

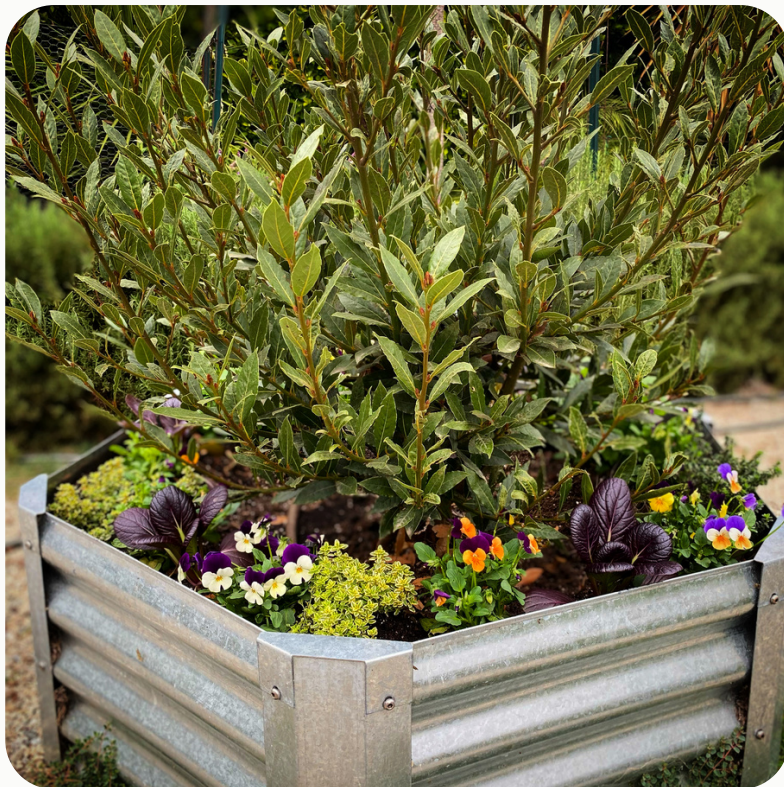
Growing in the Winter



EVERY END IS A NEW BEGINNING

The days are shorter and cooler, making December and January an ideal time to check in on and re-calibrate your garden. After a bountiful spring and summer, fall and winter offer the opportunity for rejuvenation while planning for an abundant spring.

During this hectic time while we are all navigating yet another holiday season full of so much uncertainty and unprecedented challenges, escaping into the garden can offer tranquility and respite. In this very first, of hopefully many seasonal newsletters, we offer our recommendations on where to focus your gardening energy this time of year.



We would like to share our sincerest gratitude to all of our wonderful clients!

Thank you for making 2021 another successful year!

WINTER CHECKLIST



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When a flower doesn't bloom, you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower.

Pruning

Pruning during late fall/winter is highly encouraged for some plants, especially natives and perennials. Pruning woody shrubs and vines now will allow them to grow robustly during spring and summer. It also helps keep pests and disease under control by removing dead foliage that can attract unwanted guests. You can prune ground cover plants like Rozanne Geranium and Santa Barbara Daisy. For native plants such as milkweed, california fuchsia, buckwheat, and coffeeberry, harder pruning is best done in the fall/early winter in preparation for spring.

Perennials include plants like red mexican lobelia, rock purslane, Cedros Island verbena, as well as other shrub-like specimens, such as New Zealand Flax. These plants can benefit from a trim in the fall to control size or remove ragged foliage. To control the size and appearance of these grasslike shrubs, identify unwanted leaves and follow the leaf down to the base of the plant and cut at the base of the roots. This can then be divided and replanted in a new location. If you need more support with maintenance, reach out to schedule a garden consultation!



Planting

During these rainy times, it's great to **plant, especially CA natives!** The rain allows plants to develop robust root systems that will lead to thriving, lush plants in the spring. Great CA natives to plant include yarrow, native milkweed (avoid the colorful tropical cultivars) Muhly grass, blue eyes grass, wild rye, California fuchsia, buckwheat, blue sage, pitcher sage, coffeeberry and toyon. You can also watch the weather forecast and plan to scatter poppy seed and other wildflowers ahead of predicted rain storms for spring blooms!



