

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for February

- **STROLL** through your garden to soak in the natural aromatherapy. If you are feeling stressed, a handful of lavender florets or leaves rubbed between your palms and inhaled reduces anxiety, and increases feelings of affection.
- **RAISE** your libido with a pot of night blooming jasmine or passionflower placed bedside.
- **PROMOTE** concentration with a sachet of dried rosemary, grapefruit peels and eucalyptus leaves.
- **PICK** naval oranges, also nicknamed "the love fruit." An orange warms your heart, restores your sense of humor and brings out your sunny side. If you are feeling depressed or unloved, inhaling the peels works as a mood-elevator.
- **SPRAY** deciduous trees, fruit trees and roses with the final dose of dormant spray.
- **FLOAT** camellias as a sparkling table centerpiece and pick up all decayed blossoms from the ground.
- **PROTECT** your frost-tender plants by covering with burlap, blankets, cardboard or tarps. Water deeply before a freeze and don't touch the leaves.
- **HARVEST** winter cabbages, kale, Swiss chard and spinach. Pick the last of the arugula and allow the flowers to self-seed for another spring crop.
- **FORCE** your favorite spring bulbs by placing pebbles in a jar. Push the fat bottom part of the bulb into the pebbles, fill part way with water, set in a sunny window and wait for the science project to delight.
- **REMOVE** old bird nests from reachable spaces to allow our avian friends to build fresh, new houses for their young.
- **ENROLL** in a gardening class while the weather is wet and dark. This is a perfect time of year to hone your horticulture skills with education.
- **TURN** on the lawn irrigation system at least once a month to prevent grass from growing over sprinklers. Even in February I spent over three hours attempting to find my lawn sprinkler heads as lawn roots had spread, covering the tops in over four inches of turf.
- **GIVE** living romantic plants for Valentine's offers a breath of fresh air. Excellent choices are orchids, anthuriums, bromeliads or red aglaonema.



A beautiful pink and green cabbage is ready to be cut and consumed. Photo Cynthia Brian



A bromeliad is an easy maintenance, long-blooming indoor plant. It's great as a Valentine's gift.



Pear tree blossoms in the moonlight.



Cynthia Brian with gigantic Swiss chard leaves.

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Why Not to Top

Shade trees should **never** be topped. The regrowth of a topped tree is structurally unsound. Topping required by utility right-of-way pruning is bluntly obvious and sets an unfortunate community standard followed by others. Instead of topping, use crown *cleaning, thinning, and/or proper reduction* methods, set by the ISA.

So don't wait until it's too late, call your local ISA certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping to help you with your pruning questions.

Advance Tree Service

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Show the love this Valentine's Day with a spray from your garden. Or be bold and give a rose bush or two to really express your lasting admiration! Although what we grow may not be perfect, we show how much we care by giving gifts from our heart.

Happy Gardening, Happy Growing, Happy Love Day.

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I am available as a speaker, designer, and consultant.