

## SPICE UP YOUR GARDEN

Smell is an amazing sense that can alert us to something of danger or something familiar.

Planting herbs in the garden can trigger a truly sensual experience. Inhaling the scent of lavender can take your mind to a different time and place. Scents spark memory.

You don't need a ten by ten foot plot of land to plant herbs. They can be planted in between sun loving perennials or in between flagstones.

Herbs are used today for culinary, medicinal or aromatic purposes. They are easy to grow and need lots of sun, water and good drainage.

Stevia (*Stevia rebaudiana*) is a wonderful herbal sugar substitute that may be grown as an annual in our gardens. This herb is a South American native and a member of the daisy family. The leaf powder may be used instead of sugar in desserts, drinks or preserves.

Orange Spice thyme (available at Richters Greenhouses) has a remarkable scent of orange and spice together as the name suggests. This perennial herb forms a dense ground cover and is wonderful in tea. Thyme comes in many different flavours including lemon, lime and mint. Scents in the garden are as diverse as scents in the kitchen: fruity, citrus-like or peppery to name a few.

Rhubarb Pie Sorrel is a new salad herb with foliage that has shades of cream, gold, green and red. You will love it in your salad and in your garden as a splash of colour among other perennial flowers. Experiment with it in containers too.

Few plants can offer so much enjoyment.

Remember the best part of cultivating herbs is sharing them with friends and neighbours. In addition to their beautiful foliage or flowers, they provide sensory stimulation, mood lifting qualities and healing for us. Try a few herbs this summer and you will reap the rewards.

Marilyn Pomer is a landscape designer for Greenescape Designs Inc. If you have any questions or comments please email Marilyn at [marilyn@greenescape.ca](mailto:marilyn@greenescape.ca)