

Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for August

"The world is a book and those who do not travel only read a page." St. Augustine

August is the most traveled month of the year when in some parts of the world entire cities empty of its citizens. Think Paris in August-forget about meeting Parisians, the city has gone on holiday! You will likely meet someone from Lafayette, California in the Galeries Lafayette Grand Magasin. As an avid explorer of our great globe, and a voracious reader and writer, I agree completely with St. Augustine... EXCEPT... in summer I love staying home in Lamorinda. Our weather is glorious, our gardens are spectacular, and it's the best time of the year to gather with friends and family for barbecues, croquet tournaments, concerts in the parks, swim parties, marshmallow roasts, and wine tastings. Enjoy this peaceful paradise we call "home" before the rush of back-to-school begins. This August, travel the world while day-dreaming in your garden.

- **GRILL** your fresh-picked eggplant, corn, watermelon, and peppers on the barbecue. Brush with olive oil and garlic, sprinkle with salt and sage or cilantro.
- **STARGAZE** between August 12-14 towards the northeast to watch the Perseids meteor shower. Throw a quilt on the lawn and enjoy the free show with the family.
- **PHOTOGRAPH** your end of summer perennials and landscaping. When you are planning your spring plantings this winter you'll be glad you have a record.
- **INDULGE** your adventurous nature with a hike on new trail.
- **TUCK** sun-seeking succulents such as sedum, echeveria, and sempervivum in containers for summer sizzle and easy maintenance.
- **REPLACE** broken wooden handles on shovels, hoes, and trowels.
- **WEAR** clothes that cover arms and legs at dawn and dusk and apply the repellent with DEET to protect from mosquito bites.
- **STRETCH** before gardening. As gardeners we twist, turn, bend, pull, climb, dump, and lift which can cause back strains.
- **SLATHER** on the sunscreen before working in the garden, wear a hat to keep burns and sun stroke at bay, and drink plenty of water to keep hydrated.
- **MUNCH** vine ripened tomatoes while enhancing your resistance to UV rays.
- **DIVIDE** bearded iris this month. Crowded rhizomes produce no blooms.
- **ENCOURAGE** your kids to help you water, weed, and feed. They'll feel proud to contribute while learning about the seasons of life.
- **SOAK** citrus and acid loving bushes like rhododendron, azaleas, and camillias to set the buds for next blooming season.
- **PINCH** mums and zinnias for a fuller fall show.
- **RECHARGE** your batteries in your personal garden oasis. It's free and relieves stress.
- **DEADHEAD** annuals and perennials to keep them blooming.
Be diligent with roses which will bloom until January as long as rosehips are not allowed to form.
- **GRAB** a great book and let your mind travel. You'll find hundreds of free reviews of books for the entire family at http://www.btsya.com/book_reviews.html
- **BUY** a Rose of Sharon in bush or tree form to add instant exotic allure to your yard.
- **ALLOW** carrots to go to seed. Not only are the flowers magnificent, you'll get a yield of luscious new carrots next season.
- **PLANT** another crop of lettuce, arugula, carrots, beans, and beets to harvest through the end of October. There is nothing better than growing your own healthy, nourishing, life-enhancing food.

Explore, experiment, and experience as you entertain family and friends in your home haven. Happy staycation.

Happy Gardening to You!

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Who doesn't hear the words "summer" and "bugs" and think of a neat line of ants getting ready to trespass on plaid blanket supporting a picnic basket full of delicacies. But pests can be a serious summer problem, and can threaten more than your turkey sandwich and potato salad. Left unchecked, these summer invaders can quickly turn your tree and landscape assets into liabilities. That's why insect and disease management is such an important part of summer tree care. A keen eye is essential, and proactive monitoring goes a long way towards early detection.

So don't wait until it's too late, have a complete inspection by a Certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping.

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