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A Balinese-style daybed beside the pool. CHARLES WHITE • MTEK STUDIOS PHOTOS

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Small garden is tropical oasis

Relaxing backyard escape designed for water-wise creature comfort

RYAN PRANGE
SPECIAL TO THE U-T

Falling Waters Landscape Inc. created a tropical yet water-wise landscape destination in the Cardiff by the Sea backyard of Kim Nadel. FWLI complemented the modern lines of the architecture by Brett Farrow and met the needs of the client, while respecting the city of Encinitas' strict guidelines for the space.

Tucked into the back of what was once a subtropical fruit and avocado orchard, the site had many constraints, including poor access, and there were multiple trades working simultaneously. The yard also had a single remaining avocado tree that was left when the site was developed. Ideas that involved removing the tree were floated, but in the end we made it a feature of the garden.

The garden design consists of La Cantina doors that open to the Swim-Spa with built-in swim jets that allow the owner to swim laps in a 12-by-8-foot space. Integrated benches and 14 jets in the spa walls make it the ideal place to



A fire pit made of concrete is a gathering place in the garden.

relax after a swim. The Swim-Spa is flanked by redwood decking, a solid teak Balinese-style daybed (provided by the owner) and a concrete fire pit in a bed of crushed rock. An aftermarket barbecue and outdoor shower complete the program. A plant palette of subtropical palms and grasses mixes with succulents and evergreens in a surprisingly low-maintenance garden.

FWLI handled the design, permitting and installation of

the small garden space as well as landscaping for each of the other four new homes in the development. Each home is unique yet has a vocabulary with the others. Each garden was commissioned by its new homeowner, allowing for customization of the space without a disjointed feeling.

This garden may be the smallest of all the homes in the development, but what it lacks in space it makes up for in usability and charm.

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Plants in the small garden have a tropical look, but they actually are water-wise.

Ryan Prange is the owner and lead designer for Falling Waters Landscape Inc. a landscape design/build/maintain company. FWLI operates out of a studio space in Encinitas. To contact FWLI, visit online at www.fallingwaterslandscape.com or phone (619) 955-5595. This project recently won the sweepstakes award of the California Landscape Contractors Association, www.clcasandiego.org.