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## Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian



A glorious garden of mums and maples. Photo Cynthia Brian

"Gratitude is the fairest blossom which springs from the soul." ~ Henry Ward Beecher

What a difference a fortnight makes!

Just in time to celebrate Thanksgiving, my trees and shrubs have finally donned their fiery fall finery. The show is spectacular as my numerous trees burst into colors of amber, gold, orange, crimson, purple, sienna, and red. Leaves on my grapevines and fruit trees of apple, prune, peach, apricot, cherry, mulberry, persimmon, fig, pomegranate, pear, and plum all boast a cornucopia of glorious hues that complement the shades of other deciduous trees including maple, pistache, sumac, tupelo, liquidambar, and crape myrtle. How grateful I am to witness this spectacular seasonal wardrobe change. Two of the most fascinating trees to me are my Chinese pistache. The male tree is tall, robust, sturdy, and golden. The female pistache is petite, graceful, and filled with clusters of crimson fruit that provide tasty treats for the birds and squirrels. If any berries remain in December, their colors will morph to aqua and pink, and I will pluck them to tuck into the branches of a holiday tree. I have allowed some seeds

from my Chinese pistache tree to sprout in specified areas where I prune the plants to keep them small. As the weather cools, these volunteers resemble colorful blossoms.

What else has me charmed this November? Chrysanthemums, blue plumbago, and crimson fountain grass are attractive plants that add color and interest to autumn gardens. The tips of pencil cactus have turned a brilliant orange, matching the pumpkins I've seen decorating porches. My gigantic green guavas self-harvested. I gathered them and will let them ripen on the counter before either eating them raw or making jam or juice. While visiting a small town, I happened upon a front yard that featured a rusty tricycle, alongside pumpkins, hydrangeas, and a vintage bicycle with a basket filled with yellow mums. The garden scene could have been tidier, yet it was an interesting combination of elements that piqued my imagination and brought a big smile to my face.

This is the time of year when gratitude is at the forefront of our thoughts and intentions. For me, being grateful for nature and gardens is rooted in the numerous benefits to our well-being, physical, emotional, and mental. Nature is my cathedral where I feel connected to the earth and the cycles of life.

How can we grow with gratitude this autumn? The benefits are immense. Let us count the ways!

1. Spending time surrounded by nature promotes a healthier lifestyle by encouraging physical activity.

2. Gardening is a moderate-intensity exercise that contributes to stronger hearts and body flexibility.

3. To reduce stress, anxiety, and depression, while increasing positivity in mental health, get your hands in the dirt.

4. Experiencing the fall colors, smells, and sounds of the rustling leaves calms our nerves and rejuvenates our minds.

5. An awareness of our natural environment with its biodiversity and living organism interdependence helps us appreciate living on our beautiful planet.

6. Humans are uplifted by the sensory-rich visual impact of the shapes and textures found in nature.

7. A garden is a growing university of higher education. Nature offers a hands-on laboratory for learning about biology, ecology, geology, and all earth science.

8. Growing our groceries is an exercise in sustainable living. We don't need a green thumb to grow fresh produce, just patience and play.

9. Essential ecosystems such as pollination, air purification, and soil fertility maintain the biodiversity and balance of our natural world.

10. Gardens foster a sense of community. Community gardens provide opportunities to collaborate, share knowledge, and build relationships.

11. By absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen, trees and plants play a crucial role in mitigating climate change. Green spaces cool the environment.

12. Recreational activities abound in nature. Birdwatching is a personal favorite as I attempt to learn more about our avian friends. Walking, picnicking, or just being outside in the fresh fall air offers a sense of satisfaction, relaxation, and enjoyment.

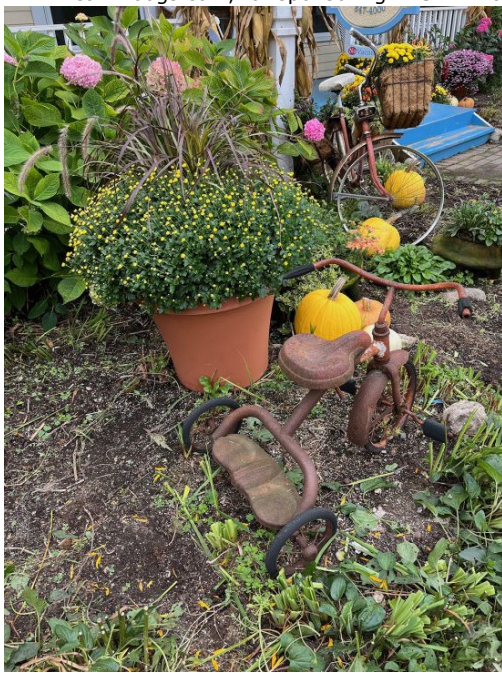
To achieve a fulfilling and balanced life, gratitude for all things is a necessary component. When we recognize the myriad ways that nature enhances our well-being, we begin to cultivate an attitude of gratitude that will permeate everything we do. Go into the garden and grow with gratitude. It is the fairest blossom of all.

Wishing you a healthy and happy day of thanks. Celebrate living with grace and gratitude.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy Thanksgiving!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Be the Star You Are!r charity volunteers will once again collaborate for Santa

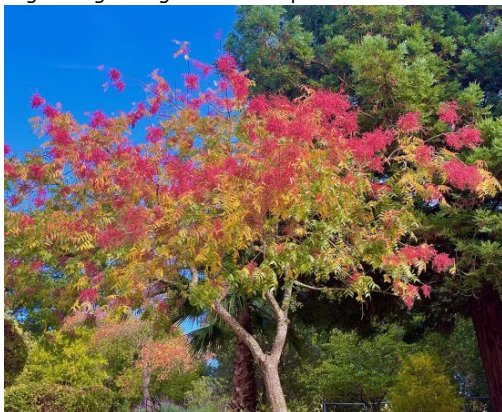
Day at 5A, Dec. 2 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., 5 A Rent-a-Space, 455 Moraga Rd. #F, Moraga. FREE crafts, holiday treats, plus a photo with Santa and his elf! Thanks to Mark Hoogs State Farm Insurance, [www.TeamHoogs.com](http://www.TeamHoogs.com), for sponsoring BTSYA. More info: [www.bethestaryouare.org/copy-of-events](http://www.bethestaryouare.org/copy-of-events)



A whimsical gardenscape for Thanksgiving. Photo Cynthia Brian



Gigantic green guavas will ripen on the counter. Photo Cynthia Brian



The colorful fruit on the arching branches of a graceful female pistache tree. Photo Cynthia Brian



Cynthia Brian advocates to continue to deadhead roses through winter. For more gardening advice for all seasons, check out Growing with the Goddess Gardener at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/books>. 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! 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle Radio Broadcast at [www.StarStyleRadio.com](http://www.StarStyleRadio.com). Her newest children's picture book, Family Forever, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available now at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com) <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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