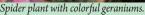
Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2017

Cynthia Brian's December Gardening Guide

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- DISCOVER a living conifer at your favorite nursery that can remain in a container for a few years of Christmas decorating.
- **RAKE** fallen leaves to add to the compost pile. Leave a layer of leaves on the ground, however, too many leaves remaining in the garden encourage disease and block the sunshine.
- APPLY dormant spray to deciduous fruit trees and roses to smother insects and eggs.
- **REMOVE** dead or dying branches from trees, bushes and shrubs.
- **APPLY** a layer of mulch (about three inches) to your landscape to keep the heat in and prevent soil erosion.
- **CONTROL** peach blight and peach curl by spraying trees on a windless day with sulfur mixed with dormant oil. Two other applications will be necessary in January and February.
- WRAP frost tender plants such as bougainvillea, banana, and bird of paradise in burlap to prevent damage.
- GATHER an array of fresh vegetables as you design your holiday menus.
- GIVE the gift of my new book, "Growing with the Goddess Gardener," 12 months of inspiration and gardening tips to sustain your inner gardener with a full year of kindness and happiness in nature. www. cynthiabrian.com/online-store
- **CONTINUE** planting spring blooming bulbs through the end of January. You'll enjoy a long lasting parade of flowers throughout the spring.
- HANG a spray of magnolia leaves sprayed gold and silver on your front door or mailbox.
- ADD merry pink berries to garlands of redwood branches to decorate a mantel or staircase.
- FILL a bowl with grapes for nibbling.
- SLICE orange Fuyu persimmons or seeds of bright red pomegranates into a salad for a delicious and nutritious treat drizzled with olive oil and homemade vinaigrette.
- TIE a gossamer ribbon around a cyclamen, geranium, orchid, or rose to give as a festive hostess gift.
- **USE** the bark of eucalyptus or a lichen covered branch in your holiday décor.
- RAIN kindness and gentleness on everyone you encounter.
- **VISIT** with Santa at 5A Rent-A-Space from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 2. Be the Star You Are!® volunteers will be present to help kids write letters to Santa. Free event with refreshments and a photo with Santa, 455 Moraga Rd. #F, Moraga. www.bethestaryouare.org/events
- REST, relax, and enjoy this season of holly jolly! Happy Gardening and Happy Growing! Cynthia Brian







Deck the halls with a simple composition of roses and orchids on a table centered by a candle.



Get the jump on holiday cooking with fresh garden vegetables.



As winter nears a bright pink hibiscus offers tropical delight.



Growing tightly together, these colorful mums are happy bedmates.