



SLAM

DESIGNING THE SOUTHWEST
SOUTHWICK LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL MEMO
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It is the relatedness of all things that creates value... Invest wisely in beauty. It will serve you all the days of your life. – Frank Lloyd Wright

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AROUND THE WORLD - NICOLETTE FISK



For those of you that have been following our newsletter, last September we promised to take you to China. Here we are to fulfill our promises. We are in Qinhuangdad City, China. Red Ribbon Park-Tanghe River Park is an iconic landscape that encompasses 50 acres of embankment along the Tanghe River. It's most recognizable element is the artistic meandering fibersteel red ribbon that provides seating and lighting throughout the park. Shade structures were added over seating areas to provide places to rest and enjoy the view. Four perennial gardens were planted to add interest to the surrounding green vegetation.

Not only does this park scream for attention, its atypical design is environmentally friendly. Red Ribbon Park was created to preserve undeveloped river banks as well as aid in flood control. This natural river course design is ecologically sensitive and provides an alternate approach for flood control in China. China's typical flood control solutions are similar to what we have in Las Vegas, concrete lined channels designed to get the water out as quickly as possible. This park focused on revitalizing dilapidated and undeveloped banks of the river for open space. The symbiotic relationships of the artistic ribbon element and environmental consciousness have created new meaning to contemporary landscape architecture worldwide.

NEVADA STATE COLLEGE LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING

Located on Foothills Road in Henderson, the landscape at the Nevada State College Liberal Arts and Science Building was designed to be a natural looking desert landscape. It needed to enhance the architecture of the building, imitate nearby natural land and be easily maintained. Desert appropriate plant materials, such as Palo Verde trees and Agaves along with other native plants and cacti were used throughout the site. A mix of rock sizes were combined to help mimic the neighboring desert land. A more modern planting design utilizing straight rows of plants in conflict with the existing rock and plant selection theme was used at the building entry. This further accentuates the building and provides a pronounced welcome to visitors.



FAVORITE FLORA: LARREA TRIDENTATA - CREOSOTE BUSH



If you've ever been in the desert when it rains you've experienced the distinctive fragrance of the Creosote Bush (*Larrea tridentata*). Chemicals in the leaves of are released in the higher humidity that accompanies rain. This long living, evergreen shrub is a common native shrub in the Las Vegas desert, as well as Arizona, Texas, southern Utah, southeastern California and northern Mexico. It averages 6' high and 8' wide but can reach 10' in height and width under favorable conditions. It thrives in full sun with little water and can handle temperatures as low as 5 degrees Fahrenheit. Small yellow flowers appear all year long although they are most plentiful in the Spring.

Larrea tridentata is most often used in revegetated or naturalistic desert landscapes. Plants can be grouped together for screening or placed alone to display the natural form. When the plant is between 30 and 90 years old, the old branches will die off while the crown of the plant splits in two. The old crown dies and the new one continues. A particular Creosote plant in Lucerne Valley, CA has been carbon dated to be 11,700 years old!

Next month's plant will help add a little color to your desert landscape...

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



DESERT CHROMA
PALM DESERT, CA
JOE VICKERS