

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

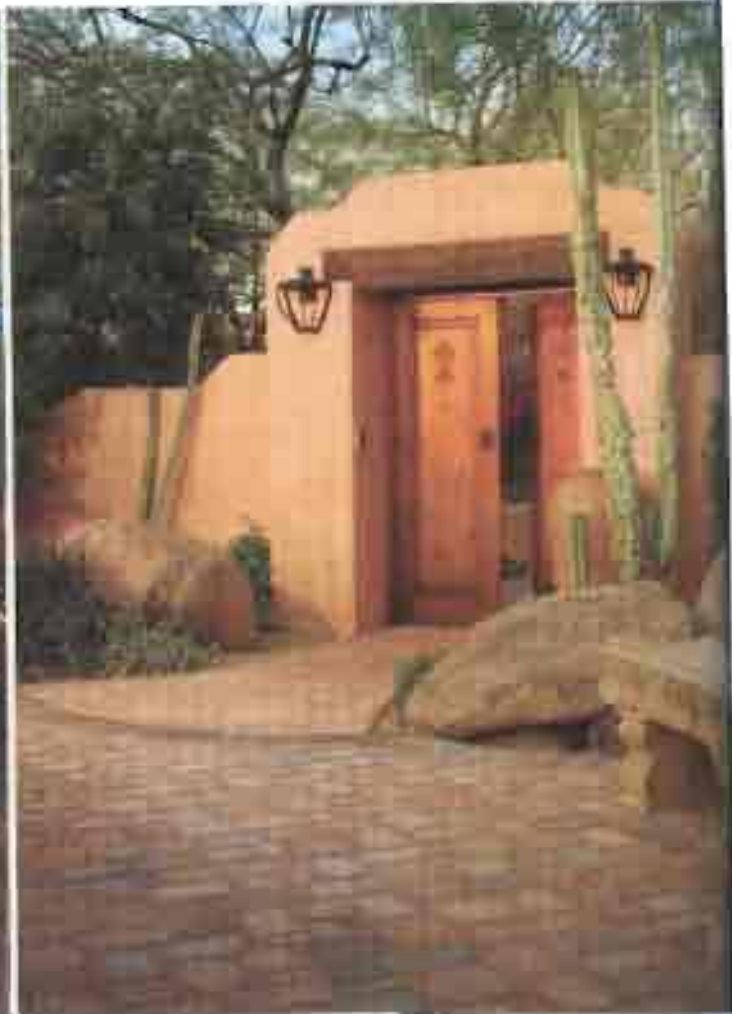
