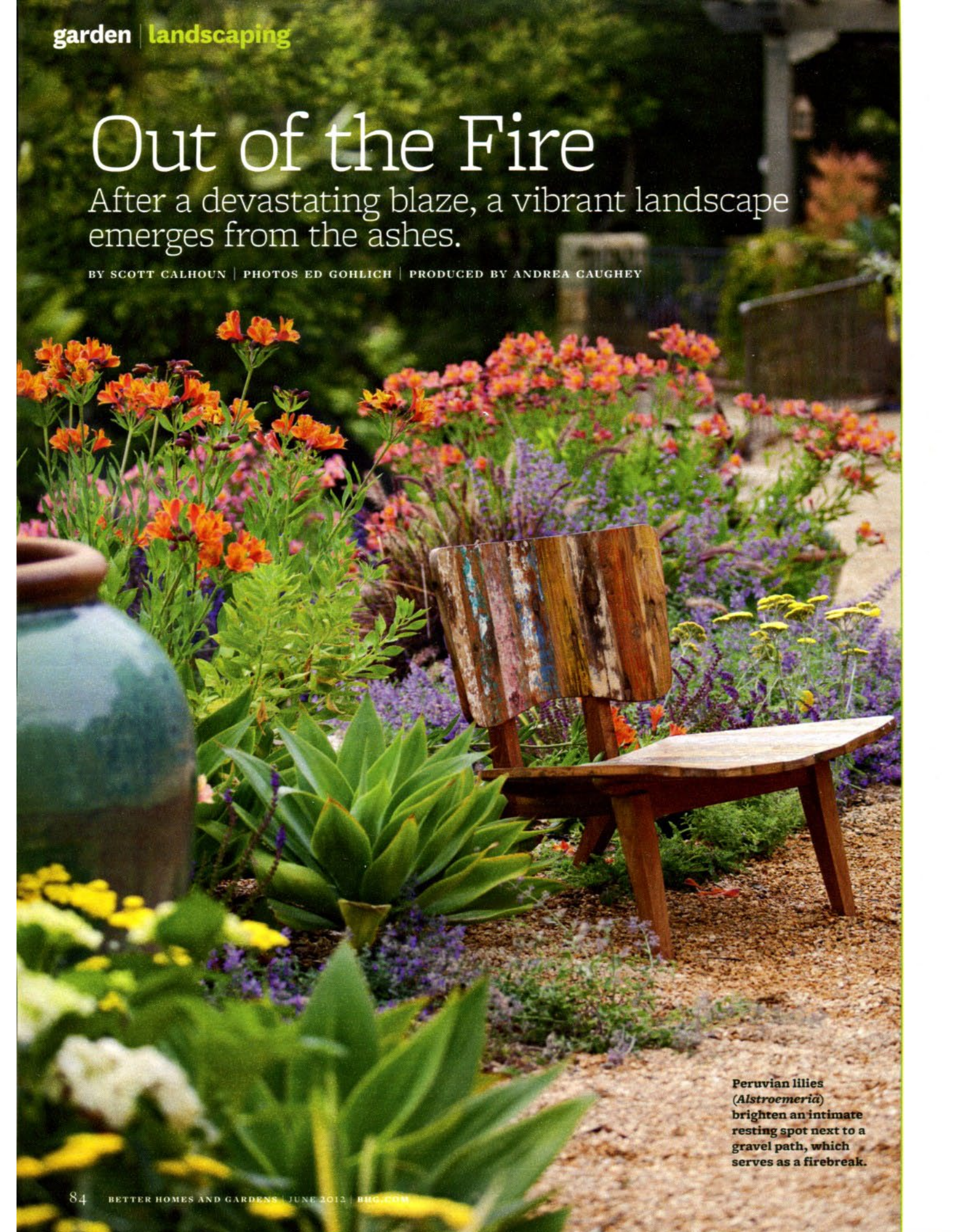


# Out of the Fire

After a devastating blaze, a vibrant landscape emerges from the ashes.

