

Artful miniature trees worth investigating

Hawaii Gardens By Heidi Bornhorst

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Q. I have visitors coming into town and they are bonsai experts. They live in Seattle and took us to all these incredible miniature-tree displays.

Without Pearl City tavern, where can we go to see bonsai?

—M.M. Kaneko, Pearl City

A. Call ahead and you can take them out to Dragon Garden and the Hawaii Bonsai Cultural Center in Waimanalo. Walter Liew is a great planstman and bonsai expert. We are so fortunate to have Anne and Walter Liew living, working and growing plants in Hawai'i.

A visit to their garden is good for anyone who likes plants. Their phone number is 259-6886.

Walter Liew also teaches bonsai classes at his Hawaii Bonsai Cultural Center. He has more than 600 bonsai artfully displayed at the nursery. Past students of Liew have formed their own bonsai club. There are also many other bonsai associations in the Islands. This is a great way to learn more and share with other bonsai enthusiasts.

They also grow water plants and have great Chinese pots that make for epic water-garden designs. I think this would be part of a great nursery tour/foodie adventure to go along with promoting food and plants grown in Hawai'i.

The new farmers market held on Saturdays at Kapi'olani Community College is a fab start. Planning guided, expertly led tours to nurseries and farms and botanical gardens would add a new dimension and revenue stream to our economy.

We tested this theory, as we had visiting landscape VIPs, here for a conference. We took Erin Lee, director of landscaping at the Hualalai Resort on the Big Island, and some of her key staff on a nursery and hotel landscape tour.

Dragon water gardens and Tis Unlimited in Waimanalo were highlights of the tour, which also included the Hawaiian Sunshine Nursery and the Takano Nakamura nursery in Pearl City.

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