

Tasteologie

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This garden has potato boxes, nasturtiums, ocean views and more! Food doesn't get more fresh than the Montage Laguna Beach's Studio where this is all steps away from the Chef's kitchen.

Montage Laguna Beach invited me down to check out their recently unveiled Studio Garden. The brain child of Chef Strong and garden consultant Kathryn Agresto, the new organic garden offers the resort's Studio restaurant and Spa extremely local fresh ingredients and inspiration (like the lavender used in my delicious Studio Garden Martini). The lawn in front of the restaurant has been transformed into a vibrant garden. It serves as a playground for Chef Strong and offers guest a new attraction to this already wonderful resort.



The giant mosaic pool is one of the hallmarks of Montage Laguna beach. Just to the right of it lies the newest addition to the property...



Studio Garden, with its amazing ocean views, is simply beautiful. Its design meshes seamlessly with the resort, and its layout provides crops a great assortment of different growing conditions.



Irrigation efficiently waters all the plants, and in the brief month since everything was planted there are already some harvestable fruits, vegetables and herbs.



Everything is labeled, not just for the benefit of the staff, but for curious guests as well. The restaurant has four of the large raised beds and the other one is reserved for the spa. I suspect Studio's enterprising young chefs may poach from it from time to time.



There is a great variety, and the garden has been designed to be constantly offering up new visual, herbal, and culinary delights.



Tucked away in the corner they are growing potatoes. The boxes serve as the foundation for potato towers. As the plant grows you can raise the level of straw... the plant senses the darkness then decides to start growing spuds. Eventually as the it reaches its harvest state the box will be full of potatoes safely packed in straw.



Some of the flowers like this Nasturtium are edible as well as beautiful. You can pop the petals straight into your mouth; they have a bright peppery flavor that you wouldn't expect just from looking at them.



Here pea tendrils grow on a trellis. The constantly evolving nature of a garden provides the chefs with unique menu opportunities every time they stroll through.



These blackberries will eventually ripen and find their way into a drink or dessert.



The garden is full discovery and the staff has been having fun with it. Garden inspired creations are constantly popping up on the Studio's menu. Chef Strong, who has been gardening since he was 8 years old, has a wonderful new resource that provides him with a new amazing amount of control over what goes into his dishes!