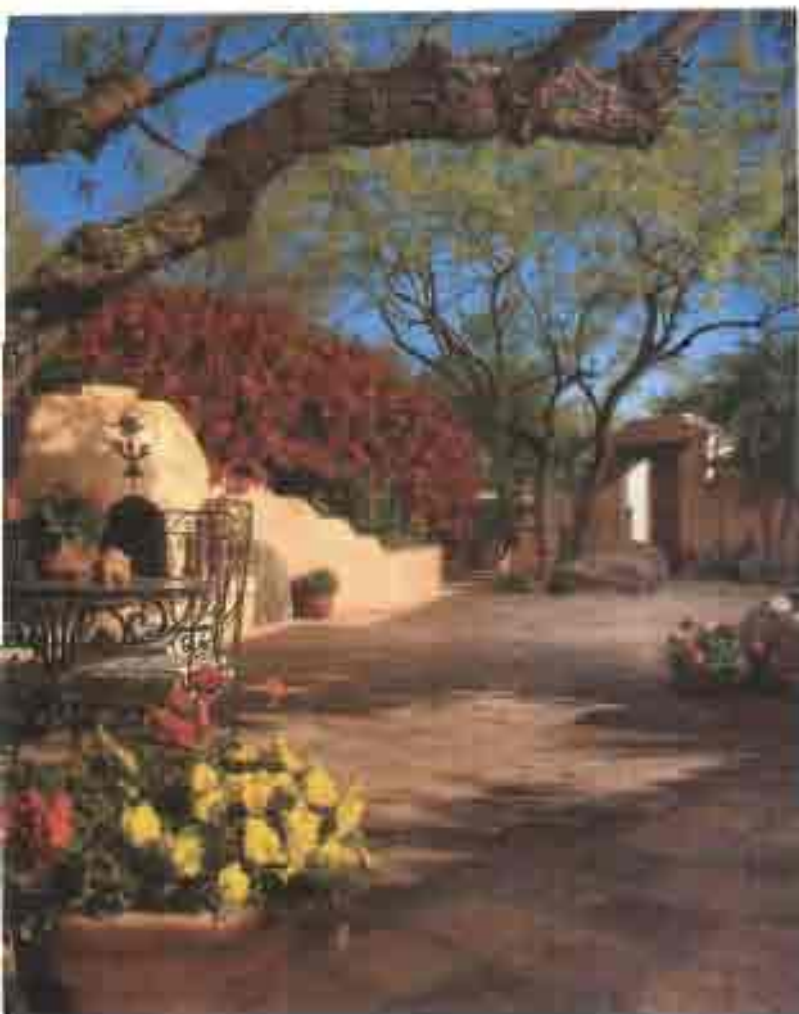
A redesigned landscape makes
room for native plants and
garden-fresh veggies

TEXT BY KIM HILL ■ PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL WOODALL

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This page: A stone statue of St. Francis and a whimsical wall piece add artful touches to a narrow niche planted with vines and flowering annuals. **Opposite:** The broad curved leaves of *Agave attenuata* make the ornamental succulent a stand-out in this Phoenix garden.



“STICK

to what you know” is a saying that aptly describes the approach one couple took to the renovation of their Phoenix property. The homeowners have worked with landscape architect Chad Robert for more than 10 years and most recently hired the Phoenix Home & Garden Master of the Southwest to renovate a Paradise Valley lot that at one time was owned by the wife’s parents. “Chad did the landscape at our other home, and he has worked on this house for my mother and for us,” she explains.

When the pair moved there three years ago, they charged Robert with removing any plant material that was not native to the area. “We wanted the landscape to look natural, and we were only interested in things with low-water usage,” says the homeowner, an avid gardener interested in sustainability. Updates included redefining the entry, creating a front courtyard, adding a vegetable garden, planting trees and installing lighting.

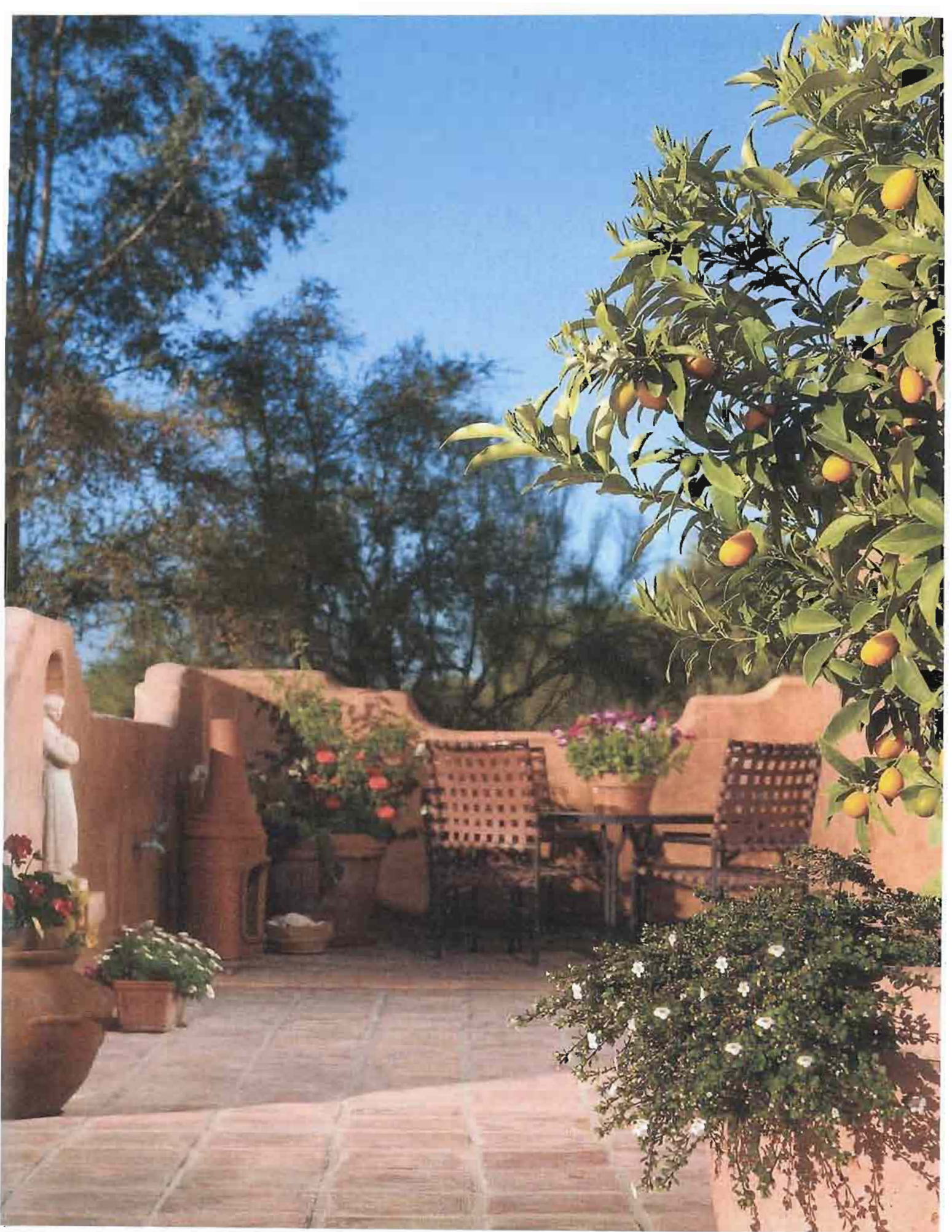
In order to take advantage of stellar views of Camelback Mountain, the residence’s original architect designed the back of the home to face the street. This posed a challenge for Robert. “There was really no sequence of arrival when you drove up the hill and parked in the drive,” he recalls. As a result, first-time visitors often were confused about where to enter. Robert solved the dilemma by creating a defined entry point leading to an intimate front courtyard with a fireplace and cozy seating. A large mesquite tree

