

HOME & 2024 GARDEN BOOK

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Garden Gadgets & Products
Around Cape Ann

Trending Design Ideas
garden

Garden Lovers Calendar
This Season

Table of Contents

The Manchester Cricket

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6 2024 Spring Season: Welcome

Spring is here, early this year on Cape Ann. Let's dive in!



9 Trending Design Ideas for Home

There are new trends in home design that promise to move us away from our love affair with cool clean colors. Bring on the vibrancy, heritage furniture, and something called "biophilic design."



12 At Home Now: It's All in How You Finish

Manchester interior designer Jen Coles writes her regular "At Home Now" column, helping us navigate all things home design. This time, she tackles new trends in finishes.

16 Local Shopping for Garden Lovers

We've gone all over Cape Ann to find some essentials for gardeners, whether it's gear or baubles for outside. And, as usual, it's all local, all good for you to enjoy.



18 Ideas to Enhance Your Outdoor Space

When it's about enhancing your outdoor space, there are big projects and easy things to up your outdoor landscaping design. Whether it's a water feature or a container garden, it's all about creating a focal point.

22 What to Plant in Early Spring

When it's about slowing down and taking time for oneself, Cape Ann offers almost limitless options, from getting out in nature to a good-old afternoon pub crawl.



25 Vegetable Planing in April

Cape Ann's spring gardening season is off to an early start this year. Learn what to plant now to get veggies on your family table as soon as May!

26 Calendar for Garden Lovers

A detailed—and surely incomplete—listing of amazing events and programs to check out all over Cape Ann, starting in April.

27 Directory

Support those who support you. Local listing of great home and garden retailers and professionals.

SCIENTIFIC TREE CARE SINCE 1907

Beech Leaf Disease is a new disease spreading rapidly among trees in Prides Crossing, Beverly Farms, and Manchester.

2024 Beech Leaf Disease Report for Cape Ann



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Editor Letter



The Buried Bulb Knows ...

Last week I received a note from a friend at the North Shore Horticultural Society, one of the oldest garden clubs, founded in 1899 by Beverly Farms gardeners wanting to share tips and seeds. The group is celebrating its 125th anniversary this year. Amazing. At the end of his email, he offered a quote that seemed perfect for right now:

Though not a whisper of her voice he hear,

The buried bulb does know

The signals of the year

And hails far Summer with his lifted spear.

Coventry Kersey Dighton Patmore

Yes, indeed, now is the time for spring bulbs—crocus, daffodils, hyacinth, tulips—to heed their calling and break through the moist spring dirt and say hello to the early season's sun. It's also time to take in all those magnolia blossoms, as one can see above in the photo taken downtown in Manchester.

This year's Home & Garden Book, we have some wonderful features to inspire us to better connect with home and garden. We tackle 2024's early arrival of spring and learn what we should be doing now to get ready for summer in the garden, because this season has come very early for New England. We also learn about new trends in interior design—like new interest in vibrant colors after years of cool whites and grays, a rediscovery of heritage furnishings, and new finishes in fixtures. And we learn about new trends in gardening, including something called “biophilic design.” (Oh, my!)

We also feature our perennial (get it?) focus on local retailers, which we should all be happy to support enthusiastically. Let's continue to seek out local farmers and nurseries and home design professionals as we create our own domestic zones of bliss.

I wish you all a wonderful gardening season filled with growth, beauty, and community!

Erika Brown

Editor, *Manchester Cricket*



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Welcome, Cape Ann Gardeners, to an Early Spring!



A quintessential New England home and garden in Rockport.

Courtesy image

Spring is upon us, bringing an array of colors and a sense of renewal to Cape Ann's gardens. Right now, it's the perfect time to highlight the beauty of your surroundings. Can you create a captivating focal point? What about a pop of color? There are lots of options right now, for integrating native plants and wildflowers for a touch of whimsy. Whether you're a seasoned gardener or a newbie, these top 10 beautiful ideas will inspire you to start your early spring gardening.

Explore the best flowers and vegetables to plant in April, or even plan ahead to May. Let's dive in!

Embracing Early Spring Gardening on Cape Ann

New Englanders know that early spring gardening is a delicate dance with Mother Nature. On Cape Ann, spring is filled with unpredictable weather, from late frosts to early bouts of heat, and it requires thoughtful planning and timely actions.

Mulching plays a crucial role in this season, protecting young plants from frost and

retaining soil moisture. Use organic materials like straw or leaves for a nutrient-rich mulch.

For the early birds, it's worth checking the soil temperature before planting. Cool season vegetables, such as **peas, carrots, and spinach**, can be planted as soon as the soil warms to at least 45 degrees. If you prefer to take cues from nature, wait for the Forsythia to bloom before sowing these crops.

In West Gloucester, Cedar Rock Gardens' Elise Smith announced its dates for seedling pre-orders and picks ups, both for spring vegetable seedlings like Hakurei Turnips, Swiss Chard and lettuces and for summer seedlings such as tomatoes, tomatillos and summer strawberries. Much the same is the case in Essex at Blue Moon Farms, which will open in mid-April for the season and has been growing organic vegetable, herb, and flower plant seedlings since last month.

So, what native plants should home gardeners be thinking of for early spring?

Wildflowers: A Burst of Color in Your Garden

Cape Ann's gardeners can also take advantage of the region's native flora during this season. The Virginia bluebell, for example, is an enchanting wildflower that thrives in the cool spring climate.

Consider also incorporating plants that serve a dual purpose. **Lilacs** and **sugar maples** not only add color and structure to your garden, but also thrive in the region's cool climate.

Wildflowers offer a vibrant and low-maintenance option for your garden. In spring, they bring a burst of color and attract a variety of wildlife, adding life to your space. New England is home to many native wildflowers that can brighten up your garden in the early spring. One wildflower is the **Virginia bluebell** (*Mertensia virginica*), which grows 12 to 24 inches tall with oval, bluish-green leaves. This flower is a native species and although it's not as common in the wild as it used to be, it still thrives in many New England gardens. Other options for early spring blossoms include the **Siberian squill** and the **single early tulip**, which bloom alongside the daffodils and crocuses.



Clethra alnifolia, also known as the summersweet or pink clethra.

Native Shrubs: Providing Structure and Interest

Native shrubs are an essential part of New England gardens, providing structure and interest throughout the seasons. These hardy plants can withstand the region's unpredictable climate, offering greenery all year round and beautiful blooms in the spring. One excellent native shrub is the *Clethra alnifolia*, also known as the summersweet or pink clethra. This shrub boasts bright pink flowers and a delightful fragrance, making it a popular choice for New England gardens.

Other native shrubs to consider include:

- **Rhododendrons and Azaleas**, which make dramatic focal points with their vivid spring flowers.
- **Lilacs (*Syringa*) and Hydrangeas**, excellent choices for borders and backdrops.
- Remember to choose shrubs that match your garden's specific conditions, considering factors like sun exposure, soil type, and moisture level.

Perennials: Reliable Performers Year after Year

Perennial plants are the stalwarts of New England gardens. Their resilience and adaptability to the region's variable weather conditions make them a reliable choice for gardeners. **Coneflowers**, for example, pro-

...Continued on page 7



Continued from page 6

vide a vibrant display and attract pollinators. **Astilbes**, tolerant of full sun yet able to thrive in afternoon shade, are another excellent option. Their vigorous growth and diverse color variations make them a visual delight. **Daylilies** are also popular for their showy blooms and low maintenance needs.

