

WILSHIRE GARDEN MARKET

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MODERN CONTAINERS OF CHOICE

New neighborhoods comprised of large, post-modern homes have sprung up from coast to coast. Often they are sparsely landscaped, and in need of large planters that match their architectural style. Modern style homes built from 1960-1980 were meant to look toward the future and didn't actually have many noteworthy features. The trend then became the post-modern style; most post modern homes are adaptations of classic architectural styles, reflecting a re-awakened interest in history and heritage. Examples are Neo-Mansard, Neo-Colonial, Neo-French, Neo-Tudor, Neo-Mediterranean, Neo-Classical Revival and Neo-Victorian. Of course the classic architectural styles went hand in hand with their gardens, planters, and statuary.



This Neo-French home could benefit from a pair of French inspired planters at the entry including this 18"W x 22"H St. Remy urn. Available in more than a dozen hues from very light moss, warm



champagne, to aged limestone, the urn could accommodate a shrub rose, a climbing rose, an evergreen topiary, or a small ornamental tree. If a formal look is desired, a more decorative planter may be preferable.



This classic light gray cast stone planter is a tasteful complement for the entry of the Neo-Colonial home. It could be filled with upright evergreens such as hollies or boxwoods, keeping in mind traditional forms, and crisp flower plantings such as red or white geraniums or petunias.



An obvious option for this neo-Mediterranean home would be terra cotta planters to echo the terra cotta tile roof. Alternatively, turquoise glazed planters would be a beautiful contrast. Oleanders or other flowers in hot colors would enhance its Mediterranean look.

Curb appeal can be greatly enhanced by correctly matching the style of planters to the homes architecture.



HELP STOP CRAPE MURDER

We have featured this topic once before. It is worth repeating because the improper pruning of crape myrtles is an ugly wrong that can be made right. Crape myrtles are one of the few flowering trees that can thrive in our unpredictable and sometimes harsh climate, so they truly deserve more respect. Crape myrtles bloom on new growth. Early spring pruning, before the tree breaks dormancy, is recommended. Unless you see new leaves emerging, it is not too late to prune right now. Fall pruning creates a less attractive tree to look at during the winter and removes the current year's growth as a buffer against winter damage.

Here is an example of poor pruning. Notice the enlarged knobs. The downside to poor crape myrtle pruning includes:



- Weak branches. Sometimes they snap off with the weight of flowers.
- Fewer blooms and powdery mildew.
- Unattractive bark.



Here is an example of good crape myrtle pruning. Good pruning when the trees are young will mean less maintenance when the trees are mature. Correct pruning will produce a beautiful tree with strong branches and plenty of blooms to grace the garden.

Crape myrtles come in more than one height. Would it not

make sense to buy the correct size originally?

The following steps will help instruct anyone how to properly prune a crape myrtle.

Start at the bottom. Crape myrtles produce multiple trunks. Keeping three or five main trunks is a good rule of thumb. An odd number is more pleasing to the eye. Three trunks vs. many trunks mean less maintenance. Trim the unwanted trunks off close to the soil line without leaving unsightly stubs.

Remove low branches. If anyone will be walking underneath, trim them up to six feet above ground, if not the branches can be left lower unless it is necessary to see oncoming traffic.

Prune all the way back to the main trunk without damaging the trunk. Make a wedge cut in the bottom of the branch so that when it separates from the trunk, it won't tear the bark off the main trunk.

Trim off the old spent blooms. The upper branches look best if they spread in different directions, so remove branches that overlap others. Also remove any branches that rub across others



or cross back through the tree. Remove excess branches from the interior of the plant to allow for good air circulation, reducing the chance of powdery mildew. Trim off pencil thin or thinner growth so that the tree's energy can be used for generating strong new growth!

MOUNT VERNON REPLICA

This beautiful new watering can of solid copper is a true replica of the one owned and used by America's first president. George Washington was for much of his life an avid gardener, who delighted in nurturing rare and exotic plants that were sent to him from all over the world. This watering can was adapted from a pair of "watering pots" that were originally used at Mount Vernon during the 18th century. Probably made in France, they were listed as being among the gardener's tools in an inventory done shortly after George



Washington's death. The watering pots were later owned by Martha Washington's grandson, George Washington Parke Custis, at his home in Arlington, now the Custis-Lee Mansion at Arlington National Cemetery. This replica watering can holds 2 ½ gallons of water, and has a six inch rose that creates a two foot diameter area of coverage; these attributes make it a great watering can for fertilizing flower beds. It makes a beautiful statement as an accent piece as well as being completely functional. We were recently asked by Southern Accents Magazine for one of these watering cans to photograph for a feature.

Look for our watering can in the May/June issue of Southern Accents!

BEST NEW PLANTS FOR 2006

'Black Lace' elder (*Sambucus nigra* 'Eva') has been named the 'Best New Plant for 2006'. It has a unique combination of purplish black foliage, large pink blooms, and finely dissected leaves. This elder has an uncanny resemblance to a Japanese maple but is easier to grow and produce. 'Black Lace' was developed by a British funded breeding program; it was introduced at the Chelsea Flower Show in 2003. A limited release has put the plant in short supply. Some retailers will have to wait until the 2007 season when the main launch will provide four times as many plants to come to market.



Azaleas are a mainstay in Oklahoma gardens, with a beautiful springtime show. The 'Autumn Belle' azalea is a new cultivar recently introduced that will bloom three times a year—spring, summer and fall with flowers that are light pink with white lace trim and magenta freckles.



APRIL TO DO LIST

- Check daffodils for thrips.
- Prune crape myrtles properly if it hasn't been done.
- Prune roses if it hasn't been done.
- Add bone meal to Asiatic lilies when foliage is several inches tall.
- Plant lily of the valley pips.
- Harden off summer bedding plants to acclimatize them slowly.
- Plant water plants.
- Check trellises and climbing plant supports for damage before plants are fully developed.
- Check hanging basket supports and liners.
- Watch for insect pests: scales, aphids, whiteflies, lacebugs, caterpillars, and sawflies.
- Establish or renovate Bermuda grass.
- Start to pinch back chrysanthemums for more dense plants.

SEMINAR SERIES 2006

These seminars begin at 10:30 a.m. and are one hour in length, with time for questions at the conclusion. The fee is \$10 per person; seating is somewhat limited, so call now to reserve a space. Door prizes are given at each seminar. Please join us!

Sat., April 8	Linda Vater	"Curb Appeal and Seasonal Color"
Sat., May 6	Linda Vater	"Roses"
Fri., June 2	Linda Vater	"Container Gardening"
Sat., July 8	Linda Vater	"Shade Gardening"
August	Linda Vater	SKIP IT! TOO HOT!
Sat., Sept. 16	Linda Vater	"Best Foundation Plants"
Fri., Oct. 13	Linda Vater	"Bulb Container Gardening"

You can get interesting garden information by watching Linda Vater's garden segments on the KFOR-TV4 4:45 News with Linda Cavanaugh every Friday.

EXTERIOR DECORATING

This year give yourself a garden retreat, or refresh the one you have. In response to repeated requests, Wilshire Garden Market now provides an exterior decorating consultation service. By appointment and for a nominal fee, we will make a consultation visit followed by written suggestions to make your garden retreat more charming, cohesive, and useful. We also plant pots or window boxes. Call the store for more details or to set up an appointment.



Let us help you create your outdoor living room!

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