



# Two Faces of Eden

This California landscape presents a front garden of old-world formality to the neighborhood. Behind garden walls, the family enjoys relaxed privacy.

BY WENDY LUBOVICH PHOTOS JAMES CARRIER PRODUCED BY CARLA BREER HOWARD

Neighbors of Karen and Jeff Detwiler are treated to a parklike vista every day. The slender front yard of the couple's home has been turned into a little lavender field—a fragrant and stately garden designed for all to enjoy.

“I have people walk by all the time and thank me for giving them the garden,” Karen says. “My favorite time of the year is that first day in spring when I’m ready to go again, and everyone congregates here to talk about gardening.”



**STRAIGHT AND NARROW** Potted citrus trees line the front garden path. French lavender planted underneath sweetens the mix. Above, Karen chats with a passing neighbor as she gardens.

**A PLACE TO UNWIND** Jeff built the trestle table where friends and family savor meals under the pergola.

*“The pergola feels like it’s an extension of the house.”*

KAREN DETWILER



**NAME THAT STRUCTURE**

What’s the difference between a pergola and an arbor? Many people use the terms interchangeably, but there are subtle distinctions.

**ARBOR** *This is a decorative structure over a short passageway or entry into a garden. It can signal entry into the landscape and may provide seating for one or two people. Traditionally, arbors are clothed with vines for shade.*

**PERGOLA** *Usually bigger than an arbor, a pergola may be attached to a building or freestanding. Sheltering a garden walk or terrace, it often provides a passageway between buildings or spaces and can seat a number of people. Vines may be trained on the overhead beams.*

The Detwilers decided to forgo front-yard privacy for their corner lot in the San Francisco Bay area, choosing instead to create a classic Mediterranean garden in full view of passersby. They planted rows of boxwood and lavender and then dotted the beds with pairs of lime, orange, and lemon trees in pots.

Jeff has always admired the discipline of European gardens, and this small symmetrical field of

lavender fills the bill. Karen cuts the fragrant flower spikes in June for drying. There’s another big harvest in fall when the plants are sheared into geometric mounds for the winter. “That’s the day we give away armloads of lavender,” Karen says.

While the formality of the front yard suits Jeff’s personality, Karen’s favorite part of the landscape is the backyard, an informal and flowery garden that is hidden from the street.



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## BETTER BY DESIGN TWO FACES OF EDEN



### OPEN-AIR AMBIENCE

The Detwilers' pergola offers shade and shelter. "It's considerably cooler under there," Karen says. Decomposed granite makes a satisfying crunch underfoot.

"The landscape designer asked me what colors I liked, and I said yes to all of them. We both just laughed," Karen recalls. "The garden has many different colors, and I like it that way."

The backyard centerpiece is a pergola, which creates an outdoor living room of sorts, inspired by the old-world architecture of the house. Tall columns support sturdy crossbeams, which are smothered in clematis, trumpet vine, and grapes. Jeff built the long trestle table to fit the space.

"We entertain out there from early spring until late fall," Karen says. The Detwilers replaced a swimming pool with a small green lawn, and Karen added a cutting garden where she can change the plants from year to year.