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Gardening Goes “Back to the Future” – GIY Style



Small fruit bushes, like this ‘Pink Lemonade’ – the first pink blueberry -- is in keeping with the GIY trend

Philadelphia -- From blueberries to houseplants ‘*grow it yourself*’ -- or **GIY** -- is the new mantra as folks turn “back to the future” to simplify their lives while gardening for the greener good.

Americans craving authenticity and fretting over rising prices in gasoline and food has reinvigorated the trend to GIY.

“It’s a resurgence of gardening for the greater good- for the earth and our wallets,” says Susan McCoy, trendspotter and president of the Garden Media Group. “The most exciting movement seems to be that gardening is popular again, particularly among younger homeowners,” she adds.

Trend analyst Faith Popcorn agrees. “I think we are going back to the 50s decade,” said Popcorn, who feels consumers are re-learning how to stretch a

dollar as they grow food in their gardens.

According to the recent National Gardening Association survey, do-it-yourself lawn and garden activities were up more than a billion dollars from the previous year, to more than \$35 billion.

"That's good news because it's the first year we have seen lawn and garden sales increase since 2002," said Mike Metallo, NGA president.

Do-it-yourself activities that showed a spending increase were lawn care, vegetable gardening, ornamental and herb gardening.

GMG’s 2009’s gardening trends reveals a resurgence in perennials, growing native plants, creating “blended” gardens using vegetables and herbs in flower beds, cultivating with best practices ‘*au natural*,’ planting to attract wildlife, and going local.

“The urgent commitment to environmental sustainability and the basic desire to make our homes our havens is reflected in all gardening trends for next year,” predicts McCoy.

For more information on the latest gardening tips and trends visit www.gardenmediagroup.com.

GMG 2009 Garden Trends

What’s In

1. Eco-Boosting is In!
2. Grow It Yourself (GIY) is In
3. Blended gardens are In
4. Locavore is In
5. Water is In
6. Outside is In
7. Info Lust is In
8. Quick & Simple is In
9. Global Colors are In
10. Worldly is In
11. Bubbling is In

What’s Out

Conspicuous Consumption is Out
 Doing it ALL for Me is Out
 Segregated gardens are Out
 Big carbon footprints are Out
 Water is Out
 Inside is Out (But not “out”)
 Lack of Knowledge is Out
 Over-the-top gardens are Out
 Safe colors are Out
 Cookie-cutter is Out
 Excess is out

1. Eco-boosting



Caryopteris Grand Bleu®

From hybrid cars to canvas shopping bags, consumers want to do their part to end conspicuous consumption and boost eco-friendly living. Eager to flaunt their green lifestyles and telegraph their “green” credentials, today’s consumers are displaying ‘green pride’ by digging into gardening.

One simple way to be an eco-booster is to create natural habitats for wildlife with native plants that attract birds, bees, and butterflies. And try to say “no” to ‘garden drugs.’ Look for eco-friendly plants like the line of native plants from American Beauties or The Knock Out® Family of Roses, which are drought and disease resistant, and require little care or chemicals. ‘Go organic’ with peat-free soil from Organic Mechanics Soil Company that supports sustainable practices and feeds plants from the soil up.

2. Grow It Yourself (GIY)

Tranquil moments may be few but the recent rise in slow-gardening reconnects us with nature, family and friends as we share our bounty.

According to the most recent survey Garden Writers Survey, more than half of Americans planted vegetables this year, and seed sales have more than doubled over last year.

With the increase demand for year-round fresh fruits and vegetables, local farmer’s markets are seeing an upsurge in business, community gardens have waiting lists, and plant swaps are on the rise.

3. Blended gardens are ‘In’

“The focus is back to the land,” says Ethne Clarke, garden editor from Traditional Home. “Edible estates transform your front lawn into an ornamental but productive space as lettuces and parsley mix with roses and petunias. Planting mini-vegetables and being able to say, ‘I grew it myself’ is hip and cool.”

