

## POOLSIDE PERENNIALS WITH A SPLASH

August is the perfect month to relax by the water and spend time outdoors with longer daylight hours. Landscaping around your pool is entirely different than landscaping around a natural pond or salt water pool. One of the main reasons for the difference is that chlorine is highly toxic to plants in most situations. That is why you never see leafy ferns dipping into the pool; although, they look terrific falling gently into a naturalized pond. There are ways to have a green oasis around your pool as long as you situate the planting beds at least two feet away from the pool itself.

### Choosing Plants

The best plants for pool sides are drought tolerant with shallow roots and small sized leaves. The hard surface pathway around the pool is a heat island and can reach over thirty five Celsius in the height of summer. The reflected heat and sunlight from the water create this hot environment. You do not want to be burdened with watering plants continuously when you are trying to relax.

### No Mess

You should select plant material with leaves that don't fall into the pool as this will create lots of clean up and clog the filter. Shrubs and trees in the surrounding pool area should produce no fruit that causes a mess or stains the pool deck.

### Safety First

It is a great idea to have plants with wonderful soft textures that come in contact with your bare skin around the swimming area. You can place softer textured plants like dwarf Fountain Grass (*Pennisetum*) beside a pathway. Obviously, stay away from plants with thorns or multiple stems that project onto

the walkways where people are coming and going.

### Top five sun loving pool friendly Perennials

- Coreopsis (*Coreopsis verticillata*) blooms all summer with bright yellow flowers
- Daylilies (*Hemerocallis*) are a popular pool side plant adding splashes of colour: red, orange, purple or yellow shades. The grassy foliage lasts until mid fall
- Ornamental Grasses provide all season interest around the pool with their unusual textures and colours
- Sedum (*Sedum spectabile* 'Autumn Joy') looks the best in the late summer and fall with fleshy cactus like leaves
- