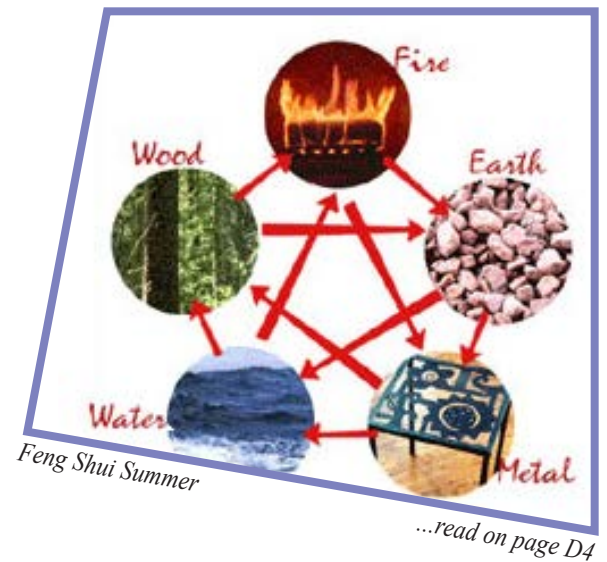


Lamorinda OUR HOMES

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Digging Deep

Give Your Gardens Some Summer Love

By Cynthia Brian

“It’s better to be absolutely ridiculous than absolutely boring.” — Marilyn Monroe



Park a container of salvia, petunia, pelargonium, geranium, and other heat lovers next to a bench.

Photo Cynthia Brian

What a difference a few weeks make. Our weather went from cool, drizzly, and overcast to three digit temperatures in less than seven days, then back again. Our emerald green hills metamorphosed into golden grasslands seemingly overnight. Mother Nature is preparing us for the forthcoming summer solstice. Pool parties, barbecues, and kids playing outside portend a pleasant June. How wonderful it is to sit in a comfortable chaise on the patio on a warm evening admiring the landscape and the stars. Welcome to blooms in June.

I was delighted to have my daughter, Heather (yes, named after the flower), spend a couple of weeks with me recently. The first words out of her mouth as she walked into the garden were “Mom, your landscape looks like a scene from Alice in Wonderland. It’s so colorful, bold, beautiful.” Indeed, my garden is a riot of hues with roses, gladiolas, lilies, love-in-the-mist, calendulas, clematis, petunias, dahlias, hibiscus, geraniums, pelargoniums, calla lilies, nasturtiums, butterfly bush, guavas, daisies, poppies, osteospermum, chamomile, salvias, lavender, numerous herbs, and flowering succulents. Many of the blooms are edible, gracing my salads, sauces and stir-fries.

There is no mystery to incorporating some summer loving into your garden. My secret sauce is to plant a plethora of perennials and bulbs enhanced by color spots of annuals augmented by shrubs that bloom, trees that bear fruit, with edibles everywhere. Add your unique creative artistry to create your personalized haven and voila! Instant success, year after year.

The elements you must consider whenever you are planting perennials or any plant are soil, light, moisture needs, climate, colors and plant qualities. Once you know what you like, you can layer your landscape to attract the pollinators, birds and wildlife, all the while being water conscious and employing practical earth stewardship.

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