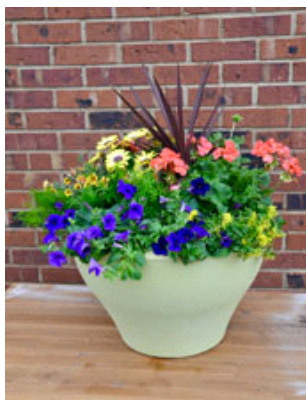


Features

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The Colors of Summer

Barbara Wise



It doesn't matter where I travel over the winter; when spring comes pouring in and melts into summer I need color to surround my home and office. The allure of an empty planter calls my name and this season the deep purples, vibrant yellows and bright coral oranges are the ones that answer that call. Add to that botanical color a chartreuse planter that will make even the deep green foliage stand out and my color fix is fulfilled.


To keep my plants happy from early spring until late fall I use a double walled resin planter like this Juno planter from Crescent Garden. The double wall protects the roots from the summer heat and the large cavity holds plenty of soil for healthy root growth. Because it's lightweight, I can plant up my annuals early in spring and easily bring the planter indoors if we get a late season frost.

Keeping with the container gardening rule of planting "like with like," all of the plants in this combination like the soil to stay on the drier side. Calibrachoa will be my indicator plant because it will be the first to start looking droopy when the soil is dry, thus reminding me that it's time to water! I enjoy mixing up my textures by contrasting foliage, such as using the big waxy leaves of the geranium with the airy asparagus fern foliage. While contrasting foliage, I'll also echo colors like the shades of yellow, the touch of purple in the African daisy to echo the petunia and the hints of orange blush in the calibrachoa that echoes the geraniums.

Flowering annuals are big eaters, so I'll keep these fed once a month with a liquid fertilizer. The rest of the time I'll simply enjoy soaking up the color and watching the pollinators visit the seasons-long flow of flowers.

THE PLANTS

Asparagus fern (*Asparagus densiflorus Sprengeri*)
Sedum floriferum Weihenstephaner Gold
Calibrachoa Superbells Saffron
Petunia Easy Wave Purple
African Daisy (*Osteospermum Blue Eyed Beauty*)
Cordyline australis Red Star



Zonal Geranium (Pelargonium) **GP**

Barbara Wise is the author of “Container Gardening For All Seasons—Enjoy Year-round Color With 101 Designs.” She can be reached at bwisegardens@gmail.com.