Plant mint and fragrant thyme varieties in-between cracks of stone pathways and grow strawberries for a delightful edible groundcover around trees. Fruit bearing shrubs and trees provide color, privacy and fruitful bounty mingling among veggies and perennials. Garden centers are reporting an increase in demand for fruit bearing shrubs like blueberries, raspberries, blackberries and elderberries being used as an ornamental.

Briggs Nursery in Washington is introducing the *first* ever “pink” blueberry, *Pink Lemonade*. Pink blueberries are as rich in antioxidants, delicious, and equally ‘pretty in pink’ as their blue cousins. This exciting new berry is right in step with the growing demand for small fruit bushes like blueberries, raspberries, and elderberries.



Vernonia lettermanii
'Iron Butterfly'

4. Locavore

Buying local is all the rage. “Gardeners are aware of our role as naturalists and conservationists, and are looking for native plants that thrive in our own climate conditions,” says Marty Ross, syndicated garden writer.

“*Nativar*” is the latest addition to the garden lexicon. “*Nativar* is a cultivar and/or hybrid of a native species and should rule the garden,” says Allan Armitage, world renowned breeder and author.

Plant natives like *Iron Butterfly*, (left) a new native ironwood from American Beauties™, that will adorn rocky areas with rich purple color and are tolerant to hot, dry locations. Caryopteris Grand Bleu® and the dwarf native, ‘Little Joe’ pye-weed, both introduced by Star® Plants, attract bees and butterflies. Ornamental grasses like northern sea oats or wavy hair grass attract birds and transform your landscape into a natural sanctuary.

5. Water is 'In'; Water is Out

For the first time, water is “In *and* Out.” Whether moving in fountains, endless waterfalls, or fish ponds, the soothing sounds of water can turn any backyard into a private oasis.



Campania Portico
Wall Fountain

Costa Farms offers plants that drink responsibly like succulents, cactus, yucca and ferns, that are easy, conserve water, and add sizzle to your landscape. Look for smart choices that use less water and produce lush color, abundant blooms, and rich foliage.

“Water features such as fountains are showing up not only in the garden but on tabletops, and sometimes more than one in the garden,” says Jon Carloftis, a renowned garden designer. He likes the classic and contemporary options from Campania to bring the sight and sound of water into gardens without a lot of fuss or maintenance.

6. Outside Inside

From bean sprouts on kitchen countertops to green walls laden with herbs and micro-greens, plants are decorating spaces as ‘art- in-motion.’ This year we are seeing a real trend to bring the outside indoors. Tropical plants like bromeliads and orchids create instant beauty and give a boost of oxygen and clean the air. “Green heroes” like peace lilies, ferns and spider plants are easy, mobile, and super air purifiers.

“Homeowners are continuing to extend their spaces by moving plants, décor and accessories outside,” says McCoy. “It’s easy to expand your home’s boundaries and add indoor charm to your patio, deck and garden using great indoor plants like ferns and palms. And ornamentals continue to be fashionistas beautifying containers, landscapes, mixed or mass planted,” she adds.

7. Info Lust

Lack of time and knowledge have been primary reasons people hesitate to garden. Not anymore. Novices and experienced gardeners hungry for inspiration, information, and instruction are packing master garden classes for instruction and gardening “how-to” tips.

“People are coming to our garden center and looking for inspiration,” says Dick Hayne, CEO of Urban Outfitters which recently launched the lifestyle center *terrain at home*. “Then they ask us for advice and the products to make their dreams happen.”

Gardeners are gobbling up information from friends, classes and workshops, local garden media, magazines, and the internet on everything from best cultivation practices to which herbs are best for relieving stress...and sharing their success stories with bloggers and friends.

8. Quick & Simple

As time-starved consumers try to juggle busy schedules most seek quick and simple solutions to meet their gardening needs.