Remember, perennials aren't just about flowers. They also include **herbaceous plants** and **shrubs**. These offer more structure and can significantly enhance the overall appearance of your garden.

...Continued on page 15



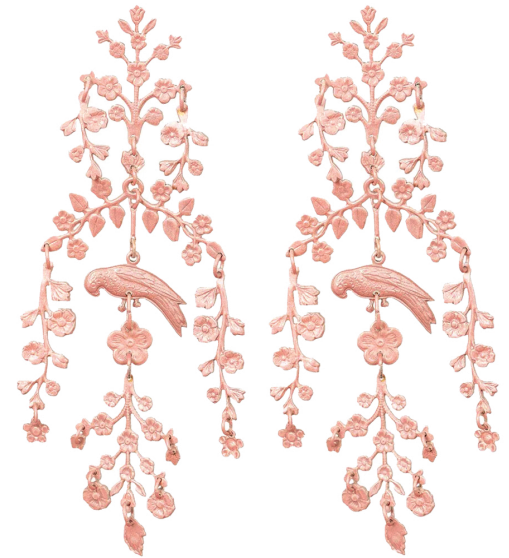
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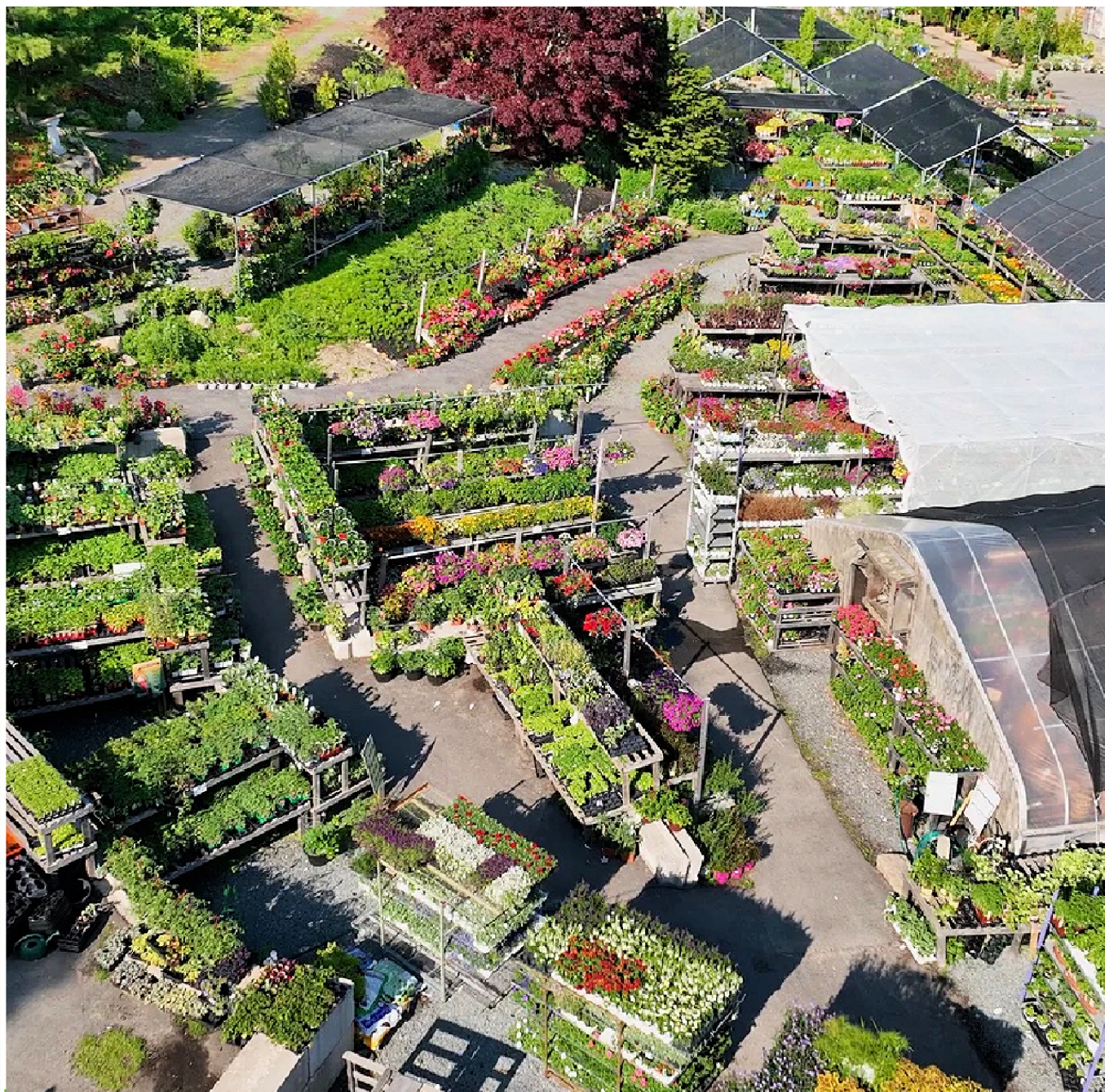
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Some Top Interior Design Trends to **LOOK OUT FOR IN 2024**



This kitchen embraces several design trends for 2024—creating an outdoor connection inside with lots of plants, embracing eclectic elements, and entering the world of bright colors.

As we delve into the year 2024, there are dozens of notable interior design trends to watch out for, from color schemes to furniture styles, and even building materials. Here are three great ones that span personal health, vibrant colors, and a nod to personalization and heritage.

Trend #1

Biophilic Design: Merging Home and Garden Spaces

Blurring the Lines Between Indoor and Outdoor Spaces

Creating indoor spaces with a strong outdoor connection is about blurring the boundaries between the inside and outside. This trend encourages a more harmonious living experience and fosters sustainability. Large glass doors and windows are becoming increasingly popular, opening up to outdoor areas and creating a seamless transition. This integration is also being reflected in material choices, with a focus on natural, organic materials such as wood and stone. Nature-inspired colors and botanical motifs are being used to create a sense of connection to the outdoors.

This trend extends beyond just physical spaces and into design elements, with lighting playing a significant role in setting the ambiance and connection between indoor and outdoor spaces. A surge in the use of energy-efficient fixtures and solar-powered LED lights is expected, helping to create a warm and inviting atmosphere that bridges the indoor-outdoor divide.

The Role of Plants in Biophilic Design

Plants are essential in biophilic design, serving as a vital connection between indoor spaces and the natural environment.



Doug Cook, owner of Gloucester-based Landesign, designed and implemented this interior garden project in Beverly. (Courtesy photo)

In 2024, indoor plants are not just decorative elements but active contributors to the overall wellness and ambiance of a space. Expect to see vertical gardens, indoor trees, and an array of potted plants integrated into interior design.

Karen Swanson of New England Design Works is a Manchester-based kitchen and bath designer who has been featured in the last two seasons of PBS' *This Old House*. She said biophilic design began in California and has been surging east and encourages clients who want to incorporate plants into their home design to build an added eight inches of counter space behind their kitchen sink for a row of potted plants or herbs, especially if the sink looks out of a window.

"It's a clean and easy look," Swanson. "And easy to live with and maintain."

The selection of plants will rely heavily on their visual appeal and therapeutic benefits, with calming green foliage and vibrant flowering plants both making appearances. Indoor plants can also play a role in improving indoor air quality, providing a practical benefit alongside their aesthetic value.