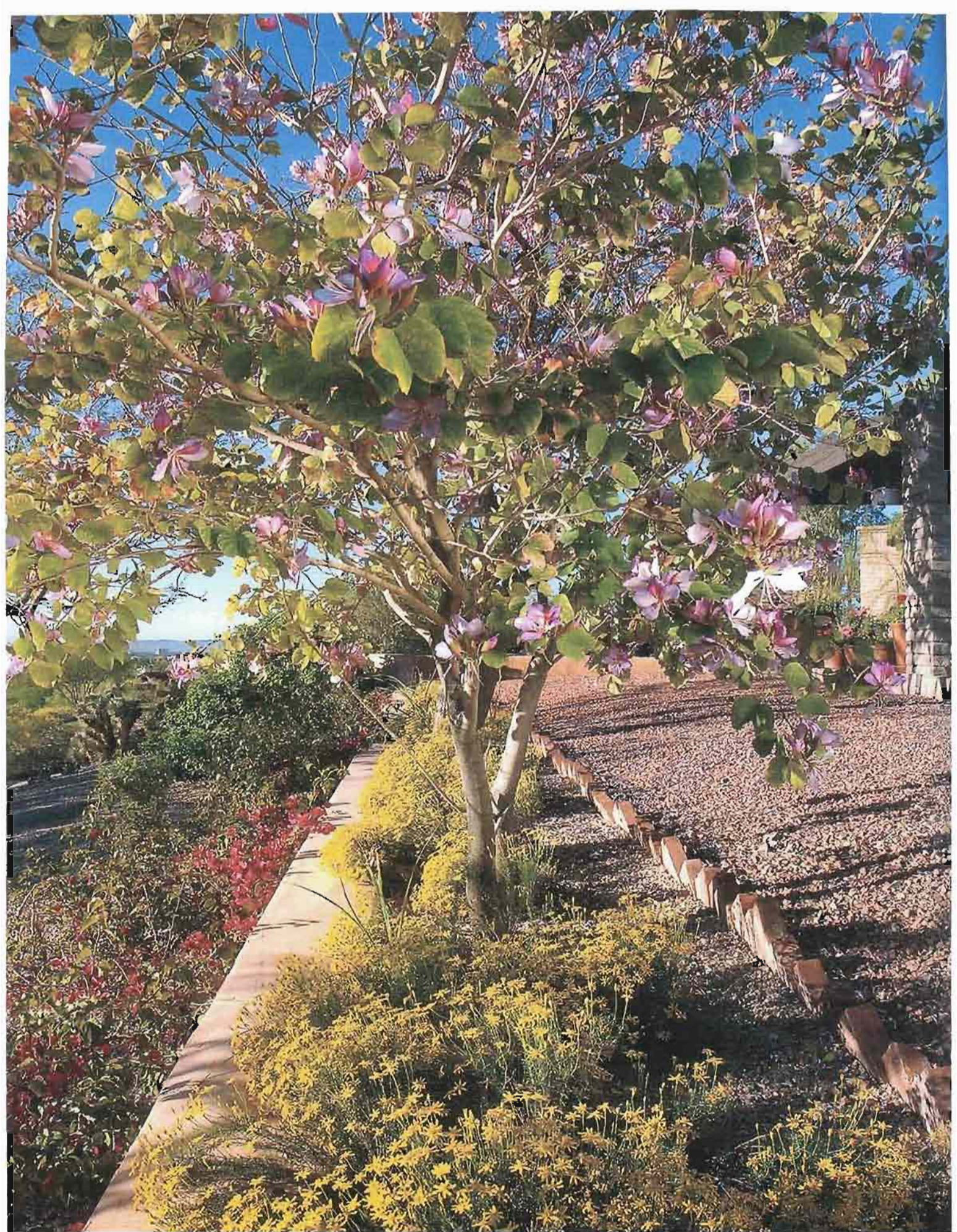
anchors the space, which also features potted totem pole cacti and showy bougainvilleas.

In the backyard, a raised L-shaped vegetable garden extends nearly 50 feet and faces southeast. “That’s the best exposure,” comments the wife, who notes the success of the garden even during the city’s brutally hot summer months. The couple savors the lettuce, parsley, cilantro, tomatoes, bell peppers and artichokes that thrive in the plot of land. They also like to grow wildflowers intermingled with vegetables; along with their beauty, the flowers help keep undesirable insects away from the crops.

The garden’s supply of edibles, its stunning vistas, an inviting pool, and areas for alfresco dining add up to a recipe for memorable gatherings with family and friends. And that is just what the two generations of homeowners had in mind. **LI**

