

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for December

BANISH the winter blah's with Amaryllis. Try something different with Nymph Amaryllis that showcase distinctive heavily petaled flowers on strong stems.

LOVE the actress Judi Dench? You can now buy her special rose: a sun-kissed shade of apricot with a fragrance of cucumber and kiwi from David Austin Roses. <http://www.DavidAustin.com>

DECORATE with living plants. Popular and easy to grow specimens include Split-leaf Philodendron and Fiddle-leaf Fig to Palm, Dieffenbachia, Zeke and Snake Plants.

MAKE wreaths from cuttings from redwoods, cedars, pines and fir. Prune your trees and use the boughs!

MOW lawns short as the grass is dormant. Winterize with an application of fertilizer to help the grass survive and thrive during the cold months.

ADD color to the winter garden with asters and cyclamen.

LOOKING for plants that will grow in your area? Use Plant Finder at <https://www.highcountrygardens.com/>

REVIVE your soil with mulch and plant a cover crop on bare dirt to bring nutrients and pump carbon into roots to feed microorganisms.

GROW sage (*salvia officinalis*) for culinary and prescriptive enjoyment. Place in full sun with well-drained soil, water occasionally when you notice the leaves curling, and harvest stems above new growth. Don't cut into the wood or the plant will die back.

BUY autographed copies of Cynthia Brian's first edition books with free shipping and extra freebies all benefiting disaster relief at <http://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>.

PICK sweet smelling narcissus as they begin to bloom to freshen your bathrooms.

PROTECT frost tender plants with burlap, blankets or sheets.

DISCOVER the lotus flower. This time last year I was in Cambodia where every establishment showcased glorious arrangements of lotus symbolizing purity, enlightenment and awakening. We could use more of this botanical symbol of peace and protection.

BREATHE easier with a harmonica class to increase your lung power. Contact Jack Pawlakos, jepawlakos@gmail.com.

CONTINUE being grateful for being alive and living in wild California.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.



The lotus flower symbolizes peace and protection.

Photos Cynthia Brian



Use slices of Meyer lemon as well as leaves to add fragrance to potpourri.



Sage can be added to bouquets or used as incense.



Drying flowers and herbs on a cookie sheet.