Beyond traditional potted plants, the trend also extends to plant-infused lighting fixtures and nature-inspired patterns on textiles and wallpapers, further emphasizing the role of plants in creating a holistic, nature-integrated

living environment.

Advantages of Biophilic Design in Modern Houses

Biophilic design offers several advantages in modern houses:

- **Enhanced wellbeing:** By incorporating nature, these designs can increase feelings of tranquility and reduce stress. They can also improve air quality and bring about a calming atmosphere.
- **Visual appeal:** The use of natural elements and colors can enhance the aesthetic appeal of a space, making it more attractive and inviting.
- **Sustainability:** Biophilic design encourages the use of eco-friendly materials and practices, thereby promoting sustainability.
- **Versatility:** This design approach is versatile and can be applied to various parts of a house, from living areas to bedrooms, creating a cohesive and harmonious look.
- **Connection to nature:** Biophilic design helps foster a stronger connection to nature, which can be especially beneficial in urban environments where access to green spaces may be limited.

...Continued on page 11



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Continued from page 9

Manchester-based interior designer Karen Swanson designed the counter in this Boston kitchen to extend eight inches behind the sink to accommodate plenty of potted plants. (Courtesy image)

Trend #2

Bold Colors and Metals: The Future of Interior Design?

In 2024, **bold colors** and **metals** are set to redefine the landscape of interior design. Bright, tonal touches are replacing the previously popular neutral palettes, transforming interiors into vibrant, dynamic spaces. Expect to see a surge in full gloss colorful walls, with hues like plum, wine, and indigo making a bold statement.

Metallic elements, particularly mirror-polished stainless steel, are also anticipated to feature prominently in home decor. From lighting fixtures to furniture, these metals bring an industrial chic vibe to spaces, complementing the bold colors perfectly.

Notably, the trend of mixed metals is expected to extend to bathrooms and beyond, with harmonious combinations of brass and

black, or brass and nickel. Moreover, the use of powder-coated metals in any Pantone color is predicted to become mainstream, adding a unique twist to this metallic trend.

Trend #3

Rediscovering Furniture Styles

The Rebirth of Vintage Pieces in Modern Homes

The re-emergence of vintage pieces in modern homes signifies a new era of home decor in 2024. This trend is about marrying the old with the new, creating a unique blend that speaks of individuality and historical appreciation. **Mid-century modern** furniture is making a strong comeback, with its clean lines and simple forms that effortlessly fit into contemporary settings.

Moreover, **ornate dark wood furniture** is



Kristen Litka, owner of Shackteau Interiors in Magnolia, perfected this dresser in "Kettle Cove Green," one of the colors in her branded line of milk paint. Courtesy photo

being warmly welcomed back into homes. These pieces, often characterized by intricate details, exude a rich and luxurious vibe.

Rattan, bamboo, and woven furniture are also on the rise, adding a touch of vintage charm and natural feel to modern interiors. These materials are not only aesthetically pleasing but also sustainable, aligning with the growing consciousness towards the environment.

Kristen Litka, owner of Shackteau Interiors in Magnolia, began refinishing and painting traditional New England antiques more than 20 years ago. Today she has a busy business with projects, classes, a line of milk paints, and more than 50,000 followers on Instagram.

"Here in New England, we're lucky to have these well-made vintage and antique pieces," she said. In the last several years, Litka has noticed an uptick in younger, Millennial customers who are now interested in furniture with a history.

"Maybe someone inherited something from their family that doesn't fit with their current décor. Reimagining that piece with updated colors or hardware is something they can do."

Another characteristic of this trend is the

mix and match approach. Instead of sticking to a single era or style, homeowners are now combining different vintage pieces with contemporary furniture for a truly personalized look. Susan Muzio who owns Muzio Designs, a home furnishing and design shop in Essex, mixes eras and aesthetics when styling options for customers. She encourages customers to leave ideas of homogenous design and tradition behind.

"To personalize a space, make it about you and your life," said Muzio. "Choose a dominant style for a room then select an antique piece to compliment. It could add that wow factor. Then add the visual interest pieces with mirrors, artwork and textiles. Take a chance, mixing and matching old and new is smart and stylish. That antique chest of drawers of your grand mother's could become your bathroom vanity."

Finally, the revival of tassels and fringes, a quintessential element of vintage design, is expected. These details are being used to add texture and a finishing layer, giving a nod to the bygone era. In essence, the rebirth of vintage pieces in modern homes is about celebrating the beauty of the past and creating homes that are timeless yet trendy.

...Continued on page 19

At Home Now: It's all in How You Finish That Counts

By Jen Coles

I don't know if you've noticed, but it's the wild west out there when it comes to the finishes we find on hardware, bathroom fixtures, and lighting. Where we used to have just a few choices (our old friends chrome, polished nickel, satin nickel) there are now about eleventy-hundred. Suddenly we're faced with finishes like champagne bronze, graphite, and brushed chrome.

I mean, what's a homeowner to do with so many options?

Of all these new finishes I get questions on gold the most. *Isn't it a trend? Won't I regret using it?*

Well first off, I don't think of trends as a terrible thing, but I do try to stay away from fads. Fads have a very short shelf life and will definitely date your project prematurely. Trends, on the other hand, can last a much longer time and are somewhat unavoidable. Like in the 90s, everyone wanted their Tuscan Italian kitchen with its warm colors and tumbled travertine tile. In its iteration, that trend lasted a very long time.

Similarly, we are currently nearing the end of another long trend, and that's the prolific use of gray. We are shifting away from the all-Carrera marble bathrooms with neutral gray walls and white vanities. Those minimalist spaces are now feeling a bit cold and clinical, so I'm adding wood grains and organic, hand-cut tile. But as a designer, it was near impossible to ignore that powerful gray-trend. It's in magazines and Instagram posts and fixer-upper TV shows, so it becomes the look that many clients think they want.

Expand your horizons. But keep it balanced.

So where does that put us with all these new finishes? Well, one thing that I think is here to stay is the concept of multiple finishes. Who knows if the "brushed silver" of tomorrow will push out the "champagne ice" of today - but the fact that we are going to be seeing lots of different finishes is here to stay. I'm betting on a few to become new classics that will stand the test of time, like black for instance. But I think some of those very yellow golds may already be marching their way down to the sale aisle.

For me, the biggest problem with that yellow gold finish is that is just so GOLD. It's very in-your-face and can have such a strong opinion that it wants to be matched with more gold, everywhere. This can be problematic. If you use gold for your faucet fixtures, you may then feel trapped into using it for your



Colors are back after a long love affair with cool whites and greys. And part of that is the opportunity to lean into new finishes in fixtures, like rubbed bronze, brass, and yes, gold.



vanity hardware, lighting, mirror trim, towel bars, and even the hardware on your glass shower doors. And suddenly your bathroom is tilting a little Liberace. Which, don't get me wrong, can be a great thing! But maybe not as a surprise. So lean into that look or proceed with caution.

What are the workarounds? Well, you

can use it in smaller rooms, like a half bath, because you won't see as much of it. After all you don't have shower fixtures or glass hardware or multiple towel bars, so already you've lessened its impact. But you'll still need to swap out your toilet lever and maybe the visible water-supply line too. Generally small bathrooms like their finishes to be su-

per matchy-matchy, so you really have to see it through.

