

The Metzler Garden

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If there were a study to determine the benefits of a hosta collection living in close proximity to a lot of companion plants, then Steve and Terry Metzler's Garden in St. Louis, Missouri would be the perfect test case. I have never seen so many beautifully grown hostas living in harmony with a wide variety of companion plants, all carefully positioned in such a way that every plant can be appreciated for its individual beauty.



It was a pleasure to attend the AHS Hosta Convention in St. Louis this year and have the opportunity to visit the Metzler garden and view their extensive collection of plants. The gardens surrounding the Metzler home were artfully designed, with pathways and focal points that lead you through the space. I loved the garden at first sight, from the welcoming bouquet of balloons featuring hosta to the wide variety of plants to all the chirping birds flitting about the garden. At 7:30 am in the morning, this was a beautiful sight to see and hear as dappled sunlight exposed hundreds and hundreds of hosta and companion plants.

As I moved from the lovely front yard to the back of the home, the wonders just kept coming. I could now see just how extensive the hosta collection is on this property. But what impressed me more was the unusual and striking hosta amid so many different types of companion plants growing on rolling terrain. The Metzler garden is set on a hill that rises from the street in front of the house to the back of the property line. The gradual and continuous rise behind the house created the perfect setting to display and view the gardens the Metzler's designed.

The Metzler's clearly love garden art and had a great collection of blown glass. Their garden art and sculptures took many forms which were displayed throughout the landscape, including a collection of mushroom art.



One of the most impressive features of the landscape is the sound of moving water and the huge Koi pond just beyond the patio off the back of the house. The pond is fed by multiple man-made streams cascading down the hill. Several waterfalls enhanced the sounds of running water from every point in the back yard. It made me wish I could wake up each morning to step into this glorious back yard with my coffee to look out on the extensive water features and unique plantings daily.



Hosta 'Pocketful of Sunshine'



Hosta 'Parisian Silk'

I enjoyed seeing some hosta new to me, like 'Pocketful of Sunshine' and 'Parisian Silk'. The Metzlers grow a beautiful specimen of H. 'Stardust'. You would have thought this hosta was holding a press conference the day I visited. Many visitors were gathered around Stardust on this day and at least five people were photographing the hosta at the same time! Another impressive specimen was H. 'Ivory Queen' growing in a blaze of sun with 'Prairie Sky' looking on. Everyone passing by this plant was marveling about its



beauty. Hosta 'Joy Ride' (above) featured unique wavy, powdery blue leaves with white backs. I also liked the way the Metzler's displayed their mini hostas in a hyper tufa trough and in a birdbath. Both raised displays enhance the view of their mini hosta collection.



I really enjoyed viewing the Metzler's impressive collection of hosta, companion plants, water features and garden art. If I were asked to choose only one word to describe this fabulous garden, I would suggest "harmonious" because the creators mixed color, form, texture, and sound to create a landscape for all the senses. I hope I have an opportunity to visit this lovely garden again one day.