

# Lamorinda

# OUR HOMES

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## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

### Preventing gardening injuries



Photos Cynthia Brian

Liquid amber and Japanese maple trees with their fabulous fall foliage.

By Cynthia Brian

*“Do what you can for as long as you can, and when you can’t, do the next best thing!” Chuck Yeager*

One of the many lessons I’ve learned from my 40-plus years in the entertainment industry is that the show must go on! Except for the COVID-19 pandemic, actors go to work despite any personal circumstances. I’ve put on my acting mask when I’ve had walking pneumonia, broken bones, and deaths in the family. I even left my hospital bed to shoot a commercial two days after giving birth. My new baby girl went to work with me!

As a hands-on gardener, I have always pushed through the pain to get everything done on time.

Whether it was digging trenches, installing French drains, cutting dead limbs, building stairways, hauling gravel, pulling weeds, pushing a lawnmower, or planting twenty flats of ice plant, I did it with joy

and with ease.

Everyone knows that gardening is terrific exercise. The muscles of our backs, shoulders, legs, arms, thighs, and wrists get an intense workout. Because of all the bending, lifting, and twisting (BLT), lower back and neck pain are common after a strenuous gardening chore. When I start aching, my remedy is to soak in a hot bath with Epsom salts. That usually works.

Not this time.

Somehow this week I exceeded the limits of my body and ended up writhing on the floor with painful spasms beyond anything I’ve ever experienced. The spinal surgeon admonished me, “No BLT!” but as a gardener how can we eliminate bending, lifting, and twisting?

I’m using voice dictation to write this column because I’m bedridden, and like in show business, publishing must go on. The photos included are not of injuries but joyful fall favorites. Because I don’t want you to experience a similar painful situation to mine, I’m including tips on how to avoid injuries in the garden. As soon as I heal, I will be following my own advice!

#### Ways to Avoid Injuries in the Garden

1. Wear appropriate clothing including sturdy boots, gloves, and a hat. My favorite piece of gardening clothing is an apron with pockets where I keep a few hand tools handy.
2. Apply sunscreen and wear sunglasses during the daylight.
3. Prevent tick bites by treating your clothes with permethrin. I have had excellent success with buying clothing and sprays from [www.InsectShield.com](http://www.InsectShield.com).



The golden leaves of the Hachiya persimmon tree with almost ripe fruit.

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