Containers are no longer a trend but a garden staple in large and small spaces. Gone are the three- note containers with the thriller, spiller, and filler formula. Think one note containers with an evergreen shrub or tropical plant for foliage with ‘boom without bloom.’

Shrubs have strongest growth potential for long term success, according to Armitage. “Plant the right shrub in the right spot, and it will live almost forever with little to no care – with low eco impact,” he says.

Shrubs are sustainable and cover a sizeable piece of ground, and, once established, require less work and maintenance for homeowners. And many new shrubs, like ‘Vernon Morris’ viburnum are multi-taskers, providing four seasons of color along with food and shelter for wildlife.

In accessories, select natural materials like cast stone and terra cotta containers and accessories that are perfect eco-friendly accents. “Big and bold is ‘in’ and *square* is the new round,” says Peter Cilio, creative director for Campania International.



Knock Out
in a Campania Lipstick Pot

9. Global Colors

2009 color forecasters predict a funky mix of colors that reflect a jambalaya of world cultures. Today's main color influencers are our global connectivity, cultural unity, and environmental responsibility.



Sun Parasol® Crimson
mandevilla.

“Colors are bold, crazy, exaggerated, and in-your-face, almost like pop-art, and reflect a playful spirit in the face of world events,” says Donna Dorian, former style editor of *Garden Design Magazine*.

From walls and furniture- to accents and art- metallics in dramatic tones of pewter and bronze and colors like electric pink, acid green, plum and yellow, reminiscent of 60's pop culture, are showing up in garden décor and elements. Campania's over-sized bronze containers can make a bold, elegant statement.

Be über-trendy with anything red this spring from Carefree Spirit shrub rose and true red rhododendron 'Trocadero' to tropical red Sun Parasol® Crimson mandevilla..

“Color is first and foremost in a gardener's mind,” says Gene Bussell, Garden Editor for *Southern Living Magazine*. “People get their color inspiration from flowers. Foliage adds a more sophisticated look.” He says to look for shades of green to be dominant in most planting schemes.

10. Worldly

Americans have embraced the world 'bazaar' of vibrant colors, textures, sights and sounds. Asian, African, Indian, and Mid-Eastern influences are showing up in patterns, textures and colors.

“As we travel more, we tend to bring more of our memories home- creating escapist retreats,” says John Kinsella, brand director for terrain. “Since opening *terrain* at Styer's, folks are asking about our large-scaled 'found objects' for their garden. People love these unusual pieces to add personality and a touch of the exotic.”

On the flip side, 'Americana' is back with folk art accents, antique and hand-crafted, one-of-a-kind artisan pieces. Rustic stone for pathways, patios, walls, and hidden trails, bring an added sense of discovery and destination, charm and intimacy, to any garden.

11. Bubbling

Outdoor living continues to boom as the trend for “stay-cations” and “bubbling” comes home. We're staying home and entertaining in our “sociable” spaces, and when the sun goes down --dining and playing in comfortable great rooms, enclosed patios, and decks.

“People are staying at home more and investing in their homes,” says Bussell. “They're still time- strapped so they're looking for easy care, high value plants... so plant shrubs, perennials, natives—anything that will last,” he suggests.

Whether you're gardening in the yard, decorating a balcony, patio, or deck with blended containers, or growing herbs in the kitchen counter or walls, it's clear that “Mother Nature” is back!

For a complete look at the GMG 2009 Garden Trends, visit www.gardenmediagroup.com or subscribe to www.gardenplot.blogspot.com.

Resources

American Beauties, LLC. www.abnativeplants.com

Briggs Nursery, Inc. www.briggsnursery.com

Campania International www.campaniainternational.com

The Conard-Pyle Co. www.starroses.com, www.starplants.com or www.theknockoutrose.com

Costa Farms www.costafarms.com

Garden Media Group www.gardenmediagroup.com

National Gardening Association www.garden.org

Organic Mechanics Soil Company www.organicmechanicsoil.com

Terrain at Styer's www.terrainathome.com