

# Disney Gardeners Reveal How to Bring Home the Blooms

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Hundreds of acres of lovingly tended displays brighten the Vacation Kingdom throughout the year, with the pinnacle of petals bursting forth in an unmatched color show each spring at the Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival at Walt Disney World Resort. How do the Disney gardeners do it? Better yet, how can home gardeners obtain successful results from their landscape efforts? Where to begin? Roses, grass, flowers, trees . . . the list goes on and on. Here are some ideas from Walt Disney World specialists on what to tackle first this spring.

## *Walt Disney World Spring 'How-To' Tips For Home Gardeners*

### ***Vegetable gardening tips***

Choose the site for your vegetable garden making sure that:

- it is well drained.
- it gets about eight hours of sunshine a day.
- a water source is close by.

Add organic matter to the soil, pull weeds and till the plot.

Some more veggie tips:

- Start your transplants indoors about a month and a half before the last frost date.
- Stagger plantings by two weeks or so to give yourself a longer harvest time.
- Consider what you eat and how many plants you'll need to produce that amount.
- Pick plants that do well in your area. Your extension agent can help you with a list.

### ***Shrub and tree tips***

- Spring is a good time of year to plant new trees and shrubs.
- If you have trees in a turf area, they may be getting enough fertilizer; if not, consider an early-spring fertilizer application.
- Skirt up low branches that get in the way of mowing.

- Re-establish your mulch rings — a good guide is three feet from the trunk.
- Get your pruners out and remove cross branches and dead wood.
- Remember not to prune your spring flowering trees until after they bloom!

### ***Cool-weather turf-maintenance tips***

- The cool weather makes us forget that it can be dry. Don't forget to check irrigation for damaged heads, leaks, and coverage.
- While you're at it, have your lawn mower and power equipment serviced in preparation for the upcoming growing season.
- Remove sticks, leaves, rocks, and any tall unwanted plants or weeds from your lawn area before mowing season begins.
- Inspect turf areas for excessive thatch and make arrangements for lawn renovation if necessary.

### ***Rose tips***

- In southern climates, wait to trim roses back until after the last frost.
- Give each rose bush a cup of bone meal and blood meal in March and, in the South, an additional cup in October.
- Each bush can use ½ cup of Epsom salt each month April through November.
- Re-mulch your roses, being sure to keep mulch away from the stem.
- Remember — sunshine, cleanliness, good air circulation, and ample water below leaf level with good drainage will give you a healthy rose garden with lots of blooms.

### ***General spring gardening tips***

- When frost danger is past, plant that Christmas poinsettia outside.
- Work compost into your soil and sow seeds for this season's garden. Check with your extension agent for good choices for your area.
- Be careful when shopping for flowers — make sure the bedding plants are for the upcoming season, not the one that has passed.
- Be sure to know what type of sunlight your garden will get so you can pick appropriately.
- Don't be fooled by cool temperatures — check the soil to keep the moisture level correct.

You've begun! Your plants will thank you by providing an abundant harvest and good show throughout the season. A little work now will pay off big later on. So, put that extra burst of energy brought on by the nice spring weather to good use by sprucing up your garden. You too can have "good show" 365 days a year.

## ***A Plant-Lover's Guide to Walt Disney World Resort***

The landscapes of Walt Disney World Resort are special places offering an array of gardening experiences. Whether you're a "tree person" or need smaller garden ideas, the Vacation Kingdom has something sure to spark your interest and make you want to get your hands dirty. Here are just a few of the horticultural wonders awaiting:

- The **Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival** offers gardeners and "green-thumb wannabes" the chance to explore the inner secrets of Disney's plant world. Epcot blooms with entertainment, gardening experts and more than 500 plant species during the annual spring festival. Check out the 30 million colorful blossoms in gardens throughout the park and the sounds of the sixties at the Flower Power concert series.
- The **All-America Rose Selection (AARS) Display Garden** located in the Hub of Magic Kingdom offers a fabulous show in the spring. These past winners of the coveted AARS awards hold court near Cinderella Castle. A winding path leads guests through a fragrant tour of rose-breeding excellence. The roses are in bounteous bloom spring and summer, then are cut back in preparation for another color show that begins around Thanksgiving.
- Only the real trivia buffs can tell you where the largest tree moved on Walt Disney World property resides — **Old Man Island at Disney's Port Orleans Resort-Riverside** recreation area. Children of all ages playing at its "feet" probably have no idea that this thriving giant was moved when it was a mere young'un at 55 feet and a slim 85 tons!
- The most exotic garden of **Disney's Polynesian Resort** is a joy to visit no matter what the weather. This tropical atrium complete with waterfalls is located in the lobby of the resort. Delicate orchids, bright foliage and a variety of interesting plants perch on the rocks of this tropical paradise.
- Created in 1995 for the Epcot International Flower and Garden Festival, the **Garden Railway** at the Germany pavilion has become one of the most popular garden attractions at Walt Disney World Resort. This 50' x 130' miniature garden is a wonder to behold. "Residents" of the tiny Bavarian village can be found celebrating holidays, holding festivals and attending to their day-to-day lives.