

Digging Deep-Gardening with Cynthia Brian

Houseplant Happiness

By Cynthia Brian

"I couldn't wait for success — so I went ahead without it." ~ Jonathan Winters



Pots of cymbidium orchids and azaleas can live outside on the porch or be brought indoors.

Photos Cynthia Brian

It's raining, it's pouring, the old man is snoring. And, oh, how happy we are all! As those of you who have been reading this column know, I am not usually a fan of winter because I adore basking in the sunlight of gardening bliss. But this January I am singing in the rain because raindrops keep falling on my head. El Nino translated means our natural surroundings are finally receiving a well deserved soaking.

Since it is wet and cold outside, we will bring the healthy spirit of the outdoors

in with beautiful houseplants. Many plants that we relish as indoor specimens grow wild in the tropics or warmer climates south of the equator. To start the year out with wellness as a resolution, we can provide physical and psychological benefits to our families by introducing the bold shapes, exotic foliage, and cool colors of houseplants. Inside plants absorb more than 87 percent of volatile organic compounds, including formaldehyde, benzene, and xylene from the air we breathe. VOCs come from newer, more energy-efficient buildings as well as household cleaners, carpeting off-gasses, drapes, furniture, and personal care products including hair spray and nail polish. The Environmental Protection Agency reveals that indoor pollution can be five to ten times greater than the outdoors.

Houseplants to the rescue!

Contrary to what many people believe, houseplants are extremely easy to grow, maintain, and enjoy with just a little TLC – food, water, sunlight and singing, if you so desire. Different plants require various amounts of each. Choose the right plant for your chosen location, then allow the healthy plant to take care of itself.

Some of the best plants to absorb airborne toxins include spathiphyllum, also known as the peace lily, orchids, pothos, Chinese evergreen, philodendron and dieffenbachia. All houseplants will clean the air and provide beauty.

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The bright shiny anthuriums come in an array of colors, thrive indoors, and bloom for months.