

Geography & History of the Land

The ridgetop setting is actually an isolated spine of lava flow from the ancient collapsed volcano now known as Spencer's Butte. The aquifer is connected to and dependent upon the snowpack of the Cascades.

Cortesia is part of the old McBeth homestead, the barn of which once stood where the house now sits. The rectangular 3-acre meadow surrounded by towering firs (where the meadow garden sits) is over 100 years old, most of the time lying abandoned. Almost all of the fir forests of Eugene's south hills were planted by settlers in the early 1800's, and logged at least twice. Cortesia's woods appear to have been logged only once followed by selective cutting. This is why the forest is so mature.

The McDowells came to Cortesia in 1986 and have lived in Eugene 27 years. The house was built in 1971, the round yurts in 1988 and 1992.

Natural Gardening

The challenge of gardening is to have a respectful relationship between human and nature — to create a true sense of sanctuary for all. The gardens at Cortesia were entirely created by hand in several stages, beginning with the vegetable/flower garden and gradually incorporating numerous special “rooms” for solitude and visiting with guests. Diverse vegetation fosters natural pest control. A strong “edge effect” allows the gardens to flow into the wildness of the woods. A commitment is made to creatively use wood and rock from the land for fencing, trellises, and structures. The gardens support a lot of bird life and beneficial insects. The organically grown flowers/herbs are used for Cortesia Flower Essences. The gardens also incorporate many benches and art.

The Gift of Sanctuary

Please visit our gift table. Here you will find information about the **Cortesia Sanctuary Project**, books by the McDowells (*The Sanctuary Garden*, *Garden Guides*, *Home Composting Made Easy*, *Gardening for Optimal Nutrition*), beautiful original sanctuary music by Forrest McDowell & Confluence (*Sanctuary*, *Amber Moon*), **Cortesia Flower Essences** by Tricia Clark-McDowell, prayer flags, and more!

Contact Information

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Cortesia Sanctuary

**Self-Guided
Map Inside**

Cortesia, a 900-year old French word, means a deep noble courtesy and reverence for the sacredness of life

Cortesia Sanctuary is a private 22-acre nature sanctuary nestled among towering 100-year old firs, and intimate meadows atop a dramatic ridgeline in the south hills of Eugene, Oregon, a thousand feet above the city. Owned and stewarded by Dr. C. Forrest McDowell & Tricia Clark-McDowell, Cortesia has deep woods, panoramic vistas, and two acres of woodland and open-meadow organic gardens.

The gardens at Cortesia have been featured in major and regional gardening magazines, and are noted for their unique natural design. The McDowells' best-selling book, *The Sanctuary Garden* (Fireside Books, 1998), explores the personal, philosophical, spiritual, and practical aspects of creating a natural garden that emits peace and harmony. This new form of garden design, *The Sanctuary Garden*, exemplifies the soulful and reverent relationship possible with nature.

Cortesia represents the McDowells' commitment to living in bright livelihood and balance, meeting familial needs at the crossroads of business and philanthropic service. The Center includes the internationally nonprofit Cortesia Sanctuary Project (which assists people to create sanctuary in their life), Cortesia Flower Essences, and Cortesia Press. Meditation and creative service allow such vocations as gardening, garden design, writing, public speaking, music performance/composition, and healing to interweave with daily life.

Inside this guide you will find a map of the nearby woods and gardens. It also includes interactive features to share your spirit.

Blessings and peace in your life. Forrest, Tricia, & Sonji McDowell