

The Goddess Gardner's Gardening Guide for April

AMEND your soil before you begin sowing. Soil is the foundation of your garden. Rich compost will help with adding the nutrients your plants will need to thrive.

CLEAN and sharpen your garden tools by plunging them in a five-gallon bucket of sand mixed with a cup of vegetable oil. The sand will keep them sharper and the oil wards off the rust. Small hand tools can be stored in the sand bucket.

BUILD or buy raised beds lined with wire to make gardening easier on your back as well as protected from digging predators like gophers and rats. Fill with a combination of mulch, compost, and soil.

CONSIDER implementing permeable pavers on a patio for increased water capturing that will support your landscape.

PLANT frost tender plants as the weather warms toward the end of the month. Ground covers, citrus, bougainvillea, and summer annuals including begonia, lobelia, snapdragon, cosmos, and primrose are available for purchase.

SUPPORT peonies or other tall plants that are flopping with a tomato cage!

EXCHANGE rhizomes, bulbs, and seeds with fellow gardeners for a variety of selections.

SOW seeds of scarlet runner bean, sweet peas, star jasmine, or morning glories to climb on fences and wire.

CREATE a palette of striking performance with the many shapes, sizes, textures, and colors of drought-tolerant succulents which require minimal moisture.

ENJOY a successive parade of patterns and painted brushstrokes throughout the seasons by planting plants with complimentary hues and consecutive blooming times.

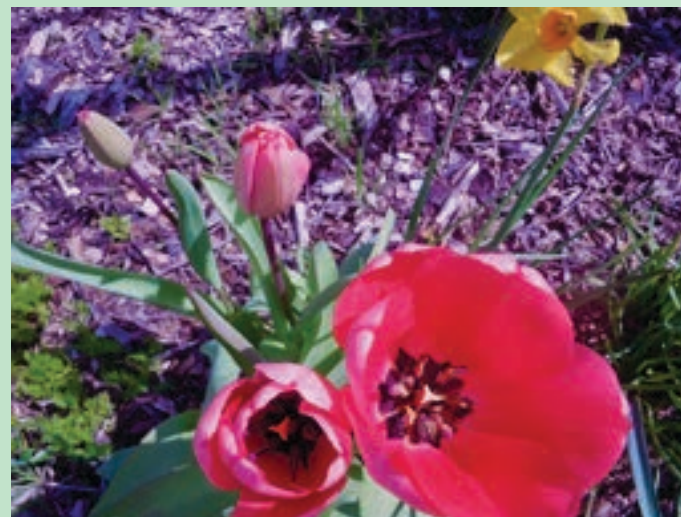
SCRUB your barbecue grill with white vinegar then scrub with half an onion to clean the grates and get ready for outside dining.

COMBINE ornamental and edible plants to create a cottage garden. Make sure your interior design and exterior esthetics flow like water.

RESIST cutting back the dying leaves of narcissi and daffodils. The fronds are gathering their nutrition for next year's blooms. Cut them back only when as dry as potato chips.

CONTROL snails and slugs with non-toxic Sluggo, pick them off by hand, use copper barriers, or bowls of beer. These slimy gastropods hatching now will devour new seedlings.

BUY ladybugs from your nursery or garden center if you see aphids, mealybugs, or other pests on your plants. Remember ladybugs fly to infested gardens.



The spirit of spring is exhibited in tulips.



Peonies add a power punch and make beautiful bouquets.



Because of the rainy weather, moss grows on the brick stairs.