

A Rose for Each Casa Resident

As Juliet professes in Shakespeare's famous play ... "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." That could not be more apropos for the dozens of rose bushes planted at Casa de Mañana, each named for a resident.



Planted near a popular walking path along Coast Boulevard South, nearly 175 rose bushes explode with color nearly year-round as they dot the landscape. Small identification tags bear the names of individuals or couples given to them by the seaside community with affection.

This special gift to residents began around 2005 when green thumb Dr. Kate Morton, affectionately known by fellow residents and staff as the "Rose Lady," found her passion keeping the roses "neat and tidy" in between visits from the professional gardeners who maintain the community's landscape. She soon began assigning a rose bush to residents. "Residents love having a rose bush they can call their own," she said. "It's just a way to make someone feel welcome and special at Casa de Mañana."

Residents may cut as many blooms as they like from their assigned bush, but are not obligated to care for the plant unless they want to. Kate has since handed over her duties to a small volunteer committee lead by fellow resident Patricia Dobbie. Volunteers keep the roses healthy and beautiful by regularly "dead heading," feeding and thinning unruly undergrowth.



One of those volunteers is Dr. Martha Convery. “When people walk by, they are often mesmerized, particularly during the spring bloom,” she said. “I have heard many people say our roses may be the most beautiful in the entire city.”

Patricia says when residents first move to Casa and find out about the roses they sometimes ask for a particular color or variety but most of the time they like to be surprised.

“We have tea roses and floribundas, but also many hybrids, so we are not sure how many varieties there are, but they are all beautiful,” Patricia said.