

Spring Ahead - By Stan Southwick



I love this time of year! In the last few days, I was able to move my clock ahead an hour and get my vegetable garden planted. Some of you may not think losing an hour of sleep by moving the clock ahead an hour is a good thing. I look at the bright side of that coin...literally. The benefit of an extra hour of daylight at the end of the day far outweighs the early wakeup call. I also love getting my hands dirty planting my garden in the cool spring air and smelling the rich soil. I could spend hours wandering through the nursery checking out all the different plants. I recently spoke with the director of a psychiatric hospital about how the importance of sun,

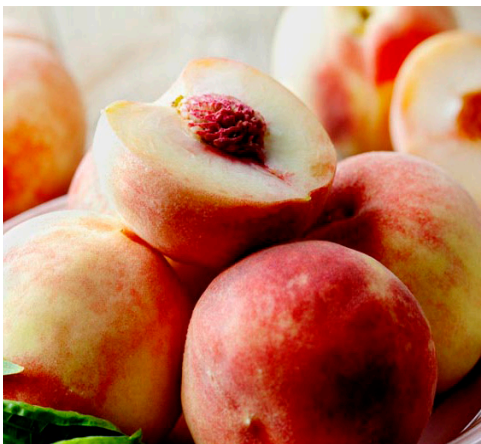
plants, fresh air, and just being outside is helping psychiatric patients cope with the altered reality they sometimes live in and how our design of the exterior space can enhance that experience. I know getting outdoors helps me cope with life. When frustrations build, I go out for a walk and always get a new perspective on things.

Spring is a time of renewal, recommitment, and rebirth. Get outside and get inspired on how to renew, recommit, or revive your life. While you are out there, plant something, anything. It will give you hope as you nurture it and watch it grow and mature.

"The garden is a love song, a duet between a human being and mother nature"
Jeff Cox, Author and Television Host

Favorite Flora:

Prunus persica 'Sugar Princess' - By Caryl Davies



The last several trees I've planted in my backyard have been food producing. Not only are they beautiful to look at, but the abundance of fruit they've given me reminds me that we humans are intrinsically linked to nature for our survival.

This month's highlighted plant is the Sugar Princess Peach tree. This deciduous tree produces large, yellow-fleshed peaches that are crazy-sweet! These delicious orbs of goodness can be eaten straight off the tree or are superb used in baked goods. Sugar Princess is a self-pollinating fruit tree that does well in USDA Zones 5-9. Plant in full sun and give it enough room to grow to its mature size of about 12'x12'. Be ready to pick the fruit around mid-summer. Oh, did I mention the fruit is freestone which means the pits come out easily?

What's not to love! This

variety of peach tree is best planted from late fall through mid spring and once planted, don't forget to keep up with the fertilizer.

So are you watering at the mouth yet? What if you can't find Sugar Princess to plant in your yard? Some other varieties of peach that do well in the desert are Babcock, Eva's Pride, Red Baron, or Desert Gold.

With a little bit of dirt on your hands, you too can soon be biting into a home-grown, juicy, sweet peach.



Steady On
Stan Southwick