. Grace Design Associates will continue to design some of the nation's most stunning residential outdoor spaces, and transform homeowners' visions into dream gardens.

"It is rewarding when the space is built, and then you watch the family in the garden," Grace said. "We're able to see how the setting is set for them to live their lives, and we can watch who they are inside that space. It is really a joy to have a garden that really suits them, and see that they love their life there." *CLT*

6. Santa Barbara, Calif. Blended gardens are all the rage. Flowers, fruit trees, vegetables and herbs all live happily together. Using containers adds structure and makes gardening easy and low maintenance. Photo by Holly Lepere Photography.

7. Santa Barbara, Calif. The grouping of hand-hewn water basins attracts wildlife, reflects surrounding plants as well as the sky and moonlight. Photo by Holly Lepere Photography.

8. Santa Barbara, Calif. A screened seating area with a stone coffee table, fountain and roses provides a pleasant front-yard space where family and friends can gather. Photo by Holly Lepere Photography.

