

Rochester: contemporary life *Herbal renewal*

Maestric arched openings frame doors and windows in the Rochester, a contemporary home with a lavish multiplicity of interior and exterior living areas.

Entering, you step into a bright entry with a lofty 16-foot ceiling. Light spills in through multipaned windows that flank and overarch the door while plant shelves above and below add visual interest along the passageway.

Rough the living room and the dining room are also richly windowed. The living room has a 12-foot ceiling and a fireplace flanked by shelves. An elegant coffered ceiling crowns the dining room.

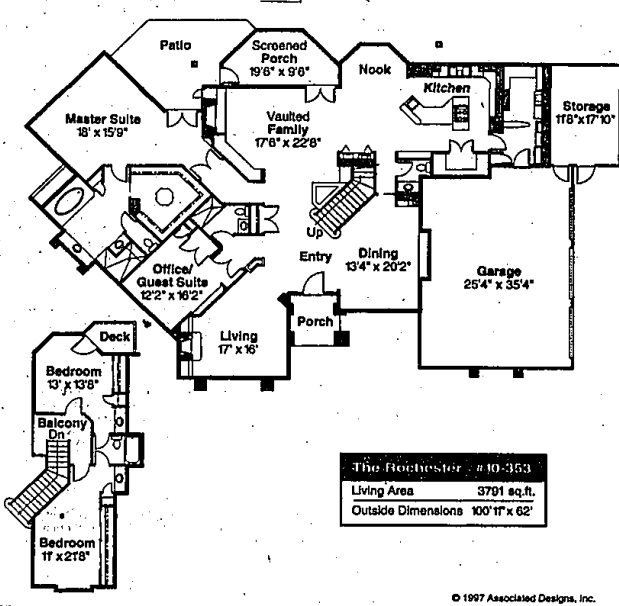
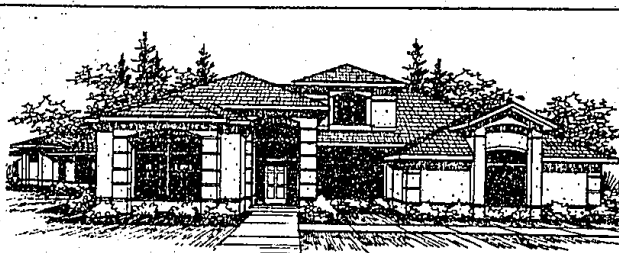
Everyday family living spaces are at the rear, where a bay-shaped screened porch expands the vaulted family room and another window bay creates an eating nook. A fireplace is at one end, next to the entertainment center, and the kitchen is at the other.

This kitchen has everything, starting with a wet bar close to the family room. The long, free-form work island houses a vegetable sink, conversation bar, and a cooktop embedded in a granite counter.

Other kitchen features include: a huge walk-in pantry, trash compactor, lazy susan shelving, and an appliance garage. Utilities are handy, in a room with ample space for a sewing desk, freer and pull-down ironing board.

The luxurious master suite boasts its own entertainment center along with an exceptionally spacious walk-in closet. Amenities in the master bathroom include: twin lavs, soaking tub, private toilet, and a walk-in shower with a seat.

The Rochester also has a office/guest suite on the main floor, and two bedrooms with a balcony on the second level.



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Herbs are a great way to spice up your annual flower beds and at the same time add a little zing to your cooking this summer. They also can serve as a wonderful lesson for children who want to help in the garden.

How to begin

For herb transplants, Home Depot gardening expert Phillip Zealy recommends you dig a hole twice the size of the root ball for each plant. If the soil is compact, add Nature's Helper to loosen the dirt and improve drainage. Explain to the children how to gently squeeze the tray to remove the transplants and to carefully squeeze the roots to loosen them.

After they're planted, fertilize once with composted manure, explaining that organic matter is natural: it comes from plants and animals. Herbs won't need more than one fertilization in the summer because they are "light feeders" and require little maintenance.

Explain that plants need three important nutrients: nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. Nitrogen is what makes the plant green and helps it grow. Phosphorus is for strong roots. Potassium works to resist disease and strengthen the plant.

It will be necessary to mulch, thin and weed from time to time. He recommends these herbs:

Spicy globe basil is a cute green mounded basil with tiny leaves. It grows naturally into a mound and makes a great border plant. This popular annual should be pinched back. Used fresh or dried, it has a spicy, mild pepper flavor and works well with tomato sauce, fish, pasta and rice. It also blends with zucchini, squash, potatoes and carrots.

Chives need a dormant period to send out leaves in the spring. It has a sweet, mild onion taste and blends well with onions, potatoes, artichokes, asparagus, cauliflower, corn, tomatoes, peas, carrots, spinach, poultry, fish, veal, creamy sauces, cheeses and eggs.

Coriander is a rapidly-growing annual with a strong sage and sharp citrus flavor. The leaves, also known as cilantro, have a sharp flavor and serve well with onions, sausage, clams, oysters and potatoes. The seeds can be added to dressings, cheese, chili sauce and is a great addition to guacamole and salsa.

Dill should be protected from wind because of its feathery foliage. It has beautiful clusters of yellow flowers and flavorful leaves and grows to about three feet in height. Its sharp, slightly bitter taste makes it an excellent addition to fish, pork, poultry and just about any vegetable.

Oregano should be pinched back to promote bushy leaves. It has a hot peppery flavor and enhances cheese and egg dishes and blends well with marinated vegetables, roasted bell peppers, mushrooms, beef, poultry, black beans, zucchini and potatoes.

Parsley has been used by chefs for years to spice up foods and add green to platters. It can serve as an excellent border for your garden. Its unique flavor blends well with other foods, except sweets, and can be added at the last moment of cooking in sauces, grilled meats and poultry. It also is the prime ingredient of salsa verde.

Pennyroyal mint is a hardy and fast-growing perennial. It has a strong peppermint flavor and scent and can be used in moderation to flavor teas, jelly, desserts, ice cream, chocolate and cheese cake.

Rosemary is slow-growing but is very hardy and will come back year after year. It has a mint-like, sweet and slight ginger flavor and is great with just about anything. It also combines well with herbs like chives, thyme and parsley.

Sage also is hardy and will return every year. Its fresh leaves are used in salads, omelets, soups and breads, rolls, sausages and poultry stuffings. It cooks well with most meats and vegetables.

Thyme has a faint clover flavor and blends well with most meats and vegetables.

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