

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for April

"Spring is the season for entering the fertile fields of life with seed, knowledge, commitment, and a determined effort." Jim Rohn

Over the mild winter, my vegetable garden was fabulously overtaken by feral foliage, many of which I've enjoyed as edible delicacies. Now that it is time to prepare the soil for my new seeds, I must edit judiciously. The poison hemlock and the pretty periwinkle will go, but the wild dandelions, arugula, mustard, calendulas, and miner's lettuce will remain until their life expires. As I listen to the croaking of the frogs mating in my pond during the night, I dream of my garden. With these first days of spring, my spirits soar as I dig my paws into the awakening earth. Aw, the renaissance of nature is within my grasp. Breathe in the energy and enthusiasm of new growth.

- CREATE a spring garden room to make your property more intimate and gorgeous by building or buying a pergola or arbor.
- ADD a mirror flanked by evergreens to a porch to enhance the space.
- IMPROVE your soil by digging in organic matter and humus.
- REMOVE deep-rooted weeds such as dandelions from your garden by hand. Eat them!
- DECREASE the spread of crabgrass by applying a pre-emergent that keeps seeds from germinating.
- PROTECT tender shoots from rascally rabbits and destructive deer with light-weight cloth covers until your plants are off to a strong start.
Old bed sheets work well.
- AERATE your lawn to improve the absorption of moisture and fertilizer before reseeding.
- PRUNE a few boughs of brilliant blue blooming rosemary for your kitchen vase. Enjoy the beauty, fragrance, and sprigs of gastronomic flavor.
- HARVEST the tender leaves of wild mustard, arugula, purslane, and dandelion. Add to salads and sandwiches for a surprising snap.
- REFRAIN from cutting back daffodils until they are as crisp as a cracker. They need to replenish the nutrients to the bulb for next year's floral explosion.
- SPRUCE up your home entry with spring in a basket! Buy four-inch pots of plants that accent your home colors to fill a rustic basket.
Add a top dressing of moss and don't forget to include tulips for that Easter ecstasy.
- KEEP picking up those dropped camellia blooms to deter petal blight.
- PLACE a vase of fresh flowers on your nightstand. Research indicates that individuals with the brightest outlooks and happiest attitudes keep blooms bed side.
- CONCEAL ugly chain link fences by planting fragrant sweet peas, scarlet runner beans, or morning glory climbers.
- MOVE plants on a cloudy day to new locations this month. Water thoroughly two hours before digging the entire root ball, plant in the new hole, water, and watch.
- FORAGE for wild greens for an adventurous fresh, nutrient rich salad.
- IDENTIFY mushrooms before using for culinary purposes. Never guess if you are not completely certain.
- CELEBRATE spring with floral, fresh, crisp wines from local agriculture. Visit <http://www.lamorindawinegrowers.com/>
- BUY homegrown heirloom plants including peppers, artichokes, eggplants, tomatoes, herbs and more at the Legacy Garden Farm in Moraga, 1370 Moraga Way, Moraga (between School Street where my office is and the Fire Department) on the weekends in April ending on Sunday, April 22.
- LIVE on the wild side at the Spring Wildflower Festival on April 14 in Sunol. www.ebparks.org or board the Wildflower Train April 14 and 28 in Jamestown. www.railtown1897.org
- GET out, get going, get gardening. It's springtime in our backyards!

Celebrate Passover and Easter in a field of greens!

Happy Gardening to You!

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Cynthia Brian
The Goddess Gardener
Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com
www.GoddessGardener.com
925-377-7827

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



Cynthia Brian with columbine, foxglove, and other garden beauties.