

Ideas and Inspiration

Garden center tours can be a great way to see both new products and new ideas that you can take and personalize into your own store. From repurposed racks used to display products to signage to where you store the shopping carts for customers to use, there's no shortage of ideas and inspiration. This month, I'm sharing more photos from the Garden Centers of America Summer Tour that took place in June in Nashville, Tennessee.

On the tour, we visited nearly a dozen garden centers in and around Music City — from urban settings to IGCs spanning multiple acres. It was an interesting contrast of merchants — and equally interesting to see the varied and unique challenges that each store might face.

For example, Yarrow Acres is a garden boutique located on Main Street in downtown Franklin, Tennessee. Signage outside the store helps bring customers inside, where they'll find seasonal items, gifts, tools and locally made items.

On the other end of the spectrum is Long Hollow Gardens & Vineyards in Gallatin, Tennessee. Situated on 35 sprawling acres, their outdoor sales space spans two acres and indoor sales space runs 12,000 square feet. The combined garden center and vineyard includes an on-site event venue for weddings and other occasions. Turn to page 16 for photos. Also, be sure to check out our online Inspiration Book (lgrmag.com/inspirationbook) for lots more photos from the tour!

Merchandising Merit

I'm excited about this year's Merchandiser of the Year award, which recognizes one independent garden center that created a dynamic and creative display in their store. Flip to page 10 to read about this year's five finalists. We hope that their entries inspire you with new ideas and marketing techniques that you can customize in your own store.

I was impressed by the creativity and personality that each of these stores showed in their entries, both visually through their photos and the story they told. I especially enjoyed reading about the team efforts involved in creating the displays — how many departments within the business came together to build something new and notable. In many cases, the displays were made to help customers understand the store's products better by giving them the chance to see, touch and feel them — and perhaps show them in a new and innovative way.

Share Your Story!

What is your store doing to spark creativity and innovation? Have you recently remodeled or expanded? Kicked off a new event? Don't hesitate to reach out to me to share your story!



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