

don't pass it by without stopping, because to see this garden is truly to experience awe, wonder, and joy at nature's magnificence. Stroll along the cool paths that wind and meander under the lush green bamboo canopy that encompasses several acres, together with greenhouses, ponds, chickens, peacocks, and colorful perennials.

All of the bamboo and plants can be purchased; however, you won't see a price tag or get a sales pitch, because the garden didn't start out as a business, but a labor of love, and



Succulents growing in one of the greenhouses



Blooming Perennials



Bamboo grows tall and majestic.



In one of several greenhouses a specimen bamboo is being propagated by air-layering.



Bamboo hides an outdoor shower.

visitors are welcome to simply wander around and soak in the beauty. Danny explains, "I don't sell the bamboo, I simply tend it and it sells itself." The steady stream of customers comes by word of mouth, as gardeners, landscapers, and developers hear from others that have visited the garden.

Danny and Melissa know most of the names of the hundreds of bamboo varieties that come from the far reaches of the earth, and are happy

to talk bamboo. There are many types and shapes of bamboo, and colors run from light green, gold, and brown to purple, red, and black. Bamboo can grow from ground covers to low shrubs of 6 ft. Pygmaeus dwarf bamboo up to 125 ft. tall specimens of majestic heights, called *Dendrocalamus Asper*.

Surprisingly, the temperature inside the bamboo garden feels at least 10 degrees cooler than outside, making it a perfect plant to cool down patios and backyards during our sweltering summers. Talking about this garden is easy, but to gain inspiration and truly experience bamboo gardening, you will have to visit this one-of-a-kind garden of paradise.

The Boo For You Bamboo Garden is located at 3050 Robertson Rd., (South on Gulf Beach Hwy.), Pensacola, FL. Call 850-497-9009.

Bamboo Planting and Care

Planting: Bamboo is happiest in a loose, loamy soil. When planting, dig a hole double the diameter of the existing root ball, and a few inches deeper. With the soil that comes out of the hole, mix an equal amount of organic material (planting mix or mulch). Place some of the mixed soil in the bottom of the hole and tamp it down, so that when the root ball is carefully removed from the container and placed in the hole, the top of the root ball is at ground level. Back fill around the root ball with the soil mix, tamp it down, then form a 3-4 inch high basin around the plant to hold water. Steer or chicken manure can be used sparingly as part of the soil mix, as long as the other organic material is used. Mist the leaves to insure the plant does not shock.

Watering: Water the root ball of the plant deeply before planting and then water 3-4 times per week, depending on the weather, for the first month. Summer watering: four times a week and cooler weather: two or three times a week. If the sides of the leaves start curling up, it is not being watered often enough or for too short a time.

Mulch: Bamboos will thrive if they have a 2-4 inch layer of mulch around the base of the plant. Let fallen leaves remain on the ground, and once a year add other organic material – mulch or planting mix.

Fertilizing: Bamboo is part of the grass family and likes a high nitrogen fertilizer like that used on lawns. Fertilize as recommended for grass by the manufacturer.