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## Cynthia Brian's Gardening Guide for December

By Cynthia Brian



Fuyu and Hachija persimmons are ready to pick for Christmas puddings and cakes. Photos Cynthia Brian

"As the rain falls equally on the just and the unjust, do not burden your heart with judgments but rain your kindness equally on all." - Gautama Buddha

The month of December ushers in a time of joyfulness and giving with gardeners being the most generous givers of all. Harvests of persimmons, walnuts and pomegranates make for baskets of nutritious and delicious gifts. Root cuttings, potted plants, and arrangements made from bark, branches and pinecones are natural reminders of the wonders of a pre-winter season. The final flush of rose blooms mixed with orchids create a lush yet simple table display when a few glittering candles are added. With the colder weather, trees are ablaze with their final cloak of autumn hues as an array of colorful leaves litters the ground. Chrysanthemums are thick with blossoms adding a brightness and lightness to the darkening sky.

We encourage the rain and the intermittent sunshine.

Soon our landscapes will boast sparkling lights and festive decorations to welcome family and friends to enjoy holiday treats. Children of all ages are excited for the surprises that await them for Hanukkah and Christmas.

I'm excited to announce that my much anticipated garden book, "Growing with the Goddess Gardener," Book I in the Garden Shorts series is now available in both color and black and white. Buy directly from [www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store](http://www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store)

for the best price and autographed copies; 25 percent of your purchase is a donation to Be the Star You Are!(r) 501 c3 charity ([www.BetheStarYouAre.org](http://www.BetheStarYouAre.org)). With every order placed directly at our store, you'll receive seeds and extra goodies. This book is a great gift for all the gardeners and nature lovers on your holiday list.

Have a holly jolly December and remember to give yourself the gift of rest and relaxation as there are only minimal gardening tasks while Nature takes her annual nap.

Cynthia Brian's December Gardening Guide

DISCOVER a living conifer at your favorite nursery that can remain in a container for a few years of Christmas decorating.

RAKE fallen leaves to add to the compost pile. Leave a layer of leaves on the ground, however, too many leaves remaining in the garden encourage disease and block the sunshine.

APPLY dormant spray to deciduous fruit trees and roses to smother insects and eggs.

REMOVE dead or dying branches from trees, bushes and shrubs.

APPLY a layer of mulch (about three inches) to your landscape to keep the heat in and prevent soil erosion.

CONTROL peach blight and peach curl by spraying trees on a windless day with sulfur mixed with dormant oil. Two other applications will be necessary in January and February.

WRAP frost tender plants such as bougainvillea, banana, and bird of paradise in burlap to prevent damage.

GATHER an array of fresh vegetables as you design your holiday menus.

GIVE the gift of my new book, "Growing with the Goddess Gardener," 12 months of inspiration and gardening tips to sustain your inner gardener with a full year of kindness and happiness in nature. [www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store](http://www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store)

CONTINUE planting spring blooming bulbs through the end of January. You'll enjoy a long lasting parade of flowers throughout the spring.

HANG a spray of magnolia leaves sprayed gold and silver on your front door or mailbox.

ADD merry pink berries to garlands of redwood branches to decorate a mantel or staircase.

FILL a bowl with grapes for nibbling.

SLICE orange Fuyu persimmons or seeds of bright red pomegranates into a salad for a delicious and nutritious treat drizzled with olive oil and homemade vinaigrette.

TIE a gossamer ribbon around a cyclamen, geranium, orchid, or rose to give as a festive hostess gift.

USE the bark of eucalyptus or a lichen covered branch in your holiday décor.

RAIN kindness and gentleness on everyone you encounter.

VISIT with Santa at 5A Rent-A-Space from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 2. Be the Star You Are!(r) volunteers will be present to help kids write letters to Santa. Free event with refreshments and a photo with Santa, 455 Moraga Rd. #F, Moraga. [www.bethestaryouare.org/events](http://www.bethestaryouare.org/events)

REST, relax, and enjoy this season of holly jolly!

Happy Gardening and Happy Growing!

Cynthia Brian



Be a child again and play in the fallen leaves.



The bark of the eucalyptus works well for holiday decorating.



Pomegranates are high in antioxidants.



Spider plant with colorful geraniums.



Deck the halls with a simple composition of roses and orchids on a table centered by a candle.



Get the jump on holiday cooking with fresh garden vegetables.



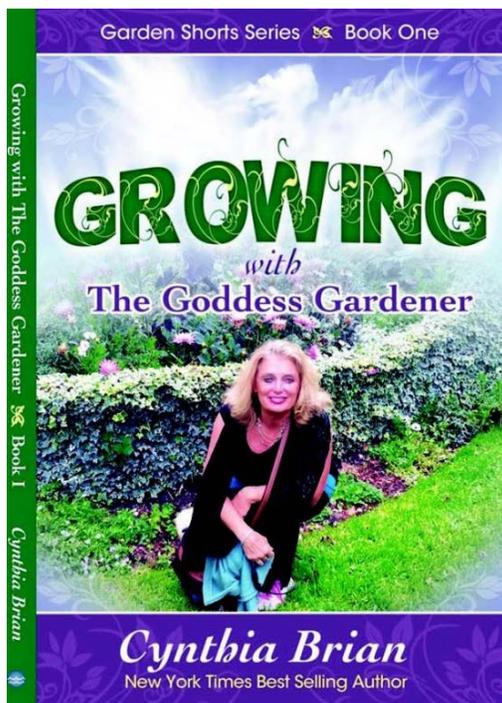
As winter nears a bright pink hibiscus offers tropical delight.



Growing tightly together, these colorful mums are happy bedmates.



The leaves of the crape myrtle turn a fiery pumpkin, saffron, and scarlet before falling.



Cynthia Brian's new book, *Growing with the Goddess Gardener*. Order at <http://www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store> Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, raised in the vineyards of Napa County, is a New York Times best selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are1(r) 501 c3. Please make a donation to help with hurricane & fire disaster relief at [www.BetheStarYouAre.org](http://www.BetheStarYouAre.org). Tune into Cynthia's Radio show and order her books at [www.StarStyleRadio.com](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com). My new book, *Growing with the Goddess Gardener*, is available at [www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store](http://www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store). Available for hire for any gardening project. [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com) [www.GoddessGardener.com](http://www.GoddessGardener.com)

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