

# Garden Trends in the New Century

## What's In

**Landscaping services.** People are busy, and many have the money to hire someone else to do the planting, weeding, mulching, mowing, etc. for them.

**Low-maintenance plants.** The hot plants of 2000 are those that don't get bug or disease problems and that need little water or pruning. Examples: ornamental grasses, dwarf shrubs, groundcovers.

**Outdoor rooms.** Our fast-paced world creates an even greater need for places to relax and enjoy a little quiet time. So we're carving out sections of the yard for patios, decks, swings, benches and screen plantings that give us a hideaway.

**Bird and butterfly gardens.** It's back to nature in our own back yard... a piece of sanity in a nutty world.

**Water gardens.** These fit nicely into outdoor rooms, they help attract wildlife, and the sound of water is relaxing.

**Garden accessories.** We're decorating our outdoor rooms with hanging baskets, statuary, artistic pots, topiary, arbors, weatherproof furniture, landscape lighting, grills... whatever gives us peace and comfort.

**Drought-fighting strategies.** Droughts aren't occasional things anymore. Look for increased demand in plants that tolerate drought well and for more watering aids such as soaker hoses, drip irrigation and TreeGators.

**"Fusion" gardens.** Eclectic gardens are in. It's OK to mix annuals with perennials, edibles with ornamentals and bold tropics with the familiar evergreens.

**Kitchen gardens.** Forget those big, straight-row vegetable gardens. We're returning to smaller "kitchen gardens" that mix patches of herbs, vegetables and even flowers for cutting. Especially "in" will be gourmet, heirloom and colorful veggies.

**Bright colors.** Hot colors such as orange, red and gold are making a comeback at the expense of pastels such as pink, salmon and apricot.

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**Colorful and bold foliage.** Variegated foliage continues to catch on. But we're also big on big foliage (i.e. elephant ears, cannas, crotons, castor beans) and brightly colored foliage, particularly burgundy, red and golden-yellow.

**Tropicals.** Northerners are experimenting with growing tropicals as annuals (i.e. mandevillas, callas, lantanas) and using traditional house plants as deck plants or even bedding specimens outside in summer (i.e. palms, crotons, bananas).

**Four-season gardens.** We're planting more berried plants, colorful evergreens, trees with interesting bark and other plants that look good all year.

**Container gardening.** It's been popular for a long time but getting bigger as people dress up those outdoor rooms and front porches.

**Gardening with kids.** Today's parents have fond memories of gardening with their parents and grandparents and will want to pass along these simple joys to their kids.

## What's Out

**Big lawns.** They're too much work, they need lots of fertilizer, they're not very creative, and they end up going brown for half the summer anyway. People are either replacing lawn space with decks, groundcovers and/or gardens or buying smaller lots in the first place.

**Sprays.** A greater concern for the environment is translating into kinder, gentler pest controls instead of routinely spraying chemicals "just in case."

**Pruned hedges.** Again, who's got time to keep a yard full of evergreens neatly sheared? Looser forms are not only less work, they give the yard a more relaxed look.

**Purism.** We're no longer isolating plants into perennial gardens or annual beds or herb patches. We're mixing and matching all sorts of plants into interesting new "fusion gardens."

**Pastels.** We're tiring of the soft, reserved look of pinks, salmons and apricots. The growing trend is toward the bold bright colors, such as burnt orange, bright red and golden-yellow.