

to evoke a psychological state of being. A setting of white flowers, for example, can evoke feelings of gentleness, tenderness, hope & healing (consider these as part of a "moon garden" that you visit at night!). Red flowers may evoke a sense of inner strength & renewed vitality. Additionally, create & enjoy your sanctuary with an eye toward lighting, mixing filtered sunlight, shade, & backlighting from the sun through leaves, with normal bright sunlight.

5. Create One or More Sitting Areas: Although you may find pleasurable activity in your sanctuary setting (especially if it is a garden), you will also want to visit it for pure rest, contemplation, & quiet



observation. Benches, chairs, logs, swings, even a mossy area — these are a must, especially if they are placed near flowers, a water feature, beneath a tree, on a rise, or in view of a bird feeder.

6. Use Natural Fencing & Trellises: A fence may be necessary for protection, privacy, or safety, but how about creatively designing one with natural materials? A woven fence constructed from flexible branches & twigs such as willow or wild hazelnut will really be admired! Native shrubs & other vegetation can also do the job, and they can even effectively hide or screen out any boarded, cinder block, or wire fence that must be used. Similarly, be creative in constructing or purchasing trellises. These important features deserve to be well-made & artistic beyond their function.

7. Incorporate Garden Art: Art is an honoring gesture, a gift of celebration between human & nature. Be it playful, sacred, thought-provoking, or sentimental, garden art expands on & amplifies the mood of your setting. It can include such objects as statues, benches, decorative tiles & stepping stones, sculpture, ceramic planters & plates, arches, trellises, windchimes, birdhouses, birdbaths, miscellaneous objects from second-hand stores, and found objects in nature such as driftwood, rocks, shells, gnarled wood, etc. Be creative &

imaginative, and don't be afraid to move your art pieces around as often as you like. Similarly, don't worry what others think. Let your sanctuary art uniquely express who *you* are!

8. Create an "Earth Altar": Honor your connection to nature and life. This may be easily & effectively done by grouping simple objects such as a few fallen leaves, a picked flower, a twig, pebbles, even an abandoned bird's nest (not to overlook special or sacred objects from nature) in a particular spot on the ground, if not on a stump, stone slab, or a small table. Careful placement of your Earth Altar among certain plants or flowers can further enhance its effect. Walk or sit near it often. Encourage young children, family members, friends & visitors to contribute to it. Above all, let it come to symbolize your devotion to peace, your reverence for nature, or any other noble feeling.

9. Honor a "Code of Conduct": The symbolic nature of a sanctuary implies that a certain range of behaviors are appropriate while others are not. First, others should respect yours or another person's time spent in a sanctuary setting. It should symbolize sacred time & sacred space free, as much as possible, from worries or outside obligations. Additionally, limits should be considered for such behaviors as the use of abusive language (including vulgarity, arguing, fighting, or yelling out of anger or rage), willful violence with intent to harm or destroy other life out of anger or rage or out of wanton pleasure or insensitivity, the use of weapons, the use of alcohol, drugs, & cigarettes, or the use of chemicals & poisons. Some people also believe their sanctuary setting should have a degree of cleanliness, and is an inappropriate place for loud radios or playing outdoor games, sports,

