



M.S. Viraraghavan (left) and Girija Viraraghavan in Belgium, June 2023. | Photo Credit: Sushil Prakash

**In a world where relationships often form the foundation of beautiful stories, there are instances that stand out as remarkable, not just for the individuals involved but for the impact they have on others.**

*by John Bagnasco*

One such tale is the heartwarming journey of Viru and Girija Viraraghavan, a couple whose shared passion for rose growing has not only strengthened their bond but has also created a fragrant legacy.

Their love story began much like any other, but it was their common interest in gardening, specifically in cultivating roses, that set them on a unique path. What started as a shared hobby soon blossomed into a deep-rooted passion that would not only fill their garden with vibrant colors and intoxicating scents but would also inspire others to take up gardening.

For the Viraraghavans, cultivating roses was more than just a pastime; it was an art that required patience, dedication, and a keen eye for detail. They painstakingly selected various rose varieties, each with its own personality and charm, and nurtured them with care. Their garden became a canvas, painted with shades ranging from delicate pinks to passionate reds, creating a haven of tranquility in the midst of the bustling world. The couple's gardening routine was a symphony of togetherness, with Viru and Girija spending countless hours tending to their beloved roses. Their dedication to their garden not only yielded stunning blooms but also deepened their connection, allowing them to share their thoughts, dreams, and laughter as they worked side by side.

The rose lovers' garden became more than just a private paradise; it became a source of inspiration for their community. Friends, neighbors, and even strangers passing by would stop to admire the vibrant display of roses. The couple's willingness to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for gardening encouraged others to explore their own green thumbs.

Through workshops, talks, and open garden days, Viru and Girija extended their passion to those around them, sparking a newfound interest in gardening and helping others find solace in the beauty of nature. Their generosity in sharing both their garden and their wisdom exemplifies the power of a shared passion to create connections and make a positive impact.

In a world that can often be fast-paced and demanding, the Viraraghavans remind us that nurturing a shared passion can create a haven of love and tranquility. Their story encourages us to find our own sources of connection, inspiration, and beauty, whether it's through cultivating a garden, exploring a hobby, or simply spending quality time with our loved ones. The fragrant legacy of Viru and Girija serves as a reminder that love, when nurtured with care, can bloom in the most unexpected and delightful ways.

**For over 5 decades, Viru and Girija's life has been a tireless quest in the service of roses, rhododendrons and the natural world.**