

THE ST. REGIS BAL HARBOUR RESORT

Bespoke

MAGAZINE

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Summer Fun

OUTDOOR ESCAPES
AT THE ST. REGIS

Wynwood Art District

AN OPEN-AIR HAVEN OF
ART AND CULTURE

Miami's Secret Gardens

FIND TRANQUILITY
ALONG THE COAST

Swimwear Showcase

EXPLORE THE SEASON'S
TOP TRENDS

Fields of **GREEN**

The coastal garden havens in Miami offer scenic diversity and harmonious tranquility.

BY PETER A. BALASKAS

WHEN ENVISIONING MIAMI, THE MIND ALMOST IMMEDIATELY conjures up images of sandy shores and aquamarine waters. It's a beautiful picture—although incomplete. In addition to its signature coastal vistas, the Miami area is also home to an entirely different kind of landscape. Secret gardens, hidden throughout the region, offer a tranquil place for those who desire natural beauty and simple serenity to calm the soul.

These green spaces, some in the most unexpected places, allow visitors and residents alike to escape from their busy lives as they revel in the delicate splendor of these exquisite gardens. From the koi ponds at Bal Harbour Shops to the renowned Kampong just a short drive from Miami Beach, explore what each of these picturesque sanctuaries has to offer.

Bal Harbour Shops Koi Ponds and Water Gardens

Creatively designed by the Biscayne Group—under the guidance of Randy Whitman, the son of Bal Harbour Shops' owner and developer Stanley Whitman—the Bal Harbour Koi Ponds and Water Gardens combine Eastern influences with the cosmopolitan surroundings of one of the most high-end shopping centers in the country. All three ponds are crafted in hard-edged, square-like geometric patterns and are home to turtles and Japanese koi fish whose warm colors vary from a hot white to cherry red.

Whitman points out that only one pond was originally installed in the courtyard, but its popularity resulted in creating two more ponds: one on the opposite side of Bal Harbour Shops and the other in the main plaza, which has a glass cover that allows visitors to walk on the surface and watch the koi beneath them.

"I suggested turning these areas into a fish pond to create a warm

and pleasant feel, similar to what residential communities have," Whitman says. "We had no idea how popular the ponds would be, especially among families and children. People enjoy taking pictures of the turtles and fish."

Special "low-light" areas inside the mall are home to spiky bromeliad plants, dark Chinese evergreens, lady palms and the phalaenopsis orchids known for lavender colors that set them apart from their green surroundings. Other tropical vegetation includes special aquatic plants like umbrella papyrus palms from Madagascar and violet Egyptian irises. Palm trees and water fountains of different sizes and shapes border the ponds and water gardens. Providing a full visual display, one of the water fountains is T-shaped and two-tiered, with waterspouts erupting from the upper level and cascading down to the fountain's body.

Whitman knows that visitors will enjoy the visually dynamic environment that the koi ponds and water gardens offer, whether they are walking, shopping or dining. "People like the outdoor garden atmosphere that we have at the Bal Harbour Shops," he says. "They eat outdoors year-round, even when it's hot outside in the summer months, because of the shade provided by the landscaped walkways and tropical plants."

Miami Beach Botanical Garden

Only 7 miles south from Bal Harbour Shops, the Miami Beach Botanical Garden sits snugly between the Holocaust Memorial and the Miami Beach Convention Center. When walking through the entrance on the corner of 19th Street and Convention Center Drive, visitors will first breathe in the scent of the yang-ylang tree,



Approximately 60 species of palms flourish at the Miami Beach Botanical Garden.

