

Garden/Kitchen Assistant Job Description

The Garden/Kitchen Assistant works under the Head Gardener two days a week to create and maintain a beautifully lush and rustic landscape that enhances the outdoor ambiance of Menla. The other three days a week will be spent in the kitchen assisting with prep work. Menla is set on 320 mostly wooded acres. At its center are over a dozen buildings holding meeting spaces and housing. Many are embellished by flowerbeds and potted arrangements. We have a large ½-acre organic garden which supplies the kitchen with fresh vegetables and herbs that are used for meals, as well as occasional cut flower arrangements for the guest areas.

The Garden/Kitchen Assistant must have knowledge of common vegetable plants, be able to distinguish between weeds and plants, and be comfortable working outdoors in all temperatures and types of weather including cool, rainy days and occasional heat-waves. The assistant must be able to take direction from the garden manager and follow instructions accurately. Since our gardening staff is limited and the campus is spread out, the successful candidate for this position must be competent with garden equipment and possess sufficient physical fitness/strength to lift tools, bags of soil, planters, and more.

Our Garden/Kitchen Assistant needs to be friendly, dependable, and willing to learn, as well as the type of person who can complete tasks in a timely manner while working alone in the garden or on the grounds. Since garden duties and responsibilities change throughout the season, it is also important that the garden assistant be willing to help in other departments once garden duties are completed. Therefore, they must also be able to work well with others. We are a one-of-a-kind business, and we all go out of our way to ensure that at the end of the day the retreat participants' experience here is uniquely transformational and healing. This means working as a team even while working alone!

Gardening Primary Duties

- Assist the Head Gardener with all tasks related to vegetable garden, flower beds, and potted arrangements
- Spring clean-up [raking, mulching, pruning, turning soil]
- Garden Prep [preparing flower and garden beds, planting, mowing the lawn, weedwacking]
- Weeding
- Watering
- Deadheading, trimming, spraying, and staking flowers
- Other duties and tasks assigned by the Head Gardener as they arise
- Harvesting food and delivering to kitchen when assigned by Head Gardener
- Assist kitchen by preparing harvested items. This includes washing/drying produce such as lettuce and rotating any items in the walk-in refrigerator.
- On days when the weather is bad (rain, etc.), s/he will be given additional prep jobs in the kitchen
- Occasionally assisting other departments when garden duties are finished for the day