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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Gardening tips from The Bishop's Lodge

Santa Fe, NM – The inviting grounds and lush gardens at Bishop's Lodge are a popular backdrop for outdoor weddings, conference receptions, family events, and a traditional children's summer camp. They surround and decorate the 450-acre property and its 111 deluxe and ranch-style rooms and exclusive hillside Villas, swimming pool, and spa.

Amid the colorful canyons and arroyos of the desert Southwest, the lush lawns and flowering gardens of the Tesuque Valley provide an oasis of green. That's why when Jean-Baptiste Lamy came to Santa Fe in 1851 as New Mexico's first bishop, he bought this parcel of land in the Tesuque Valley and made it his country retreat. He cultivated his gardens and introduced non-native fruit trees and flowers that attracted visitors for years to come.

Visitors can still appreciate the Bishop's gardens and tall elm and oak trees, a waterfall and ornamental pond surrounded by cottonwoods, blue spruce and ponderosa pines. Beyond the Little Tesuque Creek as you enter the property, are the lush green lawns and gardens of hollyhock, roses, phlox and fruit trees. Native plants include pinons, cottonwoods, Russian sage, and lavender. Bishop Lamy planted apple, apricot, and pear trees, grapevines, creeping felix, phlox, and climbing rose to name a few.

"Since Bishop's Lodge is a ranch resort, we lean towards a natural look," says Dan Evert, Chief Engineer at Bishop's Lodge. "We keep maintenance simple and efficient because of the well water source."

Bishop's Lodge has a well on the property that supplies all the water for the resort and spa, and water is reclaimed for all garden irrigation and lawn watering.

Evert says he doesn't use soil amendments or fertilizers because the reclaimed well water is rich in nutrients. He keeps the gardens in bloom throughout the growing season with minimal pruning, pinching back buds to prevent seeding, and cleaning up scrubs to keep them neat. They also bring in some perennials for late fall and early spring to add color.

“We put small pinon trees in flower pots for the winter,” Evert says. “In spring we remove and replant them before putting in flowers.”

To avoid insects, Evert says he has some insecticide spraying done around building perimeters if there is a problem. “We don’t do any field spraying and we are careful to avoid contamination of the ground water,” he says.

After Lamy’s death, the property was owned by the Pulitzer family of St. Louis, and then in 1918 it became “Bishop’s Lodge” under the ownership of the Thorpe family from Denver. The Thorpes ran the resort until 1998.

Colorful reminders of nearly four centuries of Spanish, Native American and Southwestern cultures endure at Bishop’s Lodge. The award-winning ShaNah Spa honors its spiritual predecessors with Native American-influenced treatments and techniques. Las Fuentes Restaurant & Bar serves creative American cuisine with indigenous influences. Most profoundly, the panoramic views span mountains, desert, forest and Lamy’s precious gardens.

Ranked by **Travel & Leisure magazine** as one of America's premier retreats, the Bishop's Lodge Ranch Resort & Spa offers the resort-style family vacations, weddings, and conference facilities. Bishop's Lodge Ranch Resort & Spa is managed by Prism Hotels & Resorts, whose clients also include Marriott, Hilton, Radisson, Embassy Suites, and Holiday Inn. To make a reservation, call 800-732-2240 or visit www.bishopslodge.com.