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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian



Bromeliads are colorful and easy to care for.
Photo Cynthia Brian

"Great things are not accomplished by those who yield to trends, fads, and popular opinion."- Jack Kerouac

I'll never forget how excited my mother was to play "Vanna" alongside Pat Sajak on the TV hit, "Wheel of Fortune." It was the first time in the 30-plus years of the show that anyone stepped into Vanna's beautiful shoes to wave bye-bye, and at 87-years-young, my mom definitely had a reason to gloat. Mom never owned a computer nor even knew what social media was, but a few days after her historic TV appearance, she called me to say that everyone said she was "trending." She didn't have a clue what trending meant, but she knew it must be something fun, fabulous and futuristic.

So what does "trend" actually mean? Every dictionary claims a varied description but in general a trend means an upward drift, a tendency to move in a certain direction. I've never been a person who embraced trends as I believe in being original. I like to connect and having meaning in my surroundings. I prefer style. A style is classic, enduring and lasting. Nevertheless, no matter what your personal design preference is, understanding trends can help you identify what you may be missing or what you need to pay attention to. After you know what is trending, it's up to you to express your true individuality.

Trends are what drive sales and help consumers identify new products and services on the market. For

over 20 years, the Garden Media Group has had its fingers on the pulse of a gardening nation. In 2001, outdoor spaces as living rooms were the big hit. The year 2002 was container gardening. By 2006, we had recognized the importance of growing our own food and being sustainable. The birds and bees highlighted our efforts in 2008, and because of the drought, 2011 became the year of succulents. Finally in 2015, millennials were recognized as becoming the next major gardening group, and by 2018 the focus was on wellness.

So what is the chief theme of 2019? No surprise, it is me to she. With the "#Me Too" movement launched, in gardening we are looking to the she, as in Mother Nature, to lead us to the light. Temperatures are rising, major disasters are a regular occurrence, and species are dying. We need to save our planet and being a gardener is one of the first lines of defense. Gardening connects us to nature as we birth the "new environmentalism." Through horticulture, we can assist with solving climate change and biodiversity loss. By finding joy in nature, we have the opportunity to save the environment. When we save our world, we save our species.

How is this a positive upward trend for 2019? Here are a few statistics from 2018:

\$47.8 billion was spent on gardening, including plants and patio furniture.

\$503 is the average amount spent per U. S. household on garden supplies. This is \$100 more than last year.

29 percent of all gardeners are now in the age range of 18-24 years of age, setting record highs.

According to GardenResearch.com, millennials were responsible for 31 percent of houseplant sales!

More than 2 million jobs have been created through horticulture.

For humans to survive, our earth must thrive. Growing plants both inside and outside are proactive steps anyone and everyone can include into daily life.

An indoor generation has been identified whereby 90 percent of people worldwide spend 22 hours a day inside without going outside for fresh air. Research indicates that Americans spend 93 percent of their time indoors or in their vehicles and children are outside for less than one hour per day. Earlier generations of children spent 50 percent of their time outdoors. As a species, we have migrated from the farms to the screens. Obesity, mental illness, high cholesterol, depression and anxiety are the results of too much technology where we are plugged in and tuned out to the benefits of fresh air, digging in the dirt, and natural environs.

So what can we do to help ourselves be healthier in 2019 if we have to be indoors fixated on our screens? Install a terrarium, buy a bromeliad or, better yet, take a 15-minute break to walk in a nearby park. Eat lunch on a bench outside. Enjoy a forest bath. Improve your indoor air quality with a peace lily positioned in a corner of your office, add a pot of herbs to a windowsill, fall in love with tropical plants that will flourish indoors with little care.

By spending too much time in front of televisions, playing video games, texting, being on our phones or tablets, checking social media, or surfing the web, we are disregarding our natural state while increasing our physical and mental challenges. When we take care of ourselves by indulging in nature, we will refresh and reboot our world. Mother Nature is always in charge and we can't ignore her warning signs.

In the next issue, I'll continue this discussion on Garden Trends for 2019. Understand what is trending, then start your own. Until then, consider a digital detox. Get up, get out, dig a little, and breathe our clean air.

Wishing you a fresh start and a new leaf for 2019.

Happy, happy New Year!

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for January

FREE seed catalog and free shipping on over 500 seed varieties at Sow True Seed through Jan. 15. Use Code SHIPFREE19 at <https://sowtrueseed.com/>.

FILL a nature RX, even in the cold weather, and go outside for at least 15 minutes a day. The benefits include relaxation, better sleep, fresh air, physical activity and stress reduction.

START a gratitude habit for the New Year. It's the season to be thankful and if you start now being appreciative for the small things in life, you can turn this feeling into a year-round practice, bringing you more joy.

PICKUP for your holiday tree is available through Jan. 18 on your regular collection day. Remove lights, ornaments, tinsel, and trimmings. Unfortunately, flocked trees are not included in the collection. Schedule a pickup for a fee. Call (925) 685-4711.

BOOST your vitamin C with fresh fruit from citrus trees. Ripening for the next two months you will enjoy sweet navel orange, lime, lemon, grapefruit and Clementine.

HARVEST your Hachiya and Fuyu persimmons that are still hanging.

SHARPEN pruning shears in preparation for the heavy rose pruning you'll do toward the end of January. In the meantime, allow the rosehips to flourish as food for the birds.

PREPARE for winter. A wife's tale from the old country states that when the berries are full, the winter will be long. Cotoneaster, holly, and pyracantha berries are feeding the birds.

IDENTIFY mushrooms before consuming. Many are toxic.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.

Cynthia Brian



Take a walk through our oak forested trails to de-stress. Photos Cynthia Brian



Holly berries are also plentiful, another sign of a protracted winter.



With the rains, mushrooms have surfaced. Be aware of what ones are edible.



Rosehips can be left for the birds dinner until late January heavy pruning. Photos Cynthia Brian



Cotoneaster branches are full of berries. Winter is here.



Cynthia Brian's Mom "trending" as Vanna White on Wheel of Fortune with Pat Sajak. Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, raised in the vineyards of Napa County, is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are! 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's Radio show and order her books at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Buy a copy of her new books, Growing with the Goddess Gardener and Be the Star You Are! Millennials to Boomers at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store. Hire Cynthia for projects, consults, and lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com www.GoddessGardener.com Donate to Fire Disaster Relief via Be the Star You Are! 501 c3 at www.BethestarYouAre.org

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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