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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

Love grows in a garden

By Cynthia Brian



Sink your nose into the musky scent of Angel Face roses. Photos Cynthia Brian

"The beauty of the season will grow wherever seeds of love are planted." ~ Euripides

February derives from the Latin word februa, which means "to cleanse." The Romans feted Februalia, a month-long purification and atonement festival, annually occurring during the wettest and dreariest of days of the year. In California, February opens the floodgates of rain with weather that is overcast and cold. Thankfully, not everything is dreary and gray. We attribute love to February with the celebration of Valentine's Day and what better place to savor the "amour" than in the garden?

Take a walk in a garden where natural aromatherapy originated. Feel the spongy softness of cool moss as you step off the stone path. Admire the cymbidium orchids beginning to bloom. Sink your nose into a patch of narcissi or heavenly gardenias, inhaling the intoxicating perfumes. Cut a few stems of Angel Face roses with their heady musky scent to give to your partner or friend.

If you are stressed at work, a visit to the intensely fragrant flowers of jasmine will instantly settle your nerves. Is indigestion bothering you after meals? Munch on peppermint leaves with your lunch. Do your children need to focus more on homework? Make a sachet of grapefruit peels, eucalyptus leaves, and rosemary sprigs to promote concentration. Are you having trouble sleeping at night? Pick a stem of fresh lavender, roll the leaves and flowers between your palms, and breathe in the vapors. All of these delightful therapies are available in the February landscape.

One of the season's wondrous luscious gifts is the orange. Its folk name is "love fruit" because the orange is sweet and sensuous. The orange warms your heart, restores your sense of humor, bringing out your brighter personality. When you need a boost of confidence before an interview, presentation or audition, smell the peels from any citrus, especially orange or lemon. If you are feeling depressed or sad, inhaling the peels works as a mood-elevator to restore a sunny disposition. Despite the dismal weather, every time I hike up my hill to pick a radiant navel, I am renewed and refreshed with the sweet and tangy juices. Oranges offer a concentrated Vitamin C shower that pollinates a dampened spirit. Oranges and tangerines are my elixirs. I cook with them, use the leaves, rinds and piths in teas as well as the flowers in salads. I create love sachets and toss the peels in my bathwater when my muscles are aching after a hard day's work.

Since we have more time to dream indoors about gardening in February than actually going outside, this is a perfect month to do like the Romans: clear the clutter, cleanse your body, mind and soul, and tidy your garden in anticipation of spring. Peruse garden books and catalogs. Make a list of what you want to sow for your family's enjoyment. When you start growing fresh healthy food, you'll be showing your heart some love while saving trips to the grocery store. February is Heart Health Month, so experience increased vitamins, flavor and color while munching from your private Garden of Eden.

Life and love began in a garden. Love is not only in the air. Love is growing in your backyard. Discover the benefits of your personalized, organic Love Potion No. 9 and be blessed with the beauty

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and seeds of this season.

May cupid's arrow remain in your heart all year and fill your days and nights with passion.
Happy Valentine's Day!

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for February

LOVE your heart by eating healthy fresh greens, berries, and fruits combined with exercising, and thinking positively.

PULL weeds as they sprout. It's easier to eradicate the weeds in soft, damp soil when they are four to six inches high.

PRUNE fuchsias, roses, and any still dormant shrubs or trees. Do not prune spring-flowering specimens such as tulips, forsythia, lilac or magnolia.

HOUSEPLANTS need a refresher this month. Repot with fresh potting soil, prune any dead leaves, give a jolt of fertilizer, and a spritz of H2O.

CLEAN and sharpen tools to be ready for March madness.

FLOAT pink camellias in a bowl on Valentine's Day.

PLANT bare root roses. Expect blooms by summer.

IDENTIFY mushrooms as edible before picking and consuming. Mushrooms growing in your lawn are most likely poisonous.

ADD moss to areas around steppingstones for a romantic, ethereal sensation.

NAME a rose after your special someone or celebration. Find out prices from a rose breeder or develop your specific rose. The American Rose Society serves as the International Cultivar Registration Authority for Roses following rules set forth by the International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants in the registration of new rose varieties. <https://www.rose.org>

MAKE a simple arrangement of mums, baby's breath, alstroemeria, and stock to bring a bit of sunshine into a dreary February day.

HIBERNATE at home. Enjoy the luxury of reading a good book on a rainy day. Check out my best sellers at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store.

CLEAR the clutter, cleanse and purify. When in Rome .

CELEBRATE Valentine's Day with a pocket of posies picked from your garden. Give the gift of a bare root rose that will yield years of adoration.

February 2024
McDonnell Nursery
Family owned since 1933
195 Moxiga Way - Chaska - (952) 254-8718 - Open 10am-5pm



Yellow and white narcissi make a fragrant pocket posy bouquet. Photos Cynthia Brian



Pick pink camellias to float in a bowl. Photos Cynthia Brian



Eat only identified "as edible" mushrooms growing in your yard. Photos Cynthia Brian

RENA'S RADIANCE

THE NAMING OF THIS ROSE WAS COMMISSIONED BY DAVID MUNSON FOR HIS DARLING WIFE OF 50 YEARS WHO HAS LOVED ROSES AS LONG AS THEY HAVE BEEN TOGETHER.

WE ARE SO PLEASED THAT ONE OF OUR ROSES WAS CHOSEN TO CELEBRATE THEIR 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY!



"OH ISN'T SHE LOVELY" IS WHAT PEOPLE SAY WHEN THEY SEE "RENA'S RADIANCE". THIS LOVELY FLORIBUNDA IS BLESSED WITH A WONDERFUL FRAGRANCE, BLENDING ANISE WITH LEMON AND TEA ROSE. THE PETALS ARE FRILLY AND PERFECTLY PEACH IN A NOSTALGIC FORM REMINISCENT OF THE ENGLISH ROSES. IT'S COMPACT HABIT AND BRIGHT CRISP GREEN FOLIAGE MAKE HER SUPERB IN A CONTAINER OR ALONG A ROSE BORDER. YOU WILL WANT TO HAVE THIS ROSE UP CLOSE WHERE YOU CAN ENJOY THE FRAGRANT BLOOMS ALL SEASON LONG.



Developed by Joseph E. Rogers, Select Roses

As an anniversary gift, a Digging Deep reader, Rena, received her personalized rose: Rena's Radiance.



A jar of sunshine on a dreary February day: mums, baby's breath, alstroemeria, and stock.



Navel oranges are ripe and ready to rejuvenate you.



Cynthia Brian flanked by a flowering pink bower vine.

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! r 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyler Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Buy copies of her best-selling books, including, Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul, Growing with the Goddess Gardener and Be the Star You Are! Millennials to Boomers at www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com www.GoddessGardener.com

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