For larger bathrooms, I usually don't want my finishes to pop too much. If I'm using gold, I'm using one of the softer variations that tend to recede into the background. Of course, it's a tricky business because each manufacturer uses different names, like champagne bronze, or brushed gold, or tumbled brass.

And even more confounding is that if you do happen to find two manufacturers that actually each have a "champagne bronze", you'll find that their colors still don't match. So, you have to keep an open mind about the whole thing and be ready to pivot on game day. Definitely hang onto those receipts.

Another way to de-emphasize that gold finish is to mix it up and combine two (but not three) different ones. This needs to be done thoughtfully however, so do your due diligence. Black is a great, fairly ubiquitous companion, for instance. It can be friends with chrome or gold or graphite or brass. So maybe you have a graphite faucet fixture and cabinet hardware, but you use black in your mirror and sconces. If you get it right it can look really great.

...Continued on page 14

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Gold fixtures and accessories in this bathroom are balanced with a traditional, modern coastal aesthetic.

Research what works for your personal design.

Google is your friend here. Look at what other people are doing and see what you like. Some designers will actually offer you their approved combinations. And that's good because there are some unexpected pairings that I am partial to as well, like brushed gold

with satin nickel. It sounds odd but they are both brushed finishes and they seem to like each other just fine. Another is copper or brass with oil rubbed bronze. But all designers are different, so take their recommendations (and mine too) and then see what you think.

Untreated brass, or unlacquered brass, is

a newer finish that I love. I say newer, but It's been in homes around here and in Europe for centuries. Using brass can scratch that itch I may have for gold but is more organic and timeless. It's got a beautiful finish that develops a patina over time and becomes packed with character. Because of this, it is said that brass has a "living finish," which is a term that makes sense. Some clients are impatient of course, and that's understandable because right out of the box it has an alarmingly bright (dare I say brassy?) gold shine. It takes a few years to really develop its patina, and I love the journey. But if you don't, there are products that can hurry the aging process along.

Another, more subtle, way of getting the warmth of gold without the gold is to use polished nickel. It's that higher-end finish that is similar to chrome but has a subtle and soothing warmth in its highlights. It's everywhere, and you've definitely seen it. It's beautiful, but popular, so it's not unique. Unfortunately, this is another one of those finishes that can vary from manufacturer to manufacturer, so stick with the same brand if possible, or keep a careful eye when you are reviewing your purchases.

And I can't leave the topic of finishes without giving a shout-out to the workhorse, the underappreciated, the timeless, most flexible finish of them all and its name is chrome! It's

Who knows if the "brushed silver" of tomorrow will push out the "champagne ice" of today – but the fact that we are going to be seeing lots of different finishes is here to stay.

the least expensive of all the finishes and an added bonus is that all chromes match. So, you can splurge on your faucet and then bargain hunt for your towel bars, and no one will be the wiser. I've used it in utilitarian mudrooms, laundry areas and outdoor showers, as well as in very nice primary bathrooms and kitchens. So, in this land of excessive finishes, don't overlook something that is so tried and true.

Lastly, if you are struggling with where to put your maybe-faddy, maybe-trendy details? Put them in places that are easy to change. Like towel bars, cabinet hardware, paper towel holders or vanity accessories.

Because Liberace can sometimes be best enjoyed in small doses.

Jennifer Coles is a local interior designer. Her website is: colescoloranddesign.com



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Lastly, ensure that your chosen perennials are suitable for your garden's specific conditions, such as sun exposure and soil type, to guarantee their successful growth and development.

Continued from page 6

Trees: The Backbone of Your Landscape

Trees serve as the backbone of your landscape, offering shade, structure, and aesthetic appeal. Native trees to New England are highly recommended due to their adaptability to the regional climate. The **Service-berry tree** (*Amelanchier canadensis*) is a popular choice, with its bright white blooms illuminating gardens in early April. It stands at a mature height of 10-15 feet, making it an ideal size for most landscapes. Another notable option is the **Magnolia stellata 'Centennial'**, a small deciduous tree that produces fragrant, waterlily-shaped flowers in early spring.

Moreover, the **American hop-hornbeam** (*Ostrya virginiana*) is a slender shade tree that grows well in full sun to partial shade conditions. For smaller spaces, consider the **Redbud** (*Cercis canadensis*) tree, known for its heart-shaped leaves and vibrant fall color. Remember, the selection of trees should be based on your garden's specific conditions, such as sun exposure, soil type, and space availability.



Rhododendron is a very large genus of about 1,024 species of woody plants in the heath family.



Lilacs (Syringa) is a species of flowering plant in the olive family Oleaceae that signals spring and early summer.



Hydrangeas favor moist woods, along riverbanks, and in other sites with partial shade and organically rich soil.

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Home & Garden Goodies

We've gone all over Cape Ann to find some essentials for gardeners, whether it's gear or baubles for outside. And, as usual, it's all local, all good. Enjoy.



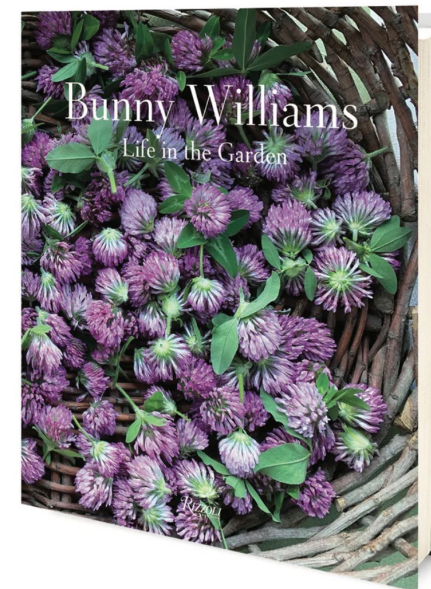
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Bunny's Garden. This sequel to renowned interior designer Bunny Williams' "An Affair with a House," this ambitious follow up invites readers into Williams' impressive garden and woodlands surrounding her eighteenth-century manor house in Northwestern Connecticut and features personal anecdotes, expert advice, and creative ideas for how to bring natural elements into the home. \$60, at **The Book Shop** of Beverly Farms, Beverly Farms.



Stack'em High! These airtight metal storage containers are such a good idea. Pack away leftovers, throw them in your bag, and don't worry about spills or leaks with these round airtight stainless steel-storage containers. So sleek, they put other takeout containers to shame, and in five sizes, there's always a perfect fit. Oven, freezer, and dishwasher safe. From \$18 at **Good Linens**, 130 Main St, Gloucester | (978) 515-7646.



Fresh & Pretty. These hand-made linen sachets filled with lavender buds will freshen up linens, closets, drawers, naturally repel moths and ease the mind. But these feature whimsical aviary designs, which make them perfect to display. From \$20 each, at **The Barn at Todd Farm**, | 275 Main St., Rowley (978) 948-5111.



Tweet Tweet! Felted wool is the world's oldest textile craft, and this precious sculpture by Georgetown, Mass.-artist Luanne Meader blends both porcelain work and needle felted wool is sweet, artistic piece. \$54, at **The Barn at Todd Farm** | 275 Main St., Rowley (978) 948-5111.



