

HEALTH, WELLNESS, ECO-LIVING & DESIGN

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MAGAZINE

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## How Does Your Garden Grow?

As customers seek out the freshest ingredients, chefs respond with the most impressive solution: On-site gardens. Here's a glimpse of what you'll find at a few of our favorite resorts.

### THE CHEF:

#### Josh Thomsen

Claremont Hotel Club & Spa  
Berkeley, CA



**THE GARDEN:** A majestic white façade beckons visitors to East Bay icon The Claremont (it's been around since 1915) where Chef Josh Thomsen is poised to unveil an intimate garden this summer. Underneath the windows of upscale Meritage restaurant he'll set up four 12' x 3' raised planter boxes constructed of redwood lumber in between idyllic crushed granite pathways. Spa-goers: Some of the featured ingredients, like rosemary, chamomile, and mint, will also be incorporated into treatments at stellar Spa Claremont.

**WHAT HE GROWS:** Tomatoes, basil, beans, eggplant, micro lettuce, corn, watermelon, cucumbers, and thyme.

**GARDEN-FRESH DISH:** Ahi tuna tartare with crispy rice, marinated cucumbers, sesame, and ginger

**WHY HE'S PSYCHED:** "I live in Berkeley; we love to grow things. There is nothing better than walking down to the garden and picking something just before service to prepare for our guests. It doesn't get any fresher than that." [claremontresort.com](http://claremontresort.com)

### THE CHEF:

#### Dean Maupin

Keswick Hall  
Charlottesville, VA



**THE GARDEN:** Sprawling Keswick Hall, the Orient-Express property tucked away in the Blue Ridge Mountains, is set amid hills and meadows adjacent to Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's historic homestead. The tranquil vibe lingers at Fossett's, where Chef Dean Maupin makes dishes using produce—there's an emphasis on heirloom varieties—from the hotel's vegetable and herb garden. Lavender grown here also adds to the aromatic aura of The Spa.

**WHAT HE GROWS:** Several varieties of lettuces, beets, and peppers (Carmen, fish, jalapeno, and Fresno chili), as well as spinach, kale, shelling peas, sugar snap peas, red Russian garlic, brussels sprouts, tarragon, chives, cilantro, and basil.

**GARDEN-FRESH DISH:** Roasted baby beet salad with horseradish crème fraiche and goat cheese tortellini

**WHY HE'S PSYCHED:** "In May we will plant all of our summer crops: six to seven different cherry tomato styles, eggplant, squashes, and melons. We are most excited this year for artichokes, something we have not tried before. Monticello had great success with them and they shared some seeds with Keswick." [keswick.com](http://keswick.com)

**THE CHEF:****Jean-Georges Vongerichten**

*Fern, St. Regis Bahia Beach Resort  
Bahia Beach, Puerto Rico*



**THE GARDEN:** The St. Regis Bahia Beach Resort, the Caribbean's first Gold Audubon Signature Sanctuary, cultivates native and indigenous plants to protect natural vegetation. Inside the 2.4-acre plant nursery is a dual-system hydroponic and raised-bed garden which grows fruits, vegetables, herbs, and spices for both Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten's tropical-inspired Fern restaurant and R mede Spa. From the spa's "herbal bar," guests select fixings for natural custom scrubs.

**WHAT HE GROWS:** Bananas, peppers, eggplant, sugarcane, lemongrass, arugula, mache, radishes, chilies, fennel, cilantro, rosemary, basil, and ginger.

**GARDEN-FRESH DISH:** Peekytoe crabcake with ginger-marinated chironja (orangelo) and cilantro

**WHY HE'S PSYCHED:** "The best part of my day is taking a golf cart over to our hydroponic garden to pick herbs and lettuces," shares Maycoll Calderon, Fern's Executive Chef. "Our signature dish of Octopus and Sweet Onions is accented with aji dulce grown for us. And if you've never tasted our Pineapple Mojito, I swear it's the mint from our garden that makes it so amazing." [stregisbahiaibeach.com](http://stregisbahiaibeach.com)

[www.organicpamagazine.com](http://www.organicpamagazine.com)

**The Joy of Urban Gardens**

Would-be gardeners may yearn for a spacious backyard to grow their tomatoes and greens, but really, that tiny fire escape will do, according to green thumbs Reggie Solomon

and Michael Nolan. Solomon, a dedicated New Haven, CT-based gardener, launched the site [UrbanGardenCasual.com](http://UrbanGardenCasual.com) to offer an informative but approachable guide to gardening in challenged spaces. Michael Nolan, a full-time writer who founded a community garden in Atlanta, started writing for the site. Together the two have released *I Garden: Urban Style* (Betterway Home). "We didn't want people to feel like they were being taught, but being entertained," shares Nolan. The comprehensive book features striking photos of urban gardens as well as advice on everything from composting to seedling selection. Peppered with profiles of urban gardeners and recipes, it attests that gardens are a possibility for the city apartment dweller—if you adapt them to your space. Nolan, who is in the process of building a 2½-acre property in rural Alabama says, "I lived in New York for quite a few years and only had a small terrace to garden in small containers." Evaluating the space you have—even if it's small—is key, he adds. "Even when it's postage-size, there's the possibility of vertical gardening."

**Sowing Seeds—and then Some**

Chef Sean Brock has a "seed-saving obsession." He has nearly a thousand heirloom varieties—"even Mayan seeds"—that stems from his love of historic low-country agriculture. "It blew my mind; I couldn't believe the range of plants that were being grown and cooked during the golden rice era," says the chef of McCrady's and Husk in Charleston, South Carolina. "Then I realized that if I wanted to truly replicate the food of this era, I needed the crops before they were genetically modified."

Vintage, long-forgotten crops like choppee, a South Carolina okra, and benne, an African sesame seed, are being given new life on Brock's land at Thornhill Farms in McClellanville, South Carolina. This year he's added a red flint corn from Italy that was grown in Charleston in the 1700s and soon he'll focus his energies on heritage breeds of poultry. "When you realize the facts about the current state of the poultry industry," he shares, "you can't help but step up and make a difference." [mccradyrestaurant.com](http://mccradyrestaurant.com); [huskrestaurant.com](http://huskrestaurant.com) 

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