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OUTSIDE



SILVERLAKE

Urban Farm

What began for Tara Kolla as clearing the ivy has, in seven years, transformed into L.A.'s model for the sustainable urban garden—complete with a steady string of local volunteers eager to get their hands in the soil. Nestled against the funky-chic residential hillside, the hidden **Silver Lake Farms** brings organically grown

bouquets to local L.A. farmers' markets, overflowing in Ball mason jars. "We're picking flowers that day for market, uncrushed and perfect," says the Brit, whose backyard farm is rife with ranunculas, sweet peas, zinnias, cox combs and heirloom lettuces. And while waiting to hear back from Sacramento so she can use Spago's kitchen scraps once again ("they're the best for composting"), Kolla foregoes the green bins to recycle virtually everything on her 21,000-square-foot plot. "When I started, there was no context for what I was doing. It was before Al Gore, before 'sus-

tainability.'" Now, she's totally in bloom. silverlakefarms.com.

ALISON CLARE STEINGOLD

Silver Lake Farms' blooms are fresh-cut for L.A.-area farmers' markets.