Spray the Rainbow. The classic watering can is a garden design accessory all its own. Especially when it's one of these bright, vibrant metal watering cans with a separate sprinkler nozzle from Tierra Watering Can. Available in six colors, \$33.99 each, at **Corliss Brothers Garden Center**, 31 Essex Rd., Ipswich | (978) 356-5422



Cutie Birds. This plant poke is part of our popular Bird Song collection designed by artist Lori Siebert. Unique style and vibrant colors make this hand-crafted, decorative poke perfect for gifting or adding an artful touch to any garden. Made of resin. Dimensions: 2"w x 16"h. \$19.95 each, at **Sea Meadow Gifts** 7 Main St., Essex | (978) 768-3441.



Sweet Swedish Ivy. Not only is this starter Swedish Ivy plant beautiful for indoor or outdoors, but it purifies indoor air by removing toxins and pollutants, so breathing in a space with Swedish Ivy can mean less respiratory irritation over time. And it's so pretty too! \$22 gets you the and its beautiful ceramic planter, at **Chapman's Greenhouse**, 58 Hart St, Beverly | (978) 927-0153.

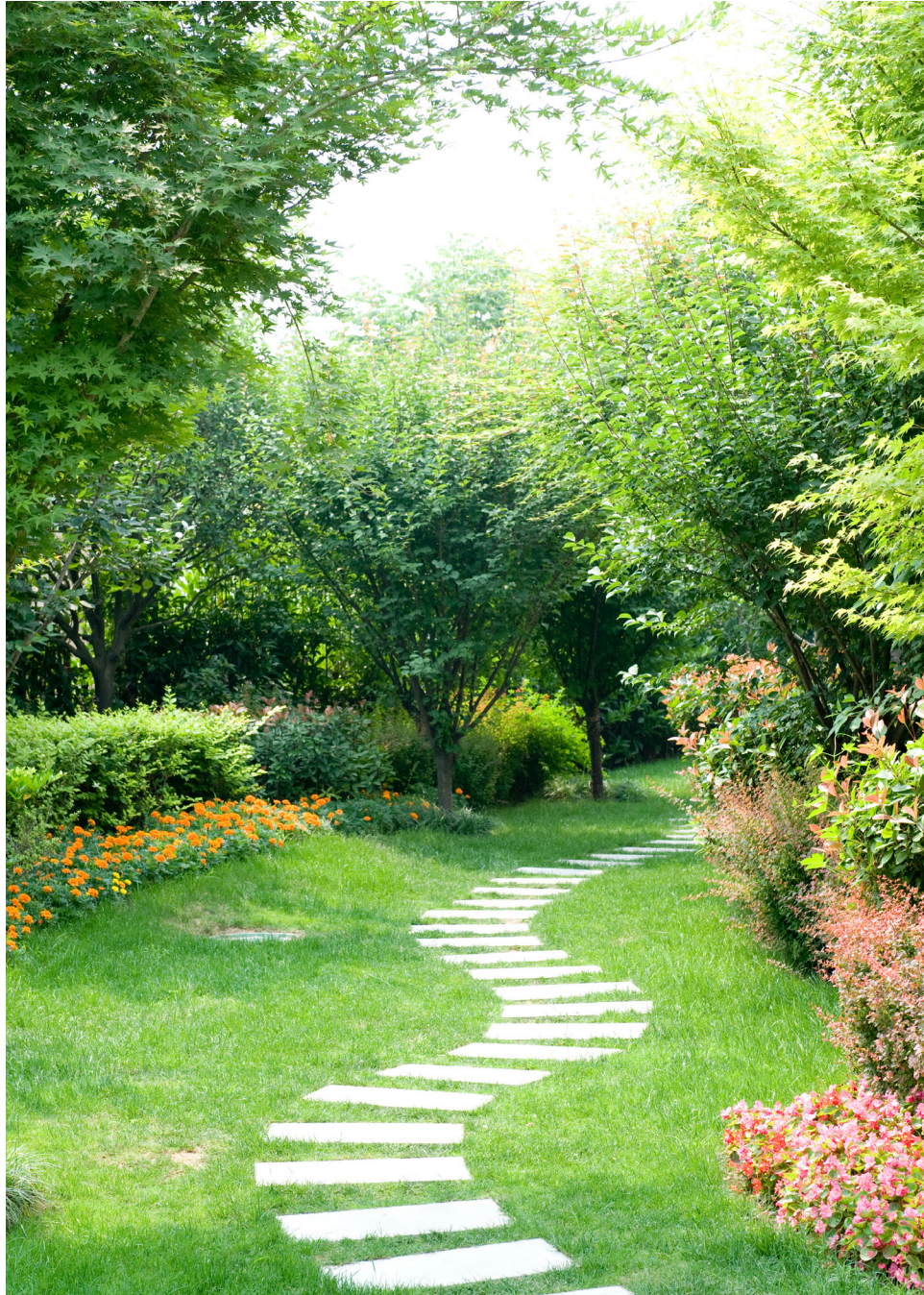


Twining & Digging. Sometimes you just need the basics, but when it comes to the hard work in the garden, those basics had better perform. That's what you can expect from this garden twine and hand tools. From \$28, at **Chapman's Greenhouse**, 58 Hart St, Beverly | (978) 927-0153.

Botanical Bodyguard. This black spot spray rescue from UK-based Norfolk Natural Living is powered by the detoxing herb, thyme, which is renowned for its soothing and healing qualities, is a powerful anti-fungal and antibacterial and will naturally and effectively restore your plants back to health in the gentlest manner. Natural, vegan and animal safe. \$16 for a 7oz bottle, at **Chapman's Greenhouse**, 58 Hart St, Beverly | (978) 927-0153.



Gardening Ideas to Enhance Your Outdoor Space



Focal points in a garden are often associated with drama, like a central fountain. But here, the focal point of visual interest is a curving walking path surrounded by green plantings and mature trees.

Add a Focal Point for Visual Interest

Creating a focal point in your garden is a powerful way to draw attention and add visual interest. It can range from a stunning tree, a vibrant shrub, an antique gardening tool, a water element like a fountain, or even a distinctive rock formation.

Garden Decor: Old implements or antique equipment can serve both a decorative and functional purpose. For example, they could lend trellis-like support for tall-growing

plants while adding a touch of rustic charm.

Water Elements: Fountains and other water elements instantly attract attention, drawing the eye with the movement of water and soothing the ear with its sound. They can serve as focal points at the center of patios, incorporated into garden walls, or placed at the end of pathways.

Plant Selection: Selecting a special plant or tree can also create a focal point. For example, the Sugar Maple, a quintessential New England tree, provides stunning fall foliage



Container gardens are an easy way to immediately create visual interest.



A water feature in the garden connects to nature, and offers the soothing sounds of water flowing over rocks.

and can draw the eye throughout the year. Similarly, flowering shrubs can add depth, character and color to your garden, creating a focal point while providing blooms, berries, vibrant fall colors, and food for the birds.

Remember, the ideal focal point depends on your garden's size, layout, and style. It should stand out but still integrate harmoniously with the rest of your garden.

Create a Whimsical Element for Fun and Intrigue

To create a whimsical element in your garden, consider adding unexpected features that spark joy and curiosity. This could include:

- **Whimsical Plantings:** Opt for plants with unusual forms, colors, or patterns. For example, the "Trout lily" (*Erythronium americanum*) has a unique, speck-

led leaf that can bring a touch of whimsy.

