

**2017 DWL Tour Essay FIRST Place Winner  
Rosalie Mendoza**

2017 Desert-Wise Landscape Tour

I saw that desert-wise landscaping is as individual as each homeowner was as they welcomingly shared with visitors ideas and experiences creating their very own garden masterpiece! The gardeners learned from nature by observing the actions and reactions of the desert flora and fauna they nurtured. Design of house, shade structures and existing plants are carefully considered to capture the expansive vistas and create outdoor rooms to enjoy them from. Contouring of land and rocks with techniques like down pipes for deep watering and dry mulching can really redeem a scarred and scraped property. Interesting natural rocks and dried wood forms are used equally with live plants in this unique desert environment.

Specifically I want to plant many of the native plants I saw and now know what they will look like when full grown. I want to reuse materials to make paths and art objects throughout my landscape. I want to create swales to capture and use the gray-water from my washing machine use. I want to use rocks to make a dry stream bed and to direct rain runoff. I want to deep water my larger trees and bushes and put mulch on everything!

I am eager to try some of these ideas in my own landscape and then open my homestead next year for the Desert-Wise Landscape Tour!