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## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian



Roses continue to bloom through the winter.  
Photos Cynthia Brian

"In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy." - William Blake

The rainy days and nights have been a welcome respite to our dry, drought-driven California. What a delight to witness hills of green and listen to the rushing waters in our creeks. In the past few weeks, seeds and weeds have germinated providing a lush look to every landscape. Green is the color of life, renewal, and most of all, nature. How fortunate we are to behold green spaces and places as the new year kicks off.

After the recent atmospheric river, I went to check on the Brussels sprouts and sugar snap peas previously planted. To my surprise and delight, the gravel path was covered with sprouted arugula and nasturtium, a most delicious unplanned encounter. The seeds must have blown in from the vegetable garden bestowing a ready-made salad corridor. In another area, chamomile has covered the ground like a lavish lime carpet. Weeds, appearing as ground covers have made their appearance

as well. The common cutleaf geranium, a wild weed also known as cut-leaved cranesbill, blankets my hillside. It is beautiful at this stage of its prostrate growth; however, it will prevent other plants from developing. By spring, it will sport tiny pink florets. The recommendation is to control its spread early as each plant will produce 150 seeds or more that will remain viable for five to 10 years! I have work to do.

In winter, wisteria is a tangle of bare branches. My purple wisteria has twined its way into my flowering pear which makes for an artistic tableau with the pear blossoms peeking out from the brambles. Fresh leaves have emerged on the loquat tree and the magnolia leaves are a shining brilliant green. Society garlic, bergenia, narcissus, and roses offer additional color to the emerald landscape. Naked lady bulbs have sprouted their gorgeous green leaves which are commonly mistaken for agapanthus fronds. I write about Naked ladies often as they are a foundation of my late summer garden with their long naked necks and pretty, pink faces. This week I've been shooting photos of their green leaves which enhance the beauty of barren earth.

My garden has entered the new year in decent enough shape that I will be able to enjoy the winter. If you haven't gardened before, 2022 will be the time to personalize and customize your outdoor experience to reduce stress, smell the roses, and eat what you grow.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention released a survey that found 42% of Americans experienced anxiety or depression in 2021 compared to just 11% pre-pandemic. Growing, giving, and receiving flowers, herbs, vegetables and fruits trigger the feel-good hormones that heal. Most seeds that are being sold this year will be for edibles as more and more people realize that growing what we want to consume is easy, nutritious, and better for the planet.

The Garden Media Group reported that in 2021, 18.3 million people took up gardening, with interest levels equal between men and women. Eighty percent of the younger generation consider gardening a worthwhile and "cool" endeavor as the concern with climate change, plant and wildlife extinction, and food equity escalates. People with children are especially interested in growing organic and natural foods. Purchasing grow-your-own kits that include the container, seeds, plants, fertilizer, and supports as well as raised beds are expected to be in high demand. Adding native plants to increase biodiversity and forage for the birds and wildlife will also be a critical ingredient. The National Wildlife Federation launched a Guide for Wildlife collection of keystone native plants that will attract insects that will feed 95% of backyard bird species. Getting to know our neighborhood birds has already become a popular pastime. Make sure to provide forage for them as you enjoy their symphonic tunes. (See my article, "A Berry, Merry Christmas. Mostly for the Birds" [www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1522/Digging-Deep-with-Goddess-Gardener-Cynthia-Brian-A-berry-merry-Christmas-mostly-for-the-birds.html](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1522/Digging-Deep-with-Goddess-Gardener-Cynthia-Brian-A-berry-merry-Christmas-mostly-for-the-birds.html))

You don't need a large landscape to have a garden. You can buy planter boxes or containers that will fit on your porch, balcony, patio, or even a windowsill. Start planning a mixture of flowers, ornamentals, and edibles. Many flowers are both beautiful and edible including violets, nasturtium, pansies, tulip petals, daylilies, bee balm, calendula, roses, hostas, and herb flowers. By making 2022 the year to embrace organic methods, adding more plants to our dining menus, and composting the leftovers, we can each do our part to reduce our carbon footprint.

As you write your goals and resolutions for 2022, I encourage you to keep a green journal and add gardening to the top of your list. You will be rewarded with a more peaceful mind, a soulful spirit, a kinder heart, and a body that is nourished. Cultivate a theme of green and together we will dig deeper to sustain and nurture our environment for ourselves and future generations.

In winter, enjoy!

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy Green New Year!



Shiny emerging leaves of the magnolia tree, a pollinator magnet. Photos Cynthia Brian



The purple florets of society garlic add purple to the greenscape. Photos Cynthia Brian



A former gravel path boasts a salad of wild arugula and nasturtium. Photos Cynthia Brian



The weed, common cutleaf wild geranium must be pulled as soon as possible. Photos Cynthia Brian



Narcissus are blooming with wafting fragrance.



Pear blossoms peek through a tangle of barren wisteria branches.



New green growth on the loquat tree.



Cynthia Brian toasts all gardeners in the New Year! Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, is available for hire to help you prepare for your winter garden. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia 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 Are!r 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyler Radio Broadcast at [www.StarStyleRadio.com](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com). Buy copies of her books, including, Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul, Growing with the Goddess Gardener, and Be the Star You Are! [www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store](http://www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store). Receive a FREE inspirational music DVD and special savings. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com) [www.GoddessGardener.com](http://www.GoddessGardener.com)

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