- **Garden Artifacts:** Incorporate playful garden artifacts like a "spilled" flower pot, recycled sculptures, or birdhouses. These can provide a delightful surprise for visitors.
- **Themed Garden Areas:** Create a garden section with a specific theme, like a fairy garden or a gnome village. This adds an element of creativity and fun to your space.

Remember, while it's important to let your imagination run wild, avoid overcrowding or creating a chaotic space. The whimsical elements should complement, not overwhelm, the overall garden design.

...Continued on page 19



Continued from page 18

Add a Pop of Color with Container Gardening

When it comes to adding a pop of color to your garden in early spring, container gardening is an excellent choice. This approach allows you to control the soil, light, and moisture conditions more precisely, giving your plants the best chance of thriving. Consider utilizing annuals like pansies, violas, and tulips that can withstand New England's unpredictable spring weather.

If you're interested in edible gardening, why not try planting herbs or leafy greens in containers? Spinach, lettuce, and arugula are all fast-growing options that offer fresh, home-grown produce in a matter of weeks.

Don't forget about container-friendly perennials like daffodils, hyacinths, and Kaufmanniana tulips, which add enduring beauty to your outdoor space. These plants are known for their early flowering and vibrant colors.

Remember that container gardening is not just limited to traditional pots. Get creative with your containers and consider using items like wooden crates, metal buckets, or even old wheelbarrows. This will not only give your garden a unique look but also repurposes objects that might otherwise go unused.

Lastly, consider the placement of your containers. Arrange them at different heights or cluster them together for maximum visual impact.

Continued from page 11

What Else is Trending in Interior Design in 2024?

Here's the complete list of trends that are making their way into our homes this year.

- **Quiet Luxury:** As a reflection of our evolving lifestyle, "quiet luxury" is emerging as a trend that focuses on simplicity, quality, and understated elegance.
- **Biophilic Design:** With an increasing focus on sustainability and well-being, biophilic design is set to make a significant impact in 2024.
- **Curved Furniture:** Defying traditional lines, curved furniture is making a comeback, offering a softer, more organic aesthetic.
- **Mixed Metals:** The combination of different metals in a single space adds depth and visual interest.
- **Texture Overload:** The use of various textures, both in materials and patterns, is poised to be a defining trend.
- **Bold Colors:** Moving away from the neutral tones of the past, bold and vibrant colors are expected to dominate the design scene.
- **Vintage Revival:** Vintage pieces are being reimagined in contemporary settings, offering a sense of nostalgia and character.
- **Artisanal Touch:** Handmade and custom pieces are gaining popularity, adding authenticity and uniqueness to any space.
- **Sustainable Choices:** The demand for environmentally-friendly options is higher than ever, influencing choices in materials, manufacturing processes, and even design styles.
- **Emphasis on Lighting:** Lighting is expected to play a more central role, with a focus on layered lighting and innovative fixtures.
- **Innovative Use of Space:** The efficient and creative use of space is a key trend, reflecting our changing living conditions and lifestyles.
- **Global Influences:** Design influences from around the world, especially those with rich cultural narratives, are expected to enrich the design scene in 2024.

Second Glance

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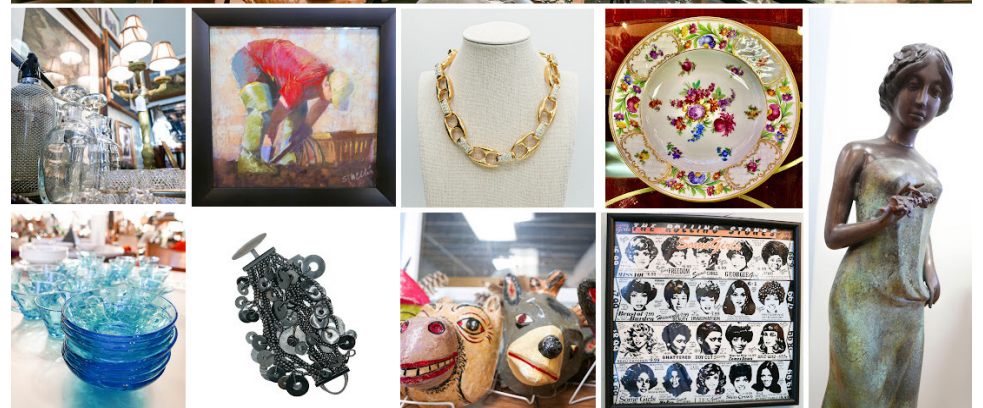
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Flowers to Plant in Early Spring

Top Flowers to Plant on Cape Ann Now



Early spring bulbs that bloom together include crocuses, daphodils, and of course, tulips. They offer a vibrant splash of color in March and April. But they require planting in the fall.

In Massachusetts and especially on Cape Ann's coastal areas, selecting the right flowers for early spring planting can make your garden a vibrant spectacle. Among the top choices are the Marigolds and Joe Pye Weed. Marigolds are perfect for an extended flower garden season, especially if you have early spring frosts or late fall frost. They attract pollinators and bloom continuously for 6-8 months. Joe Pye Weed, on the other hand, is another flower that thrives amidst early

spring frosts and also attracts pollinators. It also has continuous blooms for 6-8 months.

- **Bloodroot**, a herbaceous spring perennial, is another excellent choice. It blooms in March and lasts until late spring, fitting perfectly for either a shaded or woodland garden.
- For a dense ground cover, consider the **Winter Heath** (*Erica carnea*), an evergreen low-growing plant that delivers a plethora of purple-pink flowers through-



Marigolds continuously bloom from early spring frosts for 6-8 months. They also are a natural deterrent for pests that feast on your hard-won garden beds.

- out most of winter and into early spring. Finally, the **Aquilegia canadensis**, commonly known as red or Eastern columbine, is a superior choice for all kinds of wildlife. This native wildflower blooms in late spring to early summer and serves as a great source of nectar for hummingbirds, butterflies, bees, and other pollinators.

Remember, all these flowers thrive in different conditions, so it's crucial to consider factors like sunlight exposure, soil type, and moisture level when choosing the flowers to plant.

Bulbs to Consider for Early Blooms

To have a colorful display early in the

spring, consider planting bulbs in the fall. Some excellent choices for New England gardens include the *Galanthus nivalis* (Snowdrop), Woodland phlox (*Phlox divaricata*), and Siberian squill (*Scilla sibirica*). These plants not only bloom early but also add a touch of beauty to your garden with their delicate flowers.

- **Galanthus nivalis** is a charming early spring bulb that brings weeks of beauty to the garden. Its dainty white flowers, with a green spot on each petal, nod gracefully atop slender grayish-green leaves.
- **Woodland phlox** blooms with rose, blue, or lavender flowers in April and May, making it a good fill-in plant for borders.

...Continued on page 23



Continued from page 22

Joe Pye Weed is another hearty flower that thrives in early spring and blooms for 6-8 months. And it attracts pollinators.

- **Siberian squill**, with its clusters of long-lasting, iridescent blue, star-shaped flowers, can form a carpet of blue under a tree or spring-blooming shrub.

Consider also the **Single Early Tulip**, a classic variety with one row of colorful tepals that blooms early in the spring season. Its beauty perfectly complements the daffodils

and crocuses in your garden. Another worthy consideration is the **Chionodoxa** (Glory of the Snow), which blooms in very early spring and offers a delightful mix of blues, pinks, and whites.

Annuals for a Pop of Color

Annuals can be a vibrant addition to your New England spring garden, providing a burst of color and variety. Many annuals are known for their bright and showy flowers, and they tend to bloom for a longer period than perennials.

