

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

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The Real Estate Quarter in Review ... read on Page D4

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Sweet, savory summer



Beautiful pink cherry plums hang on the tree.

Photos Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian

“Steep thyself in a bowl of summer.” – Virgil

Summer! Just saying the word puts a smile on my face.

Since I was a little girl, the months of July and August were times of great joy, working as a laborer picking or cutting apricots, peaches, and pears in neighbors' orchards or

fruit shed to earn money for college during the day, followed by unwinding with evening baseball games in the fields. Sundays were spent with cousins and relatives swimming in the pool at my grandparents' vineyard. Our parents would prepare a feast for dinner after harvesting whatever vegetables were ready in the garden while the kids braved the thorny brambles to find the juiciest berries for dessert. In the station wagon on

the way back to our ranch, we'd fall blissfully asleep, our hearts filled with happy memories and our bellies pleasantly satiated, except, of course, for my Dad, the driver.

Summer boasts a sweet and savory story with harvests of corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, peaches, pears, apples, plums, prunes, eggplants, zucchini, berries, peppers, and other nutritious treats that will grace our dining tables. Although this summer I won't be hosting any barbecue buffets, I still enjoy picking fresh fruit in my orchard and eating my home-grown vegetables. Pink cherry plums are plump and especially delicious this year as are the deep dark purple prunes. Prunes and plums come from the same genus, *prunus*, yet they are not identical.

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Shrub filled with black currant berries.