

I look to the future because that's where I'm going to spend the rest of my life.

- George Burns

PALAZZO TOUR... SARAH McCLEAN



In October, we had the pleasure of visiting The Palazzo and The Venetian Hotel, Resort & Casino for a private tour. We received a behind the scenes tour from the VP of Floral & Horticulture, Audra Danzak. It was a great way to spend a Friday morning. We learned there is much more landscaping on the resort than visible at first. Our tour began in one of the lobbies of the Palazzo. Here we learned how the huge vines for the holiday display were engineered to hang from the ceiling, the processes and procedures involved to haul and mount such large pieces and the difficulties that were presented to get them into their final places. Next we visited the floral department where the staff was preparing for a large event. There were tons of flowers and the smell was intoxicating. It was great to see the miniature city of employees existing out of sight of the general public. We discussed the challenges of maintaining living plants inside a resort of that size. It takes a lot of time to maintain all of those plants. Then we were taken to the beautiful pool deck. The layout was discussed as well as the challenges with irrigation, plant palette and our wonderful Las Vegas sunshine on a roof deck level. The pool area was made to feel truly like an oasis in the desert. We also visited the pool deck of The Venetian. It was interesting to see the difference in

theme in the properties. Ms. Danzak gave us loads of helpful information to incorporate in our future designs. We want to thank her for taking time out of her busy schedule to show us around. She also gave us a sneak preview description of their upcoming winter holiday display. Trust us, you don't want to miss it!

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

To help you plan your holiday family outings we have compiled an almost comprehensive list of events going on around the Las Vegas Valley during the Holiday Season.

- * Ethel M's will be having their 16th Annual Cactus Lighting Event on 11/17 from 5-8pm. Bring in a candy wrapper and receive a ticket to the party. They will have some special guest performers such as George Wallace and Zowie Bowie. If you can't make it to the lighting the garden will be open daily until 10pm through 1/1/2010 except on Christmas Day.
- * Many of you know that we visit the cactus garden every year to check out the lights and sample some chocolates. This year is no different. We will be going on 12/17 at 5:30pm. And as always, everyone's invited!
- * The District at Green Valley Ranch will have a Christmas Tree Lighting with Santa on 11/27 at 5pm and a Menorah Lighting on 12/12 at 6:30pm.
- * It will snow nightly at 7pm in Town Square beginning 11/13 through 12/23 with additional snow showers at 8pm Friday-Sunday.
- * Sunset Park will be holding its Annual Gift of Lights opening nightly at 5pm beginning 11/13 through 1/3/2010.
- * 2009 Magical Forest benefiting Opportunity Village will begin 11/21 through 1/2/2010 5:30pm – 9pm Monday through Friday. On Saturday it closes at 10pm.
- * While most of the events listed above are free, some have a fee. Be sure to be prepared! *
- * **Santa Sightings: Ethel M's 11/18-12/20 5pm-8pm Friday through Sunday and Town Square 11/13-12/24 10am – 9pm.**



FAVORITE FLORA:

OPUNTIA FICUS-INDICA - PRICKLY PEAR, INDIAN FIG



Opuntia ficus-indica (Prickly Pear) is a plant seen frequently around the Las Vegas Valley both in landscapes and in the produce section at the supermarket. This unique succulent is used often as a space definer or barrier and can be used as a container plant. The yellow to orange flowers arrive in late spring and early summer and make way for the edible fruits.

Like most succulents, the Prickly Pear is slow growing and on favored sites can reach heights of 15 feet and widths up to 10 feet! Watering should occur every month or two during the warm season and very rarely during the winter. Full to reflected sun is best. While it is almost maintenance free, this cactus may

need occasional shaping for control. Care must be taken when pruning as the discarded pads will root where they fall.

The edible parts of the plant include the fruit which can be carefully peeled and eaten raw or used in place of other fruits in anything from pies to jams. The pads or nopales also must be peeled to ensure they are free from their protective spines. These can then be diced up and added to fresh salsa, scrambled eggs, or brushed with oil and grilled. Please be aware that it is best to purchase these from your local market rather than trying to harvest them yourself. For recipes using the fruit or the nopales search the internet.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



GARDISKY SECLUSION
YOSEMITE, CA
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