Begonias, with their colorful flowers and lush foliage, are popular choices for shady areas. If your garden receives good sunlight, consider **sweet peas** (*Lathyrus* spp.), which are cool-weather loving and bloom early in the season.

Zinnias are another excellent option, with their array of forms and vibrant hues. They are easy to grow from seed, attracting both butterflies and hummingbirds.

For a more traditional look, you might add **marigolds**, **nasturtiums**, or **floss flowers**. These annuals are known to repel insects, making them a practical as well as a beautiful choice.

Finally, **Sweet William** (*Dianthus barbatus*) can thrive in short growing seasons and offers a fragrant, high-yielding bloom.



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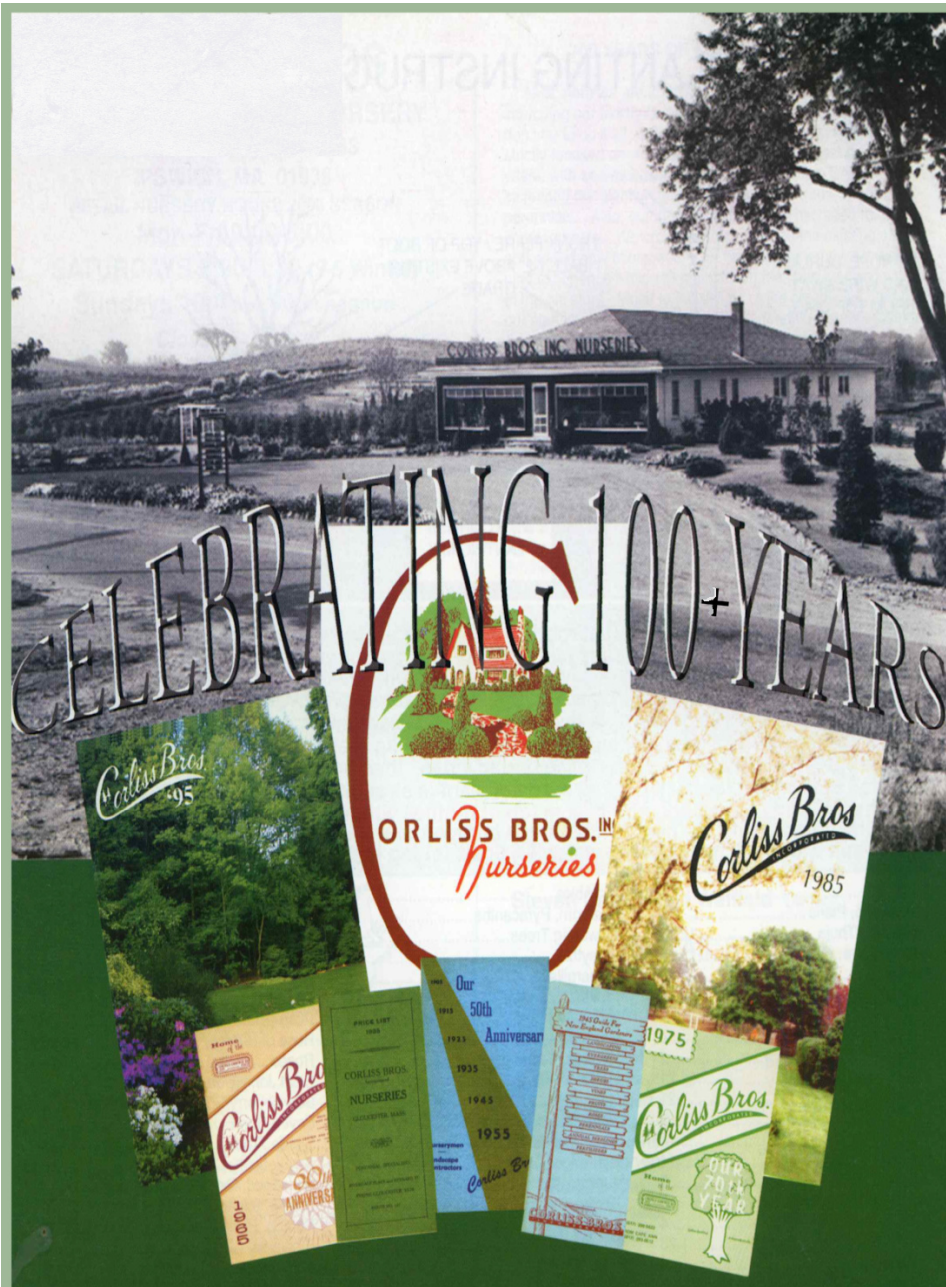
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Vegetables to Start Planting in April

Early Season Leafy Greens



vegetables, they are worth the wait. Another great option is beets, which are not only frost-tolerant but also nutrient-rich, making them a healthy addition to your garden. Parsnips and radishes are other root vegetables that can also thrive in the cooler climate of New England.

Remember, New England soil can be rocky and acidic, so using raised beds filled with nutrient-rich soil can provide optimal growing conditions. Plus, the soil in raised beds warms up faster in the spring than the ground, promoting quicker plant growth.

Frost-Resistant Herbs and Alliums

When it comes to frost-resistant herbs, rosemary and parsley stand out as top choices for early spring planting in New England. Varieties such as 'Alcade,' 'Arp,' 'Athens Blue Spire,' and 'Hill's Hardy' are particularly cold-hardy, making them well-suited to the region's climate. Remember, these herbs prefer full sun and well-drained soil.

On the other hand, the allium family offers a range of frost-resistant options, including onions and garlic, which can be planted early spring for a late summer or autumn harvest. For ornamental purposes, Allium bulbs can be planted in the fall for late spring or early summer blooms. They produce distinctive globe-like blooms that add a touch of elegance to any garden.

- For successful growth, ensure:
 - Adequate sunlight: At least six hours for herbs and full to half a day's sun for Alliums.
 - Proper soil conditions: Well-drained soil for both herbs and Alliums.
 - Appropriate spacing: About 12 inches apart for Allium bulbs.

Remember, each plant has unique requirements, so always research the needs of each herb or Allium variety you choose to plant.

In the early season, leafy greens, such as lettuce, spinach, and kale, are excellent choices for your New England garden. These greens are fast-growing and can be planted as soon as the soil has thawed, often germinating at temperatures as low as 40 degrees F.

- **Lettuce** varieties, such as 'Red Sails' and 'Little Caesar', can provide great results when planted in early spring. They mature quickly, some in just 50 days, offering early gardening gratification.
- **Spinach** is another cool-weather loving vegetable, perfect for early spring planting. It prefers rich, loose, and fertile soil for optimal growth.
- **Kale**, a nutrient-rich green, can also be sown early in the season and doesn't require much care beyond regular watering.

Remember to ensure your soil is ready before planting. The use of organic materials like straw, leaves, or wood chips for mulch



can help retain moisture and suppress weed growth.

Cold Tolerant Root Vegetables

As part of your early spring gardening in

New England, consider planting cold-tolerant root vegetables. These are a practical choice, capable of withstanding the region's unpredictable spring weather. Carrots, for instance, can be planted early in the spring and while they take longer to mature than some

ON THE CALENDAR

For Garden Lovers

APRIL

Manchester

Rake, Shovel, Sweep and Lift: An Ergonomic Workshop for Gardeners

Thursday, April 25 | 6 p.m.

