

Published February 11th, 2015

## Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for February

By Cynthia Brian



The beautiful tulip magnolias are showing their colors earlier this year.

messages with posies. Giving 12 red roses meant, "I love you. Be mine!" in the late 19th century, and it still means that today. I wonder what giving 12 red rose bushes would mean in the 21st century?

STROLL through your garden to soak in the natural aromatherapy. If you are feeling stressed, a handful of lavender florets or leaves rubbed between your palms and inhaled reduces anxiety, and increases feelings of affection.

RAISE your libido with a pot of night blooming jasmine or passionflower placed bedside.

PROMOTE concentration with a sachet of dried rosemary, grapefruit peels and eucalyptus leaves.

PICK naval oranges, also nicknamed "the love fruit." An orange warms your heart, restores your sense of humor and brings out your sunny side. If you are feeling depressed or unloved, inhaling the peels works as a mood-elevator.

SPRAY deciduous trees, fruit trees and roses with the final dose of dormant spray.

FLOAT camellias as a sparkling table centerpiece and pick up all decayed blossoms from the ground.

PROTECT your frost-tender plants by covering with burlap, blankets, cardboard or tarps. Water deeply before a freeze and don't touch the leaves.

HARVEST winter cabbages, kale, Swiss chard and spinach. Pick the last of the arugula and allow the flowers to self-seed for another spring crop.

Love is in the air! Every February we are reminded about the importance of amour in every day living. Recently my gardening mentor, my mother, was hospitalized in the Intensive Care Unit of a major hospital when her lungs filled with fluid from an undetected virus. Picking two cultivars from my garden, fragrant narcissi and pink bergenia that she had originally given me from her garden years ago, I ambled to her bedside with a jar filled with these beloved winter blooms, only to be told by the head nurse that flowers weren't allowed in the ICU. With her saddened eyes, my mom pleaded, "Oh please, may I keep them? They make me happy." She survived her ordeal and her bouquet went with her as she was moved from room to room. I like to think that these small reminders of her home and the love she has for her garden spurred her miraculous recovery.

One of the most popular ways to show we care is to give those we love flowers. Florists sell more bouquets at Valentine's than any other time of the year. Last year over 200 million roses were grown for Cupid sales with men purchasing 75 percent of all blooms according to the Society of American Florists. Depending on what message a person wants to convey, there is a flower and a color that corresponds to the emotion. The Victorian era popularized the language of flowers with floriography, a poetic way to exchange

**FORCE** your favorite spring bulbs by placing pebbles in a jar. Push the fat bottom part of the bulb into the pebbles, fill part way with water, set in a sunny window and wait for the science project to delight.

**REMOVE** old bird nests from reachable spaces to allow our avian friends to build fresh, new houses for their young.

**ENROLL** in a gardening class while the weather is wet and dark. This is a perfect time of year to hone your horticulture skills with education.

**TURN** on the lawn irrigation system at least once a month to prevent grass from growing over sprinklers. Even in February I spent over three hours attempting to find my lawn sprinkler heads as lawn roots had spread, covering the tops in over four inches of turf.

**GIVE** living romantic plants for Valentine's offers a breath of fresh air. Excellent choices are orchids, anthuriums, bromeliads or red aglaonema.

Show the love this Valentine's Day with a spray from your garden. Or be bold and give a rose bush or two to really express your lasting admiration! Although what we grow may not be perfect, we show how much we care by giving gifts from our heart.

Happy Gardening, Happy Growing, Happy Love Day.

(c)2015  
Cynthia Brian  
The Goddess Gardener  
Starstyle(r) Productions, llc  
Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com  
www.GoddessGardener.com  
925-377-STAR  
I am available as a speaker,  
designer, and consultant.



Fragrant narcissi brighten the February garden. Photos Cynthia Brian



A beautiful pink and green cabbage is ready to be cut and consumed. Photo Cynthia Brian



A bromeliad is an easy maintenance, long-blooming indoor plant. It's great as a Valentine's gift.



Pear tree blossoms in the moonlight.



Cynthia Brian with gigantic Swiss chard leaves.

Reach the reporter at: [info@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:info@lamorindaweekly.com)

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA