

Fragrant Gardens

"Where People who Love Fragrance, Love to Shop"™

Fragrant Plants

What's the first thing we do when we see a flower? Most of us smell it of course. Children especially identify the sight of a blossom with fragrance. While we can occasionally be surprised, disappointed or repulsed by a plants odor, fragrance is an important aspect of gardening.

Humans can identify hundreds of odors. Many can trigger strong reactions and emotions. Using fragrant plants in the landscape is certainly not a new concept. The botanical reason for plant fragrance is simple — it's there to attract pollinators to the blooms. White or pastel blossoms seem to have stronger scents. This trait is probably to help them compete with their more brightly-colored cousins.

Fragrance is not limited to blooms. The essential oils that provide the perfume can be found in other plant parts such as foliage, seeds and bark. Herbs are especially good examples.

Location, Location, Location

Viburnum by the front entrance to your home will invite guests to take a moment to stop and smell the flowers. Of course you want to place fragrant plants where they can be appreciated. Remember our prevailing mountain wind comes from the Southwest and directs the aroma. Remember scent intensity differs as the day progresses and humidity levels and air temperatures change. The best planting locations are:

Walkways and the Entry - passers-by enjoy the aroma from blooms. Scented leaves release their aroma when you brush them as you walk by.

Porches, Patios and Decks - anywhere you have seating is a great place to enjoy fragrant plants, especially evening blooming plants like jasmine and moonflower. A solitary bench in the garden is an excellent place to escape.

Containers Gardens on the move - create your own portable plant aromatherapy by using containers.

Open the Window - any window that allows a breeze to enter the home can only be enhanced by adding the fragrance of plants.

A Trellis to Climb - bring the fragrance up to nose level. Arbors, especially over garden gates, and pergolas bring the aroma to you.

What to Plant

Many of today's hybrids are bred for exceptional appearance. In the process, the traits that provide fragrance have

diminished. Some newly introduced roses have little fragrance compared to their older cousins.

There are still plenty of fragrant plants to choose from. Heirloom or "old-fashioned" varieties tend to be fragrant. Many plant tags will indicate whether aroma is one of the plants traits. There is one very important consideration when selecting fragrant plants for the landscape, the individual gardener's personal definition of fragrant. Perfume to one person may be putrid to another. In short, it's a matter of opinion. Even among flowers most agree do not smell offensive, many people can be overwhelmed by the aroma. Some heavily scented plants such as gardenia, jasmine or lilac may be overpowering.

Having cleared the air on that issue, if you would like to include some fragrance in your garden, we have some ideas and plants to consider.



Herbs

Most if not all herbs are fragrant. Sage and rosemary are undeniably fragrant. Creeping thyme is used as a ground cover in stepping stone walkways simply because it smells good when stepped on. Here are some of the most notable fragrant herbs:

Herbs - almost the entire family of herbs are super fragrant:

Basil
Bay
Catmint
Chamomile
Lavender
Mint
Oregano
Rosemary
Sage
Scented Geranium
Thyme
Many Others

Perennials

Astilbe
Dianthus
Lily-of-the-valley
Hosta
Peony
Phlox
Russian sage
Sedum
Sweet Woodruff
Verbena
Daylily
Primrose
Iris
Lily

Shrubs

Butterfly Bush
Gardenia
Lilac
Mock orange
Osmanthus
Roses
Daphne
Viburnum
Big Sage Bush
Silverberry
Manzanita
Cotoneaster
Forsythia

Trees

Citrus
Crabapple
Flowering Cherry
Crape myrtle
Chitalpa
Pine
Fruit Trees

Ground covers & Vines

Akebia
Clematis
Climbing roses
Honeysuckle
Jasmine
Moonflower
Sweet pea
Wisteria
Akebia

Creeping Thyme
Blue Chip Juniper
Mugo Pine
Lady Banks Rose

Bulbs

Daylily
Hyacinth
Iris
Lily
Narcissus
Daffodil
Tulips
Gladiolas

Annuals

Alyssum
Nasturtium
Pansy
Marigold
Petunia
Poppy
Primrose
Stock
Viola
Candytuft

Evergreens

Juniper
Pine
Holly
Euonymous
Waxleaf Privet
Azalea
Deador Cedar
Spanish Broom
Cypress
Desert Broom
Silver Berry
Rosemary



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