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## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian



Golden leaves of a red-branched Japanese Maple. Photo Cynthia Brian

"Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away; Lengthen night and shorten day! Every leaf speaks bliss to me, Fluttering from the autumn tree..."~Emily Brontë

When it rained this past week, did you smell it? The scent of earth mixed with fallen leaves and decomposing plant matter signals the transition of the seasons. On the calendar, autumn began on Sept. 22, but it wasn't until November that I inhaled this intoxicating aroma that brought back childhood memories of the end of harvest, jumping in piles of leaves, and blazing bonfires.

In just a week, it seemed that so many trees changed their wardrobe from vibrant green to sunset colors of amber, gold, red, bronze and yellow. The "foliage show" is late here in California, yet it is glorious. As the leaves turn, they also drop, blanketing our landscapes with a marvelous source of nitrogen phosphorus, potassium, and nutrients that the soil craves. As much as you want to tidy your garden, refrain

from raking the leaves into your green bin. Leave a layer of leaves on the ground to encourage the photosynthesis process in the natural circle of life. If leaves are too big, mow or cut them and add them to a compost pile with food scraps, lawn clippings, eggshells, coffee grounds, and other biodegradables. After a few months, you'll have a rich mulch filled with worms and beneficial microbes to add back into your garden at no cost to you. When you add organic materials to your soil, you are providing food for the organisms that improve soil aeration and drainage while reducing soil compaction. The nutrients will release over time

As we inhale the delicious flavors of fall and experience the cooler temperatures, it is also time to perform tasks in preparation for winter.

COVER any exposed soil with straw, grass clippings, aged wood chips, pine needles, or even shredded newspaper to reduce weed growth, moderate soil temperatures, retain moisture, and reduce erosion over winter.

BUY six packs of perennials including columbine, carnations, penstemon, and coral bells.

BRIGHTEN your fall garden with pops of color from pansies, cyclamen, violas, Mums, stock, Iceland poppies, and primroses.

FIND favorite fall color trees to add to your landscape where selections are vast at your local nursery.

SCATTER California wildflower seeds including poppies and lupines and sow seeds of sweet Alyssum, bachelor buttons, forget-me-nots, and milkweed.

DEADHEAD roses for continued blooms during the holidays.

PRUNE dead branches from trees and shrubs.

BEWARE hungry coyotes have been on a rampage killing poultry, cats, and small dogs. Keep your animals and small children safe.

ENJOY the many colors of lantana blooming throughout fall in purple, orange, red, white, and yellow.

GET READY to plant bulbs towards the end of the month for a spring show.

### IN THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

During a cold winter, there is nothing better than knowing that you have organic, tasty, greens and vegetables growing right outside your door. Fall is the best time to get these nutritious edibles going for a bountiful harvest in the new year. Most of these plants prefer extra nitrogen. Side-dress them with a balanced fertilizer as they grow.

Plant seeds or seedlings of:

Varieties of lettuce

Asian greens

Spinach

Arugula

Swiss Chard

Chicory

Kale

Cress

Beets

Cabbage

Radish

Broccoli

Broccoli rabe

Carrots

Cauliflower

Kohlrabi

Peas

### Turnips

Make sure to plant shallots and garlic now to harvest next summer.

Although I don't like the darkness that descends so much earlier when I still have so many chores to complete, I am reveling in the cooler days that allow for laboring longer with less strain. Digging in the dirt in fall bequeaths the most luscious autumn aromas . musty, musky, intoxicatingly earthy. I wish I could bottle it!

Thank you to so many readers who sent me notes of healing. You touched my heart and my spirit, and I am very appreciative. I am following my own advice. Each day anew . and a wee bit slower!

Go outside and breathe in the fragrance of fall and know that, as gardeners, we will be resting soon, along with Mother Nature.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing!

### NOT TO BE MISSED

Saturday, Nov. 12 from 3 to 5 p.m., I'll be in-person reading, telling stories, and signing books from my new children's book, "No Barnyard Bullies," at Point Richmond Art Gallery, 145 West Richmond Ave., Point Richmond. Families with children are welcome. If you have purchased an NFT from [www.StarStyleCommunity.com](http://www.StarStyleCommunity.com), you'll be given a gift.

Monday, Nov. 21 at 2 p.m., I'll be hosting a "Thanksgiving is Every Day" celebration via Zoom for members of the StarStyler Community. Buy a StarStyler NFT today that benefits Be the Star You Are!r 501 c3 charity and participate in numerous exclusive experiences designed for members only. [www.StarStyleCommunity.com](http://www.StarStyleCommunity.com)



You can almost smell the fall fragrance of this autumn orchard. Photo Cynthia Brian



Keep deadheading your roses to have beautiful bouquets for the holidays. Photo Cynthia Brian



Primroses add color to the garden throughout fall and winter. Photo Cynthia Brian



Pick pumpkins now. Photo Cynthia Brian



Cynthia Brian in fall with the blooming Tecoma Chicklet Orange stock plant.

Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia Brian 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). Her newest children's picture book, "No Barnyard Bullies," from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available now at [www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store](http://www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store) For an invitation to hang out with Cynthia for fun virtual events, activities, conversations, and exclusive experiences, buy StarStyler NFTs at <https://StarStyleCommunity.com> Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com) <https://www.GoddessGardener.com>

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