VEGGIES AND EDIBLES

Tis the season for citrus and avocados! If your trees are producing, make sure you are fertilizing and watering deeply to maximize your fruit production and quality.

If keeping a vegetable garden, by this point in the year, you probably have most of your winter veggies in the ground. Continue sowing seeds for continual harvest for lettuces and herbs such as spinach and cilantro. Harvest the outer leaves of greens such as chard and kale to continue encouraging healthy growth. If you haven't already planted root vegetables sew seeds for carrots, turnips, parsnips and beets. You can also plant garlic, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, leeks, and peas.

Finally, this is a particularly great time to plant strawberries! Strawberries require time to develop a strong root system so that they are ready to bear fruit in the spring.

Watering



As we start getting more rain (hopefully), make sure you adjust your timers and irrigation systems. To conserve water, make sure the rain delay features on your timers are activated when it's raining. You can also lower the length and frequency of your watering system as needed. If you have not already done so, consider putting together a watering schedule to help manage seasonal changes.

If you have California natives that are older than a year, you can usually turn off your system entirely, as California plants are adapted to survive on winter rains alone. The only exception is if we have an extremely dry winter (which is still TBD for this year). If your California native is newly planted, they will likely still require some supplemental water to ensure they get established properly.



STILL UNSURE? WE ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP! SCHEDULE A CONSULTATION, OR INQUIRE ON PRICING FOR US TO DEVELOP A WATER SCHEDULE FOR OPTIMAL CARE OF YOUR LANDSCAPE!

Winter Cooking



With all the festivities the holiday season brings, keep this set of recipes on hand for a beautiful offering to bring to gatherings. I'm always looking to offer clients delicious ideas for using that bounty of avocados and citrus growing this time of year right in our backyards! Each of these recipes is inspired by my time cooking at the iconic A.O.C. restaurant. They are based off of recipes and techniques you can find in the cookbook, *Sunday Suppers at Lucques* by Suzanne Goin. **I especially love the sparkling pomegranate salsa as it adds the perfect ornamental touch to elevate the aesthetics of any dish and bring on the holiday cheer.** You can also omit the pomegranate seeds and follow the same recipe to instead have a simple citrus vinaigrette.

Winter Citrus and Avocado Garden Salad

- 3 heads of little gem lettuce, cleaned and chopped (sub romaine lettuce if not available)
- 3-4 citrus fruits, zested and segmented (cara cara, valencia, satsuma and oro blanco work great - reserve the juice of the cara cara and satsuma for the dressing) * blood oranges are also great for this salad, but must be worked with separately so juices don't bleed - these are best sliced into pinwheels
- 2 ripe avocados, cut into wedges about the same size as segments
- ¼ cup cilantro, cleaned and picked
- ¼ cup queso fresco or cotija (optional)

Pomegranate Salsa

(this "salsa" also makes a great finishing touch for roast vegetables, fish or chicken, among other dishes!)

- 3 Tablespoons shallot, finely diced
- 1 Teaspoon lemon juice + 1 Tablespoon of reserved segmented citrus juice
- ½ Cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 Tablespoon sliced flat leaf parsley
- ½ cup of pomegranate seeds
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine shallot, citrus juice with ½ teaspoon of salt and set aside to allow to macerate for at least 5 minutes. This blends the flavors together and creates a delicious base.
2. Once the flavors have bloomed, whisk in the olive oil and citrus zest. Taste and season with more salt if the flavor does not pop in your mouth.
3. Gently fold in the pomegranate seeds and sliced parsley
4. Combine citrus segments and wedged avocado in a medium sized mixing bowl and season with about ½ teaspoon of salt.
5. Gently fold in the pomegranate salsa and taste avocado + segments for seasoning
6. Just before serving, spoon mixture over lettuce and garnish with cilantro leaves and optional queso fresco