

Belle Vie

Gardens & Nursery

October 2002 Newsletter

Fall Herbs in the Garden . . .

Our 2nd Annual Fall Event was a great success. Success measured in seeing familiar faces, meeting new herb and garden enthusiasts, enjoying a beautiful day in the garden, and sharing information on growing and using the abundance from our gardens. The workshops on Herbal Harvest, Container Gardening, and The "Edible" Garden ("It's a Jungle out there" – great fun for the kids) generated such interest, that we will repeat them over the next few weeks, as follows:

Herbal Harvest	October 12	2:30 pm
The "Edible" Garden	October 26	2:30 pm
Herbal Harvest	November 2	1:00 pm

Recently, a group of 3rd – 5th graders visited Belle Vie on a field trip for their science class to learn about plants. What fun that was! The children's enthusiasm and inquisitiveness was a joy for us and, I think, for them. Introducing kids to gardening and plant life is a great way to teach them many different things, not the least of which is an appreciation for the world around them. If you are interested to learn how to get your children involved in gardening or would like information on planning a field trip, please let us know.

A date to remember – Saturday, October 19th is Saratoga Horticulture's Fall Plant Sale. Don't forget to mark your calendar from 9am to 2pm here in San Martin. As usual, they will have a wonderful variety of bedding plants, shrubs, and trees for sale and we will be there with our herbs. This is *the* place to find varieties that do well in our area. Please check their website at www.saratogahortfoundation.org for complete information and directions.

Our hours through the end of October are:

Thursday & Friday	9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Saturday	9:00 AM to 1:00 PM (at the Farmers' Market)
	1:30 PM to 4:00 PM (at Belle Vie Gardens)

The Morgan Hill Farmers' Market runs through October 26th at which time we'll have our November newsletter with our fall hours and more workshop information.

Topic of the Month: Fall Herb Planting Guideline

We are so blessed living in the Santa Clara Valley of California, one of the most wonderful agricultural areas of the USA, both in soil and climate. Similar to the Mediterranean, we can plant and grow virtually year round. If you thought it's too late to plant that (herb) garden, think again. October and November are great months to plant your herbs and other perennials. Although you won't see much top growth, the roots of your plants will be getting a healthy head start--ready to burst forth with full vigor in the spring. **Research has shown that plants planted in the fall out surpass their spring planted counterparts.**

First select your site--either a specific area for herbs alone or interspersed in your garden. Herbs are not too fussy about the soil, but good drainage is key. Then, select your plants. Sunset Magazine in their April 2002 issue suggests the following essential perennial **culinary** herbs and quantities: **Thyme**, 3 to 4 plants; **Sweet Marjoram**, 2 to 3 plants; **Sage**, 1 or 2 plants; **Rosemary**, 1 to 2 plants; **Parsley** (biennial), 1 to 2 plants; **Oregano**, 2 plants; **Chives**, 3 to 4 plants. If you have all the "essentials", go beyond the basics and try garlic chives, lemon or caraway thyme, lemon verbena, or sorrel--all will add a bit of flavor complexity to your recipes.

Some fall recipes from Belle Vie over . . .

14035 Columbet Avenue, San Martin, CA 95046 (408) 683-5610
We are located East of 101 between San Martin Ave. and Middle Ave.
<http://www.belleviiegardens.com/>

Sorrel is a favorite of several of our Farmer's Market customers who each have their own family soup recipe. Here is a version to try on one of those cool fall evenings:

Sorrel Soup

1-1/2 Tbsp	Butter
1-1/2 Tbsp	Olive Oil
1 cup	Celery with tops, minced
4 Tbsp	Chives , minced
4 Tbsp	French Sorrel , minced
2 Tbsp	Tarragon , minced
4 Tbsp	Savory , minced
6 cups	Chicken broth
Salt and pepper to taste	
6 slices French bread, toasted	
Grated Parmesan cheese	

Heat butter and olive oil in a 3-quart soup pot until butter is melted. Add celery and cook over medium heat until transparent. Stir in herbs and add chicken broth. Bring to a simmer and cook, covered, for 20 to 30 minutes. Adjust seasoning. To serve, place 1 slice toasted French bread in bottom of soup bowl and ladle soup over it; sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

Variation: Add 1 cup of light cream after the soup has simmered for 20-30 minutes. Bring to a boil and remove at once.

Mulled East Indian Basil Punch

(East Indian Basil has a wonderful clove aroma and taste and is a great addition to this warm fall drink)

4 cups	Apple juice
1/4 cup	Sugar
1/3 cup	East Indian basil leaves (or to taste)
1	Cinnamon stick
2	Limes, thinly sliced (optional)

Heat apple juice, sugar, basil and cinnamon stick, stirring until mixture begins to come to a boil (but don't let it boil). Turn off heat, add limes and let steep for 5 minutes. Strain. Serve warm. Makes 4 cups.

Baked Acorn Squash

1	Acorn Squash
1 tsp	Honey (optional)
1 clove	Garlic
2 tsp	Chopped fresh thyme leaves
1 Tbsp	Unsalted butter
Salt and pepper to taste	

Preheat oven to 375. Split squash lengthwise and remove the seeds. In a small pan (or microwave), warm the honey, butter and thyme. Score flesh slightly and drizzle with half the warm butter mixture. Cover with foil and bake 50 minutes (or until a fork pierces easily). Remove foil, drizzle with the remainder of the butter mixture, and bake an additional 10-15 minutes, or until squash is lightly browned.

Happy Gardening (and Good Eating),
Donna Ahern and Kathy Nolan

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