

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian

In My Sister's Garden-A Wistful Romp through a Drought-Resistant Oasis



A whimsical corner featuring wagon wheels, butterflies, and a grand mixture of petunias, roses, geraniums, sweet William, iris, and more.

Photo Cynthia Brian

"Spring is the time of the year, when it is summer in the sun and winter in the shade." - Charles Dickens

One of the great things about growing up on a farm in the boondocks is that your tribe is your family. We five siblings were as thick as thieves as we climbed trees, worked the fields, pulled fences, drove tractors, branded cattle, and planted the spring garden. We played, we quarreled, and we dug in

the dirt together. By the time May arrived, we ached to get our hands grubby in the vegetable patch. Waiting for the vegetables to sprout and be harvested taught us patience and responsibility. Of course, Mom's beautiful flower gardens would already be in bloom by this time of year getting us into constant trouble because we were forever picking bouquets not only for her, but, for teachers, 4-H leaders, and Sunday masses.

As we grew into adults, our love of the earth grew as well. Following in the big shoes of my father, my brother continued the family tradition of being a farmer and has one of the most beautiful vineyards in the county. Our mother's love of gardening instructed the gardens of her girls.

Recently I walked with my sister Debbie through her eclectic garden. There is a saying that "you can take the girl out of the country, but you can never take the country out of the girl." With Deb, she's never left the land where we were born. She is a country cowgirl through and through. She's always adorned with her cowboy hat, rodeo belt buckle, and boots! She hunts, fishes, grows her food, and would have relished being a pioneer in the 1870s.

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The antique plow with the cowpoke couple greets visitors.