



# Garden FARE

Straight from the garden to the table – this foodies' garden is set for entertaining

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This page: Convivial times amid an edible garden. Royal Botania table and chairs from Parterre Garden, Surry Hills, (02) 9356 4747. Opposite: from bottom left: Roberta Muir and Franz Scheurer's garden keeps on giving, thanks to aromatic herbs and plants. Keeping the birdlife happy, this bubbling fountain (opposite, top right) by Tasmanian sculptor Folko Kooper adds to the tranquil atmosphere; call (03) 6268 0385.



A kingfisher gets the first laugh but as the guests find their spot in the sweet smelling garden, there are plenty of chuckles to rival the birdlife. With champagne in hand, sun on the back and the scent of lavender, lemon thyme and mint to tickle the senses, it's little surprise there's such merriment in the air.

For food fanatics Roberta Muir and Franz Scheurer (top right), only fine cuisine can better the vibe in their new entertaining garden – and there's no shortage of that in both the garden bed and on the table. Roberta has a master's degree in gastronomy from the University of Adelaide and heads up the Sydney Fish Market's Sydney Seafood School, while Franz runs his own advertising agency, a food and wine website, and wears the tag of Australia's top spirits aficionado. It's a delight to find that their love of all things gourmet extends to their garden.

"The idea was to create a totally edible garden, or one where the plants related to something edible," explains Roberta as fresh antipasto arrives, garnished with herbs. Within reach of the table grow lemon- and ginger-scented geraniums, grapevines to provide leaves for dolmades, lettuce, rosemary, Kaffir lime, parsley and nasturtium (used in salads). >





< It's enough to inspire any menu and has been put to good use in many a gourmet soiree, says Roberta – especially come pizza time ... “The first thing I wanted when I finally got a house – after apartment living for so long – was an outdoor pizza oven,” confesses Roberta.

The impressive house-like structure (right) blends beautifully with the Himalayan sandstone deck, and is just a stone's throw from the outdoor kitchen and barbecue, which is tucked underneath the house. When it's all fired up, Roberta can simply top her pizzas with tasty fresh herbs from the garden – potato and rosemary is one of her favourite combinations.

The synergy between garden and plate makes any meal interactive. “It just makes sense,” says Roberta. As the wagyu beef comes off the barbecue and is topped with Franz's delicious café de Paris butter and served with delights from the garden, we can't help but agree. >

**Top left:** Romantic lavender's sweet smelling foliage and flowers make it a perennial favourite. **Top right and above:** For a tantalising lunch, the antipasto includes insalata caprese – a mozzarella, plum tomatoes and basil salad – placed beside char-grilled eggplant, and followed by fresh oysters. **Right:** Roberta's pièce de résistance – an outdoor pizza oven by Verona Ovens, (02) 6493 8396 – is every foodie's dream.

