

## Spring Into Action

Well, it's that time of year when I start thinking of planting my garden and getting my yard ready for spring. With the mild winter weather we have had this year it feels like spring has already arrived. This is the time of year to cut Deer Grass and Fountain Grass down to the ground so that the new growth can reach out to the sun. Other perennials like Lantana that went dormant during the winter should also be trimmed back to encourage new growth. If you still have a small piece of grass in your yard, now would be a good time to remove the old thatch.

One of my favorite tasks in spring is planting my garden. Tinkering with the vegetables is my way of relaxing and of course the rewards later on are delicious. One of my good friends, Bill Lake, was the head gardener at the Desert Inn Hotel for a couple of decades. For those of you new to the valley, the Desert Inn was one of the iconic hotels on the strip with incredibly lush grounds but was imploded in 2001 to make room for the Wynn Resort. Bill is an avid gardener and can grow some of the most amazing vegetables even in our harsh environment. He is my go-to guy for help on getting the most out of my garden. One piece of advice that he gave me was to get those vegetables planted early. He starts growing his vegetables from seed indoors in January. By the end of February, most of his vegetables have been transplanted outside. Bill is able to get a big yield from all his crops with the right amount of nutrients, water, sun and care.



I have two types of gardens that I like to grow. One is a traditional garden planted in soil. I have some raised pots that have been filled with rich soil to provide the best growing medium. The other method that I like the best is growing my vegetables hydroponically. Using a hydroponic reservoir system, I am able to increase my yield seven to ten times over planting the same vegetables in soil. Of course the root vegetables have to be grown in soil.

There is something exciting about watching a seed sprout, grow and produce food that I can enjoy during the year. If you never have had a vegetable garden, make this the year that you start. Everyone can grow a garden even if you live in a small apartment. Vegetables can be grown in pots, buckets, an old boot or just about anything that holds soil. So have some fun, watch a plant grow and enjoy the harvest.

"If the automobile had followed the same development cycle as the computer, a Rolls-Royce would today cost \$100, get a million miles per gallon, and explode once a year, killing everyone inside."  
-Robert X. Cringely

## FAVORITE FLORA:

### LAVANDULA ANGUSTIFOLIA- ENGLISH LAVENDER

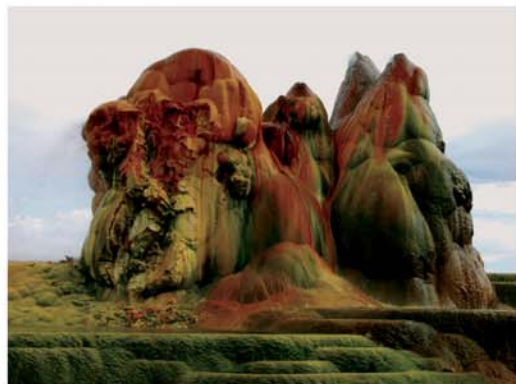


extremely exposed areas. Plant in well drained soil and provide medium amounts of water to achieve the best growth. To keep this plant at its best size and shape, prune back to 8"-10" in the early spring every 2-3 years as needed.

English Lavender is right at home in a rock, herb or sensory garden. Try growing this shrub in combination with other flowering and/or scented plants such as Guara (Guara linheimeri), Rosemary (Rosemary officianalis) and Lemon-scented Geranium (Pelargonium crispum). These plants can be placed near patios, entrances, or windows to provide visual and aromatic interest. Fresh or dried English Lavender foliage and flowers can also be used in arrangements as well.

Want to add some color and a fresh scent inside and outside your home? Try adding some English Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) to your landscape. English Lavender has thin, gray-green leaves and forms a small shrub from 1.5 to 2.5 feet tall and wide. Blooming in the spring through summer, this plant will be adorned with violet colored flowers that will add a bright spot to any landscape. Both the foliage and flowers are fragrant which can attract bees and butterflies. This plant is commonly used to create lavender scents found in soaps and perfumes. Native to the Mediterranean region, English Lavender is can thrive in the Las Vegas valley. It prefers full to partial sun but can struggle in

Photo of the Month



Colorful Geyser  
Gerlach, NV  
Victor Trujillo