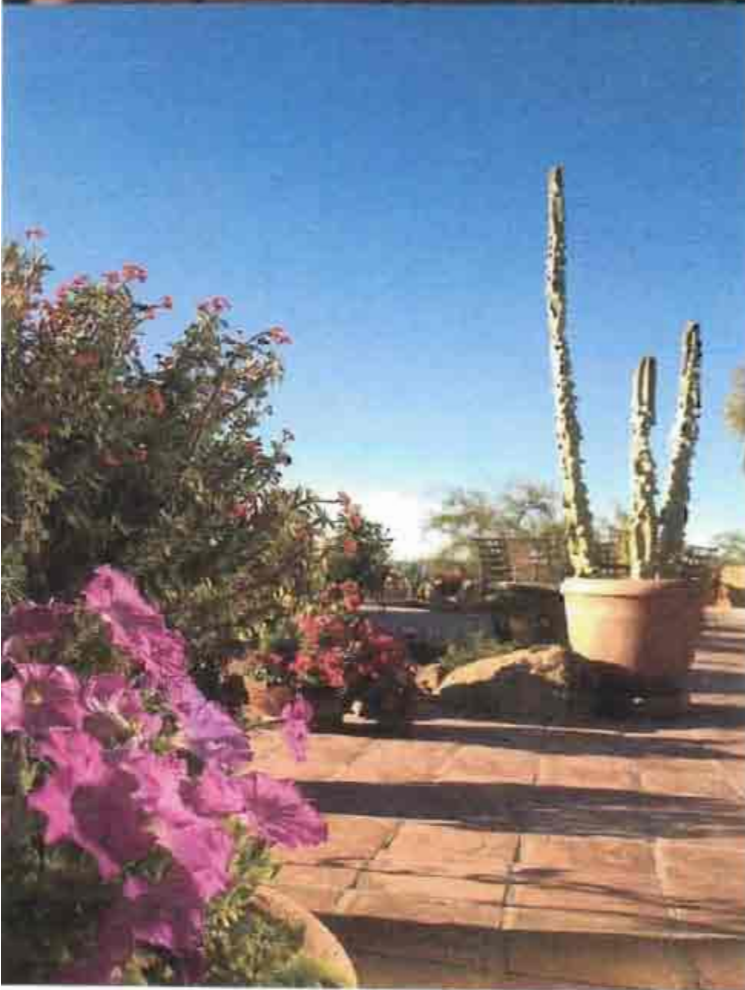
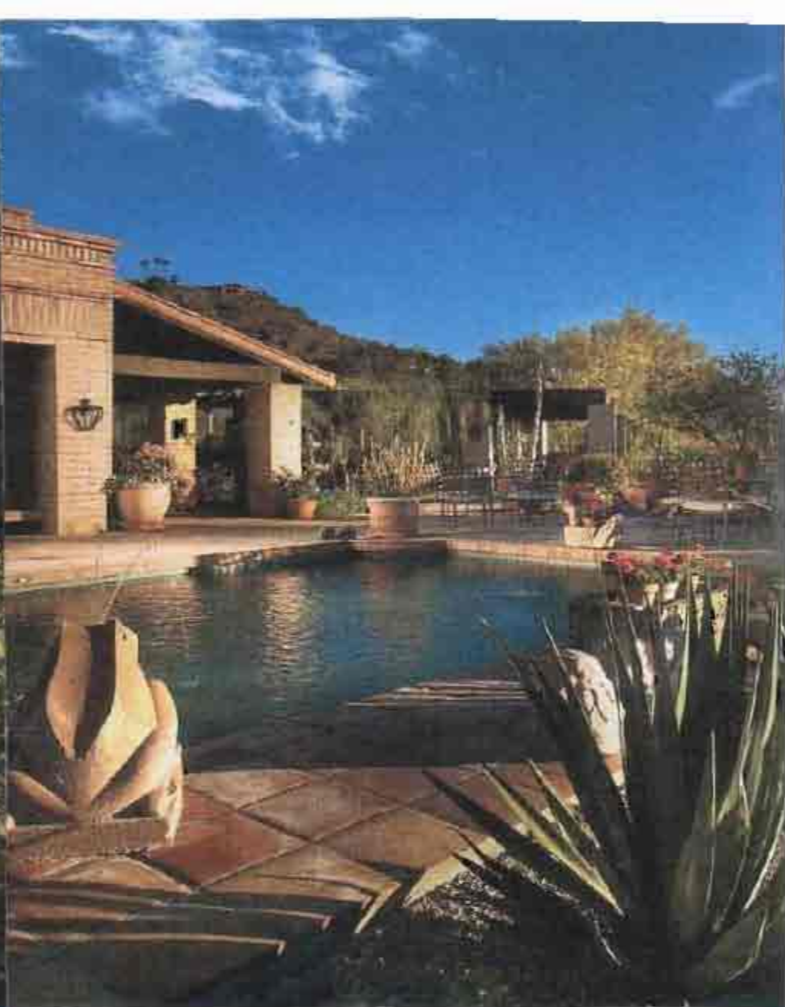
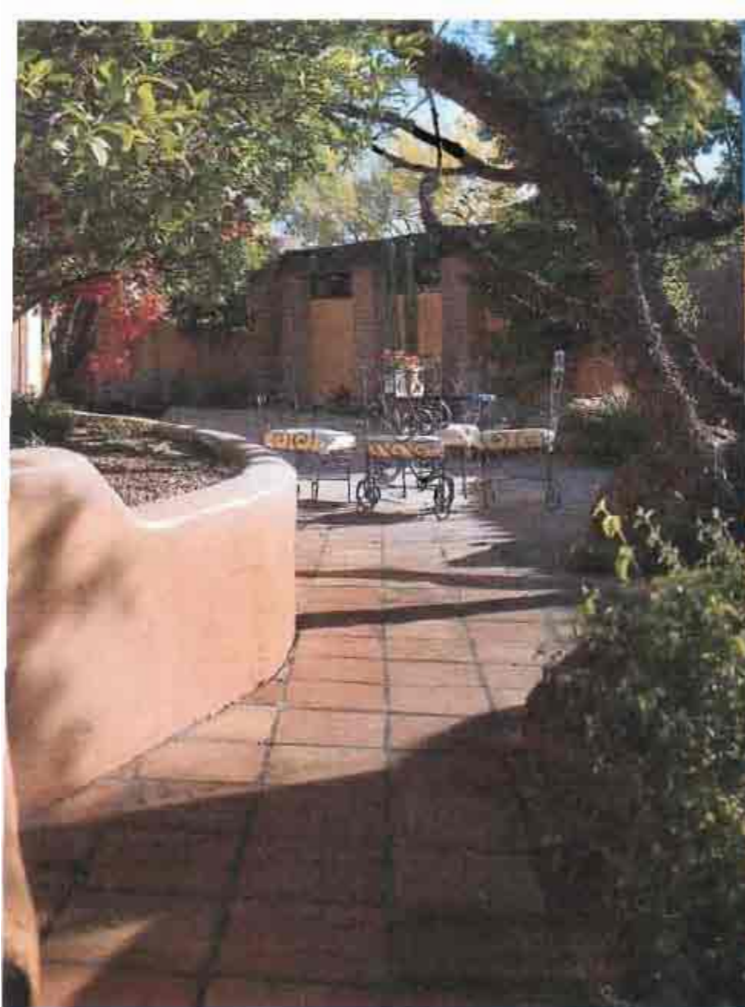
Above left: The front courtyard, which is nestled into a hillside, includes a newly constructed fireplace brightened by a wall of bougainvilleas. Ideal for simple alfresco meals, the patio furnishings were acquired in Mexico. **Above right:** Southwestern-style wooden doors flanked by totem cacti provide a defined entry point to the home and front courtyard. **Opposite:** Full of charm, this dining alcove invites respite. A dwarf citrus tree bears fruit in an oversized pot. Flooring is Saltillo tile.





verbena and a Mediterranean fan palm draw attention to Camelback Mountain in the background. The hillside setting has stunning views from several vantage points. **Opposite:** In the backyard, a blooming orchid tree enlivens a narrow planting bed filled with yellow-flowering damianita.





Above left: When landscaping hillside lots it is critical to incorporate nutrient-rich soil for plants to thrive, notes landscape architect Chad Robert. "We leveled this courtyard area and imported enough dirt to plant several trees," he says. Serpentine walls create movement and act as retaining barriers. **Above right:** Potted annuals and statuary add visual interest to the front-yard pool area. **Bottom left:** Although the homeowners are committed to using native plants, they also enjoy bursts of color from such flowers as petunias. The couple's sensitivity to the surrounding desert can be seen in many of the plants displayed around the property, including potted totem pole cacti. **Opposite:** The homeowners grow vegetables in this L-shaped space with a southeastern exposure. The raised garden's bounty includes flowers as well as produce. Decorative trellises line the wall.

See Sources.