BY SCOTT CALHOUN | PHOTOS ED GOHLICH | PRODUCED BY ANDREA CAUGHEY

A vibrant garden landscape featuring a wooden chair, Peruvian lilies (Alstroemeria), and various colorful flowers. The scene is set on a gravel path, which serves as a firebreak. The garden is filled with a variety of plants, including tall orange and pink flowers, purple flowers, and a large green succulent. A wooden chair with a rustic, weathered backrest is positioned on the gravel path. The background shows a blurred view of a house and more greenery.

Peruvian lilies  
(*Alstroemeria*)  
brighten an intimate  
resting spot next to a  
gravel path, which  
serves as a firebreak.





**T**alk about starting with a blank slate. When designer Margie Grace was hired to renovate a landscape near Santa Barbara, the entire neighborhood had just been blackened by fire. “Luckily, the house was spared, but the surrounding property looked like a moonscape,” Grace says.

Her directive was twofold—conjure a new, lush landscape from the ashes and make sure the property was well-protected from future fires. She achieved both with a design so subtle that the garden looks like it was created solely for style.

Drawing from California guidelines for fire-smart landscapes, Grace created zones around the house. Closest to the home, the “inner circle”—which extends 30 feet from the house—has few flammable trees or shrubs. Rather, fireproof succulents such as *Agave*, *Aloe*, *Crassula*, and *Bulbine* thrive here. An irrigation system keeps borders lush, yielding an oasis amid the parched hills.

Separating the “inner circle” from more naturalistic zones farther from the house, wide gravel paths act as firebreaks and beckon guests to explore a landscape that bears nary a scar from its fiery past.

**Rustic stonework, above, highlights the terrace and pergola. The rocks and naturalistic look of the plantings help the garden blend with the surrounding native habitat.**



## Rising from the ashes

Playing off the homeowners' favorite colors, designer Margie Grace used warm-color plants dotted with contrasting purples. "It looks like an Impressionist painting," she says.

- 1) **ALSTROEMERIA**  
'The Third Harmonic'  
Zones 6-10
- 2) **ALSTROEMERIA**  
'Tall Pink' Zones 6-10
- 3) **PENNISETUM**  
'Eaton Canyon'  
Zones 8-10
- 4) **BUDDLEJA** 'Lochinch'  
Zones 6-10
- 5) **SALVIA** 'Mystic Spires Blue'  
Zones 7-10
- 6) **ALSTROEMERIA**  
'Inca Ice' Zones 6-10
- 7) **LEONOTIS LEONURUS**  
Zones 9-10
- 8) **BULBINE FRUTESCENS**  
Zones 8-10
- 9) **ACHILLEA** 'Moonshine'  
Zones 3-10
- 10) **PENSTEMON**  
'Midnight' Zones 7-10
- 11) **LAMB'S-EAR (STACHYS BYZANTINA)**  
Zones 4-9
- 12) **AGAVE ATTENUATA**  
Zones 9-10





4

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12





Herbs and vegetables, *above*, grow in cattle troughs. The tall containers prevent browsing by rabbits and require less bending by the caretaker. A café table encourages path-side picnicking.

Pathways are wide enough to allow space for large succulent bowls, *right*, which are repeated throughout the garden.



## Stock pots

Livestock troughs serve as excellent planters. Their heavy construction makes them durable, and their large size yields good crops. Here's how to get the most from them:

- 1 Put them in a full-sun location for the best production.
- 2 Place them on slightly sloped ground, with the drain plug at the lower end.
- 3 Remove the plug so excess water will drain out the bottom.
- 4 Fill with potting soil. Even containers as large as these will produce better results if you use a potting mix rather than garden soil.

## Plant these containers

Go to [BHG.com/SucculentPots](http://BHG.com/SucculentPots) to get the recipe for these pots, *below*, and many more featuring succulents.





Large containers on the terrace echo the Spanish hacienda architecture of the house and are filled with succulents such as red pencil tree (*Euphorbia tirucalli* 'Sticks on Fire') and *Aeonium*. ■

For buying information see page 203.

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