



Volunteers from Slow Food Lake Tahoe with some of the demonstration garden's produce, harvested every Monday and donated to the Project Mana food bank. COURTESY/SLOW FOOD LAKE TAHOE

Digging in

Truckee Demonstration Garden

It's tucked away inside Truckee Regional Park on Brockway Road—behind the play area and the baseball field, closer to the river—but the Truckee Demonstration Garden is a hidden gem that features natural beauty and organic food, also receiving a big boost in popularity in recent years thanks to its efforts to work more in its community.

"Part of our mission is to have this vibrant community space where someone can come sit and have lunch at our picnic tables, just something welcoming and beautiful," said Katie Townsend-Merino, garden director and a board of directors member of Slow Food Lake Tahoe.

Townsend-Merino said the garden began about 20 years ago. While it has changed ownership from government to private to non-profit over the years, Slow Food has tended it since 2013.

A lot of progress has been made on the demonstration garden, specifically in the last four years, Townsend-Merino said, including covered beds and a robust composting program in an area where the hot weather makes it difficult for that to take place.

Coming up this weekend is one of the more popular features at the Truckee Demonstration Garden. The Community Dig In is an all-volunteer effort to do work on the 50-by-100 foot space, from planting to netting to rebuilding or touch ups on garden beds. It takes place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. every third Saturday. The events draw everyone from novices to experienced

green thumbs, Townsend-Merino said.

"We have all the tools and gloves you need. I just tell people to bring water and a hat," she said. "I have jobs for 3-year-olds and jobs for 80-year-olds. We never run out of work for people."

Townsend-Merino also emphasized that it's a drop-in type of event. "Even if you can just stay for a half-hour come on down," she said.

Slow Food is also going to host a garden party and community picnic in its garden from 4 to 6 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 25. "One reason we're doing the garden party is to say thank you," Townsend-Merino said. "We really wouldn't be here without the large number of people and organizations who have given to us."

In general, the garden keeps a pretty active agenda going in the summer months for those who want to lead a more green lifestyle. They have Harvest Mondays every week at 7 a.m., and the harvested food is then donated to Project Mana, the local food bank.

There are Workday Wednesdays, also at 7 a.m., where people can work on a variety of different farming jobs to help the garden grow. There's also a children's garden that includes a sandbox as well as kid-sized shovels and rakes for them to do some work.

"I'm a mom of three and a grandma of four, and I know that kids just love to dig," Townsend-Merino said. "We also work with some of the day camps who come in and either plant something in the garden or they use their trip as a learning opportunity."

Any of these opportunities to volunteer may lead to a deeper appreciation of gardens and how they contribute not only to the beauty of a place, but also help the environment. Townsend-Merino said she's seen several volunteers who consistently donate their time and grow to love this work.

"I feel like people who put their hands in the dirt are some of the most interesting people," she said. "I've met so many wonderful people here."

Find out more about the Truckee Demonstration Garden at slowfoodlaketahoe.org.

"THE #1 COMEDY CLUB IN THE COUNTRY"
- USA TODAY

AUG 13-18
Laugh FACTORY
ROCKY DALE DAVIS
BRING THE FUNNY on NBC
with MITCH BURROW & DAVE MENCARELLI

AUG 20-25
LIVE!
JOEY MEDINA
THE ORIGINAL LATIN KINGS OF COMEDY
with DREW MARKS & STEVEN ROBERTS

AUG 27-SEPT 1
NBC
K-VON
TANX GOD! Comedy Special & ONCE YOU GO PERSIAN
with MARK FRY & DRAKE NELSON

SUN-THURS 7:30 PM (Dark Mon) FRI & SAT 7:30 & 9:30 PM

50% OFF 2 FOR 1 SPECIAL
1 free ticket with the purchase of a full price GA or VIP ticket.
Offer NOT valid for Special Events. Management reserves all rights.

ticketmaster® LFRENO241 *Artist Subject to Change

1-800-MUST-SEE (1-800-687-8733)
SILVER LEGACY
RESORT • CASINO • RENO

GET YOUR PLAYA GEAR IN MIDTOWN!

COMING SOON NEW SIDEWALKS, CROSSWALKS AND TREES, NEW LIGHTING, TRANSIT AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS
Support Midtown businesses during construction.

VirginiaStreetProject.com
(775) 300-1848

RTC SNC

[f](https://www.facebook.com/VirginiaStreetProject) [i](https://www.instagram.com/VirginiaStreetProject) [y](https://www.youtube.com/VirginiaStreetProject) [t](https://www.tiktok.com/VirginiaStreetProject)
#VirginiaStreetProject