

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide For April

"The richness I achieve comes from Nature, the source of my inspiration." Claude Monet

"April showers bring May flowers," or so the saying goes. It's time to tiptoe through the tulips, even with galoshes and umbrellas to celebrate the sensory spring jewels of crocus, daffodils, muscari, hyacinths, hellebores, tulips, freesias, and other early gems as they carpet our woodlands, hillsides, and personal havens. The secret to beautiful gardens is a gardener who is enthusiastic about digging deep-rain or shine!

- COMPOSE beautiful stoneware container gardens by mixing a combination of cannas, tuberous begonias, oxalis tetraphylla (lovely pink flowers), dahlias, Tinkerbell agapanthus, and lobelia.
- CAPTURE a photo of your garden with you in it and send it to us for possible publication subject to editorial approval. We want to showcase your creativity. Email high quality jpegs to

Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com.

- CLEAN out perennial beds now and prepare the soil for replanting.
- MULCH plants with organic compost. Wood barks are great for a top cover, but rob nitrogen from the soil as they decay.
- START seeds as soon as the soil is warm enough. If you are anxious, start your crops indoors near a south-facing window or use a fluorescent light for 12 or more hours per day.
- WELCOME the migrating birds home with fresh water in the fountain and seed in the feeder.
- PRUNE wisteria and other woody specimens before they leaf out to promote flowering.
- PLANT edibles amongst your ornamentals. Lettuces, parsley, dill, and basil are pretty as well as delicious.
- GROW your own personal bouquets. Create a stunning arrangement of a variety of daffodils and calla lilies and add sprigs of flowering herbs such as rosemary with its deep blue florets.
- DIG out and replace older woody lavender bushes. Lavender thrives for about 5 or 6 years then is ready for the compost pile.
- FLOAT camellias for an attractive conversation, stimulating centerpiece at a dinner party. Continue to pick up any camellia blossoms that have fallen to the ground to maintain the vigor of the bush.
- ADJUST your lawn mower to a higher setting and allow the clippings to nourish the soil.
- DON'T cut grass when it's wet as it breaks the delicate blades and compacts the soil.
- PROTECT your sewer lines by composting your food scraps as opposed to using the garbage disposal. Your garden and your pipes will thank you.
- BEE friendly by planting three or four types of native wild flowers to attract the honey gatherers as well as pest resistant varieties of flowers, shrubs, trees and vegetables, thus eliminating pesticides.
- LOVE caterpillar larvae as part of the natural food chain attracting birds. Plant host plants for the butterflies such as milkweed and dogwood. Leave a patch of dense vegetation for protection from inclement weather and a small mud puddle to quench their thirst.
- PARTICIPATE in any of the spring flower events in our area
- DECORATE for Easter with fresh eggs from geese, chickens, and ducks. With their natural loveliness, no food coloring is necessary.
- HAUL heavy rocks and flats of flowers by investing in a good wheelbarrow, cart, or even a Red Flyer wagon.
- EXPLORE our local hiking and biking trails for a whiff of springtime wild flowers.
- EXPERIMENT with new plantings and unusual varieties by visiting Lamorinda garden centers and talking with the garden experts.
- EXPERIENCE the bliss of living green and growing memories.

Welcome to spring. May you and your family enjoy a sunny bunny day in your personal Monet's masterpiece makeover.

Happy Gardening to You!

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Cynthia Brian

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My virtual door is always open. I am available as a speaker and consultant. Feel free to contact me.





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