\$Free for members, small donation recommended for guests

The North Shore Horticultural Society continues its monthly program with, "Rake, Shovel, Sweep and Lift: An Ergonomic Workshop for Gardeners." In this workshop, Diana Glenn and Larry Young, teachers of the Alexander Technique, will show you how to bring more conscious awareness to what you are doing while you are doing it. The Alexander Technique helps you use and direct the optimal amount of effort for any task, giving you more energy and less fatigue and pain for all your activities. Non-members are welcome, with the hope you will want to join and support the club!

62 School Street, Manchester
nshorticulture.org/monthly-programs

Manchester

All About Pollinator Gardens

Tuesday, April 9 | 6 p.m.

\$Free for members, small donation recommended for guests

The Seaside Garden Club will host Deborah Thompson who will speak at this meeting about how to turn our lawns into pollinator gardens. Pollinator habitats have captured the imagination of home gardeners in recent years, and for good reason: they can beautify your space, increase native biodiversity, increase pollination services and biological control of "pest" insects, and provide community engagement and learning opportunities. Then check out the club's website for information on its annual plant auction, which last year took place in May.

Manchester Community Center at Harbor's Point | Manchester
Seasidegardenclub.wordpress.com

Gloucester

"What's it Worth?" Night at Second Glance

Thursday, April 4 from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

\$10 each

Anyone curious to learn the value of an an-

tique or vintage item should take part in Second Glance's "What's it Worth" night. The evening will feature acclaimed appraisers who will assess the value of items brought in by attendees. James Callahan, Asian Art and General Antique Appraiser of Antiques Roadshow, Colleene Fesko, Art (Painting, Watercolor, Sculpture, and Print) Appraiser of Antiques Roadshow, and Bryan McMullin, local Gemologist & Jewelry Appraiser. Each ticket holder may bring one item to be appraised. Second Glance will also be open for shopping during the event. Proceeds will support hunger-relief programs of The Open Door.

Second Glance 2 Pond Rd #1, | Gloucester
whatsitworth.eventbrite.com (tickets)

MAY

Rockport

MOTIF # 1 DAY

Saturday, May 18

Motif No.1 Day Arts Fest celebrates Rockport across the arts. The Festival centers around Rockport's iconic Motif No.1, the fishing shack artist's studio tourist attraction. A fantastic lineup of free outdoor art events take place throughout the Day. In the past this event has featured everything from a short film festival, poetry slams, live music, aerial and dance performances, interactive art, and fine art. There is also a Motif No.1 Day 5k & Fun Run support wellness initiatives at Rockport Public Schools.

DowntownRockport

Hamilton & Ipswich

Family Farm Chores at Appleton Farms

Friday, May 3 | 12 - 1 p.m., 1:30 - 2:30 p.m., and 3 - 4 p.m.

\$15 (member), \$20 (non-member)

Experience the beauty of America's oldest functioning farm - the Appleton Farms. Enjoy a sight full of greeneries, grazing livestock, restored farmhouses, and stone walls. Get on your muck boots - your whole family will get to be farmers together! Help feed our rabbit Violet, the goats Morgana, Maeve and Mordred, and the dairy cows Gray, Jasmine, Gigi and Joanie. Collect eggs from our flock of

chickens and ducks, muck and bed the stalls, scrub buckets, fill hay managers, and more. Help with our production livestock, pasture maintenance, and electric fencing. Note: activities may change based on weather, number of participants and other factors.

219 County Road | Hamilton & Ipswich
thetrustees.org/event/410368/

Beverly

Afternoon Tea in the Garden at Long Hill

Sunday, May 19 | 4 - 6 p.m.

\$36 (member), \$45 (non-member)

Afternoon Tea in the Garden is back again by popular demand this season! Join us in the historic Sedgwick gardens on the terrace for this very special tea service, which will include a selection of sandwiches, scones, and mini desserts - all served with your choice of tea. We are excited to partner with Ferreira Foods this year, who will be supplying all of the delicious food and tea. Note, The Trustees will contact all participants to confirm seating arrangements and any dietary restrictions. The meeting point is under the tent at the top of the hill.

572 Essex Street | Beverly
thetrustees.org/event/410104/

Essex

Birds, Bees & Butterflies at The Cox Reservation

Saturday, May 18 | 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Bring the entire family and check out this educational event with the bees and other pollinators! Find out how these little creatures are off on an important mission to keep our flowers and food supply high. A screened-in tent will be in place for safety purposes and various activities and snacks will be available around the area. Bathrooms will also be accessible for your convenience. Feel free to set up your spot for a picnic and enjoy the rest of the day with the gang!

82 Eastern Avenue | Essex
ecg.convio.net/calendar

Manchester

North Shore Horticultural Society Annual Plant Sale & Auction

Thursday, May 23 | 6 p.m.

\$Free

Always a fun local event, and this year, as usual, the plant sale and auction is at Sacred Heart Church Hall where there will be loads of pre-priced plants for sale (6 p.m. sharp!) and then the live auction with Jo Goodwin Rogers. This year the club is celebrating its 125th anniversary as the longest running garden club in the area.

62 School Street, Manchester
nshorticulture.org/monthly-programs

JUNE

Essex

Art In The Barn at The Cox Reservation

Friday, June 14 | 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (5 p.m. party/reception)

Saturday, June 15 | 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

\$Free

Art In The Barn will be presenting the magnificent works of the wonderful artists in the region this year. At Greenbelt's headquarters, Cox Reservation, where the air painting location is preserved carefully by Greenbelt. The first time slot on Friday will offer a pure exhibit while the second slot provides a public reception where attendees can enjoy some live music, beer, and food. On Saturday, expect to see artist demos while pastries and coffee will be served until supplies last.

82 Eastern Avenue | Essex
ecga.org/artinthebarn

Ipswich

About Castle Hill Tour: Formal Flowers, A Tour for Gardeners

Sunday, June 9 | 10 to 11 a.m.

\$free (children), \$15 (member), \$30 (non-member)

Calling all gardeners! Are you interested in how the formal gardens at Castle Hill have grown and changed over the years? Are you looking for inspiration for your own garden? Formal Flowers will take you on a detailed journey into the way the Italian and Rose Gardens were designed and planted in the Crane's day, and how the gardens were reimagined in 2016 and 2020. Tours include information on the current plantings with emphasis on those that are in bloom at the time of your tour.

Castle Hill on the Crane Estate
290 Argilla Rd. | Ipswich
thetrustees.org/event/409832/

Rockport

Rockport Farmers Market

Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. beginning June 15 thru Oct. 12

\$Free

Hosted by Rockport Exchange, this weekly outdoor farmer's market in Harvey Park offers the best local vendors and crafters from around Cape Ann.

Harvey Park, Rockport
rockportexchange.org/farmers-market

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Ace Manchester Hardware | 35 Beach St., Manchester (978) 526-4000

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Cedar Rock Gardens | 299 Concord St., West Gloucester (978) 471-9979

Chapman's Greenhouse | 58 Hart St., Beverly Farms (978) 927-0153

Corliss Brothers Garden Center | 31 Essex Rd., Ipswich (978) 356-5422

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We Dream In Colour | 166 Main St., Essex (978) 594-1425

White Painting Co. | Gloucester (978) 927-4939 or (508) 783-1107

Wild Oats | 12 West St., Beverly Farms (978) 921-0411



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