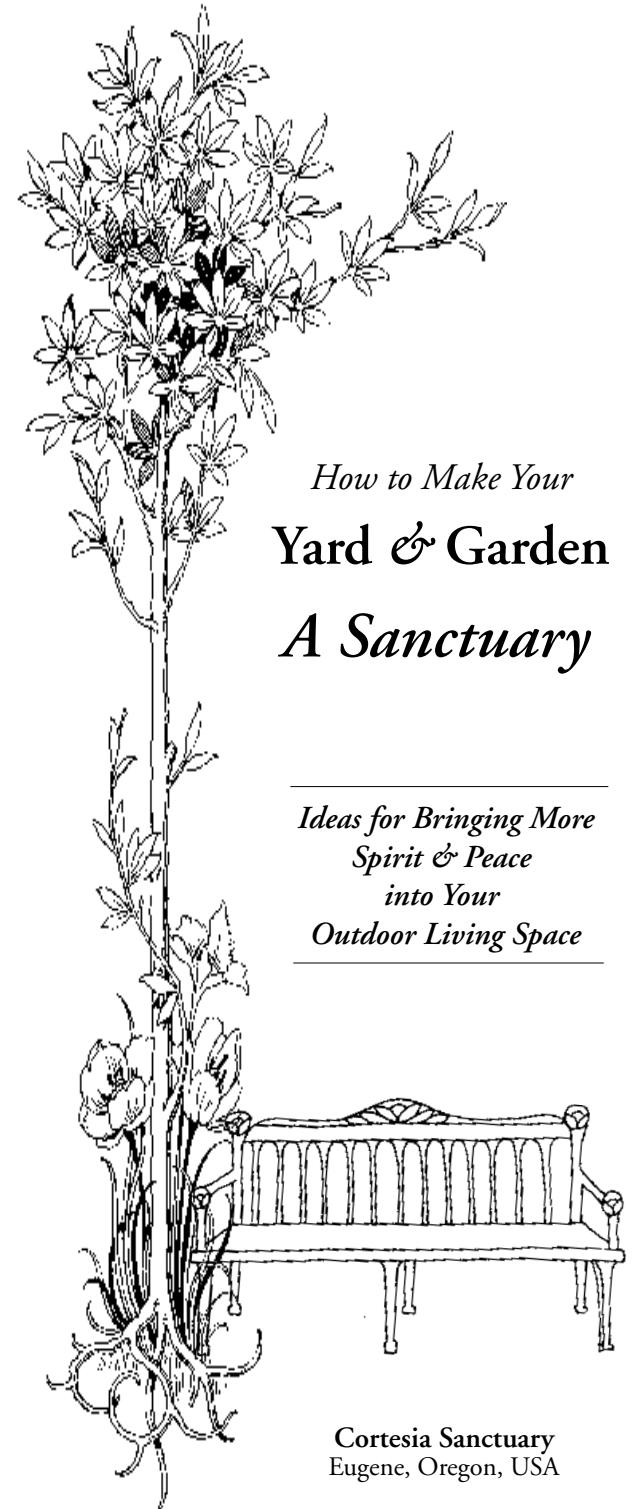
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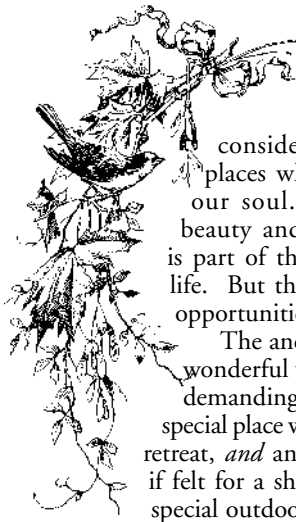
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How to Make Your Yard & Garden A Sanctuary

*Ideas for Bringing More
Spirit & Peace
into Your
Outdoor Living Space*

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Eugene, Oregon, USA



Just as we need to do those things that enhance and maintain our bodily & mental health, we need to consider those activities & special places which replenish and refreshen our soul. The soul is attracted to beauty and artistry in the world; this is part of the inherent need to celebrate life. But the soul also desires and needs opportunities for reflection and solace.

The ancient concept of *sanctuary* is a wonderful way to find balance in today's demanding world. Sanctuary can be a special place within the world, like a wayside retreat, *and* an inner feeling of peace, even if felt for a short while. When we enter a special outdoor setting, we allow our body/mind/soul to experience a type of harmony with itself and with the natural world. Time & obligations seem to fall away, often replaced by awe & wonder, curiosity, reverie, quiet observation, even prayer. This is the power inherent within certain forests, mountain settings, parks, botanical gardens, even temples, shrines, and other sacred geographical sites. Each elicits our attention in a special way.

It is entirely possible to see your yard and/or garden, even if just a small portion, as a type of *nature sanctuary* as well. With reverent thought & devotion, you can create a setting that gives you respite from the world, refreshes your spirit, and demonstrates your desire to honor nature in earth-friendly ways. You can be extravagant about your endeavor or quite humble. Any place in your yard, garden, balcony, or patio setting will do if you enjoy spending time there and can aesthetically enhance it to meet your needs for beauty, quiet, & communion with nature. This brochure suggests numerous ways to bring more soulfulness into your yard & garden. We hope it inspires you to see that bit of nature just outside

Location & Boundaries

What gives a sanctuary power is some sense of enclosure. This is important, for a boundary heightens the anticipation of entering. It makes the experience special. It is certainly okay to consider a whole fenced in yard or garden a nature sanctuary. But oftentimes there may be a special area that seems just right. Perhaps there's a water feature, surrounding shrubs, gazebo, a particular tree, and of course, a nice bench. Maybe it's particularly grassy, even woody, or maybe it's an area with prized flowers such as roses. Such settings are perfect "rooms" in your yard worthy of the

feeling of sanctuary.

