

# Lamorinda

# OUR HOMES

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Top tips for fall organizing

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## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

### Seasonal reset

By Cynthia Brian

*“Nature gives to every time and season some beauties of its own.” ~ Charles Dickens*

Monochromatic. My feature-less October garden appears unicolor. There are several shades of green, so perhaps not completely boring, but other than splashes of pink from the crape myrtles, rock purslane, roses, Jacobinia, and late-blooming Naked Ladies, as well as purple from the Princess flowers and muscari, colors are absent. I’m trying to find the beauty in this “in-between time” before autumn leaves turn brilliantly bright.

It seems like it was only last week that I was power washing my patio, setting out umbrellas, and arranging my outdoor furniture in a landscape that was filled with blooms. The summer wasn’t endless as fall arrived abruptly and with it the numerous chores in preparation for winter and spring. It’s time for my annual seasonal reset.

Because summer is so wonderfully pleasant in our community, my husband and I choose Saturday and Sunday “staycations” instead of traveling elsewhere in the warmer months. Summer is when we do our outdoor entertaining for family and friends. I’ve designed my backyard to reflect a relaxing and rejuvenating resort complete with multiple market umbrellas, lounges, tables, chairs, firepits, hammocks, games,



Fountains and ponds are especially enjoyable to the birds and wildlife.

and spa refinements. Summer is glorious, colorful, and comfortable.

When October arrives, it’s time to pack up. It takes me more than a week to clean, cover, move, and store all the furniture, cushions, umbrellas, hammocks, and more. The dozen atmospheric rivers of last winter may be an indicator of even stronger storms requiring sand bags coming this winter. I prefer to be prepared. Most of my outdoor cushions I custom sewed myself using Sunbrella® fabrics in the colors that complement my landscape. Although these fabrics are created to last years in the sunshine, rain,

and inclement elements, I choose to protect them from winter wear and tear.

Here are my recommendations for shielding your outdoor furnishings from the harsh winter to increase their longevity.

1. Wipe off all dirt from furnishings. If dirt or bird droppings are on your furniture or pads, wash them thoroughly and allow them to dry in the sunshine.
2. If you have the space, it is best to store your chair pads and lounge cushions indoors. After cleaning and drying, I place mine in plastic bags to keep them dust-free.

If you can’t store them in-

Photos Cynthia Brian



Get in the fall spirit by decorating with gourds and pumpkins.

doors, make sure to seal them in water-proof plastic bags and place them in an area that will incur minimal rain, wind, or rodent invasions.

3. Buy outdoor furniture patio covers for each of your patio chairs, tables, and chaises. Search for quality workmanship that will last longer. Most of my patio covers last an average of two years in the wind and rain. Cover your furniture and make sure to anchor the bottoms of the fabric so it doesn’t blow off.

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