



Summer is almost here . . .

And our fabulous spring will be over in a few weeks. In our climate, it's hard to tell when one season ends and another begins. This year especially – our weather has been near perfect. Will the summer be extra hot because of the warm spring? We'll have to wait and find out!

Our U-Pick Vegetable Patch is gearing up for another great summer harvest. We were able to get most of the planting done a bit ahead of schedule and now have nice tomatoes and baby peppers coming along. We'll keep you posted on the progress.

Something NEW! A **Junior Volunteer Program** will begin this summer for interested youths 12 and older who would like to spend some time learning about all we do here at Belle Vie Gardens. Hours are flexible, work varies from propagation methods to watering plants and everything in between! For info, please call us.

In May, we held our first **Succulent wreath workshop**. About 12 ladies attended for a day of fun and creativity. We held this on a Friday and we've had requests to repeat this, but on a weekend. We'll try to plan another one sometime in August or September.

Everyone seems to like our selection of **pottery pots**, especially the little squat strawberry pot, and we'll soon be making another foray into San Francisco to obtain more. These make lovely gifts when planted with an array of herbs – culinary herbs or tea herbs like anise hyssop, lemon bergamot, and mint.

Remember Fathers' Day coming up on Sunday, June 20. Maybe Dad would enjoy a new pair of gardening gloves. Our gloves provide a superb sense of touch, almost like a second skin – we have devoted customers using them for woodworking (no splinters), electrical (can feel the wires), and a host of other household and yard projects. Dad might also like a custom herb or pepper garden planter – see us to arrange one for you.

June Planting Schedule

Don't despair if you haven't planted your garden yet – there's still time and June's warm days and pleasant nights will speed things along. This is a great time for beans, cucumbers, squash and melons. We now have a nice variety of both bush and pole beans – filet, string, snap, shell, and runner. Melons are coming along nicely – nighttime temps are finally warm enough for germination.

More interesting Garlic tidbits in Part 2 coming next month in our July newsletter. In the meantime, see over for some delicious recipes and ENJOY!

Kathy & Donna

New EXPANDED Garden Hours:

Thursdays

& Fridays: 10am to 5pm

Saturdays: 9am to 1pm (at the Farmers' Mkt)
2pm to 5pm (at Belle Vie Gardens)

Sundays: Noon to 5pm

Herb of the Month: Garlic (*Allium sativum*) Part 1

The Herb Society of America has named garlic as the Herb of the Year for 2004. This well-loved herb even has its own national fan club, the Order of the Stinking Rose. Our garlic beds are almost ready to harvest, we'll have a full update in the July newsletter.

From time immemorial, humans have sought the help of plants in an attempt to master the forces of nature. Our ancestors didn't need a trained botanist to appreciate the energy and diversity of plants, and attributed magical qualities to the wonders of the plant kingdom. Is it any wonder that myths and legends abound? The knowledge of garlic goes back so many thousands of years that no one knows where it originated. It was mentioned by the classical writers where it was said to give strength to the pyramid builders, courage to the Roman legions, and fighting spirit to English gamecocks.

Garlic has always enjoyed a reputation for "white magic" – the power to turn back evil forces; it was said to defend people against vampires and the "evil eye." Garlic is the main ingredient in the Four Thieves Vinegar, a legendary remedy that was said to protect against the plague. Medical research has shown that garlic does have significant antibiotic activity. The component that gives garlic its strong odor is the one that destroys or inhibits various bacteria, fungi, and yeast. Research is ongoing as to garlic's ability to reduce blood pressure, decrease cholesterol, and reduce the likelihood of blood clots that trigger heart attacks and most strokes. Garlic is also said to cleanse the intestines, expel worms, ward off colds, ease chest congestion and alleviate rheumatism.

The downside is that you must eat the garlic raw, since most of the protective components are destroyed in cooking. If you do opt for eating raw garlic, here are a few remedies for getting rid of garlic breath: Chew on a sprig of parsley right after eating the garlic, nibble cardamom or fenugreek seeds, eat a strawberry, or take a long bath in very warm water (the garlic oils will evaporate).



Garlic and Eggplant Pate



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|-----|----------------------------|----|-----------------------|
| 1 | large eggplant | 1* | clove garlic, crushed |
| 1/8 | cup extra virgin olive oil | | Juice of 1 lemon |
| | Salt & pepper to taste | | |

Preheat oven to 350°F. Puncture the eggplant in several places with a fork. Place on a baking sheet or piece of foil and bake for about 1 hour or until soft. Let cool and then cut eggplant open and scoop out the insides. Mash by hand or place in a food processor and mix with the oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt & pepper. Serve as an appetizer on crackers, toast slices, pita bread, etc.

**If you like it more potent, add more garlic.*

Summer Squash Soup

This soup is good cool or at room temperature

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|---|--------------------------------|-----|---------------------------|
| 2 | cups summer squash | 2 | cloves garlic |
| 1 | apple, peeled, cored & chopped | 1 | Tbsp fresh oregano |
| 1 | small potato, peeled & chopped | 2 | tsp fresh rosemary leaves |
| 1 | leek, washed & chopped | 1/4 | cup chopped parsley |
| 1 | onion, peeled & chopped | 3 | cups chicken stock |
| 1 | carrot, peeled & chopped | 1/2 | cup cream or milk |
| | Salt & pepper to taste | | |

Place all ingredients except the cream in a large pot. Cover and cook over medium heat until the vegetables are tender (about 30-40 minutes). Let cool, then puree in a blender, food processor. Stir in the cream, adding more if soup is too thick. Check seasoning and add more salt & pepper as needed. Serves 4 to 6.

Broiled Fish with Garlic, Parsley and Oregano



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|-----|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 1/2 | cup butter* | 2 | Tbsp fresh oregano, chopped |
| 2 | cloves garlic, crushed | 4 | fish steaks, about 1 inch thick |
| 1/4 | cup parsley, chopped | 2 | lemons |

Melt the butter and add the garlic, oregano and parsley. Place the fish on a foil covered broiler pan and brush with the butter mixture. Broil for 5 minutes, turn, baste with more butter mixture and broil for another 5 minutes. Transfer the fish to a serving platter and keep warm. Squeeze 1 lemon into the remaining butter and simmer until slightly brown. Pour the sauce over the fish. Garnish with the other lemon, cut into quarters. Serves 4.

**A mixture of butter and olive oil works well here.*