Additionally, if yard space is tight don't rule out a special place on your patio or balcony. Uniquely arranged, such settings may be just the right place to find peace & quiet. Lastly, consider placing a sign near the entrance of your sanctuary designating it as a nature sanctuary. You will be amazed at how a simple sign can

Key Qualities of Your Sanctuary

Generally speaking, there are usually one or more striking features (natural or human created) that may draw you or a visitor into a special setting. A good exercise is to close your eyes and visualize your yard/garden sanctuary setting. The following key qualities are highly desirable:

- **Aesthetic Attraction** — To co-create a sanctuary with nature is a wonderful experience! Imagine you are privileged to be an artist at nature's canvas. Try, therefore, to set a tone, evoke a feeling, enhance nature's drama & character. Create an entrance, if possible, that is inviting. The types of vegetation are important, as is their placement and color. Equally as important are the uses of wood, rocks, water, trellises, and the like. These, including sitting benches, windchimes, birdbaths, and garden art are worthy artistic additions that give your outdoor sanctuary appealing ambience.

- **Soul Attraction** — Perhaps the most magnetic quality of a sanctuary is how it affects one's spirit. This can be attributed to the way it has been created so as to *honor & celebrate* life. A sanctuary naturally evokes unspoken "codes of conduct" — behaviors by visitors in keeping with the peacefulness and beauty of the setting. Try, therefore, to steward the three elements of earth, air & water. Enrich & plant the soil organically. Celebrate the wind with tall wispy grasses & windchimes. Honor water with good conservation practices and water features. Appealing to the soul's need for beauty, tender a variety of flowering vegetation, and integrate garden art & crafts, the more naturally made the better! Lastly, give that contemplative part of yourself a special sitting area, bench, or chair. Set these in seclusion or near a special nature altar constructed especially for honoring nature.

- **Habitat Attraction** — As much as possible welcome wildlife into your sanctuary setting. Most people who take the step to create their yard or garden as a nature sanctuary quickly discover a whole new relationship with the many creatures who come and go. You, too, can learn to provide, through vegetation and other means,

the type of food, water, shelter, and nesting space for a wide diversity of insects and larger animals. Laying fear aside for curiosity, you can learn that it is this very

9 Special Ways to Enhance Your Outdoor Sanctuary

1. **An Inviting Entrance:** Create a special tone that is inviting, one that gives you and any visitor the feeling that the heavy cloak of worldly cares & woes can be left at the sanctuary gate. A formal sign, a simple saying, a vase or pot of flowers, a natural or human art or craft piece are excellent ideas. Perhaps a special gate, arched trellis, a hanging chain of Tibetan bells, or even an overarching tree limb denotes an entrance point. Be creative *and* sincere in marking your sanctuary entrance.

2. **Create Habitat for Wildlife:** Birds, butterflies, beneficial insects, and other small wildlife are key actors in maintaining the overall balance of your garden or yard's ecosystem. Include in your plantings native shrubs & trees, ground covers & grasses, and nectar-rich flowers & herbs. All these can provide not only varieties of nesting sites, shelter, & thermal protection, but also food sources with their seeds, nuts, berries, soft fruits, nectar, & insects. Additionally, provide nesting boxes, feeders, and water sources for birds, bats (which are invaluable for mosquito control!), frogs and other small animals. Even rocks, logs, snags, or a small pile of limbs & twigs are important additions that mimic the diversity seen in natural settings.

3. **Create a Water Feature:** Be it a pond, a meandering watercourse, a bog, or simply a small fountain, water is one of the most important additions to any outdoor sanctuary. Any water feature will attract its share of wildlife for your viewing pleasure. But also consider the soothing quality of the sound of water. It not only salves the soul but it also gives one the sense of being closer to nature. You can also use the sound of cascading water or a fountain to mask traffic & city sounds, if not the noise of neighbors.

4. **Color & Lighting:** Use flowers & colorful vegetation

