

2019 Tour Essay 2nd Place: Jeff Jens

The Art of Landscaping

I love garden tours. This year, my wife and I decided to travel to the Morongo Basin Desert-Wise Landscape Tour. We live in the Santa Clarita Valley and have never been to the area - we had no idea what to expect, but we were very interested in learning how desert dwellers landscape using drought tolerant plants.

It was the most amazing weekend of a garden tour we'd ever experienced. I can't stop sharing with friends and family. The garden tour hosts were friendly and welcoming. Each location was unique, offering inspiration and ideas to take home to improve our own garden.

A common thread throughout the tour was the impressive creativity of yard art and the use of repurposed materials (my favorite). Nothing better than 'accidental' art. We enjoyed visiting with the artists present onsite who were willing to share their inspiration.

The emphasis on the importance of water conservation and the educational materials offered during the tour were eye-opening. We've taken the information learned to use in our own yard and to share with others. We plan to add native plants to our already drought-tolerant landscape, as well as repurposing materials to use as mulch to retain water.

We so enjoyed our visit that we plan to return again next year. We'll also visit in October for the Highway 62 Art Tour. We look forward to returning soon!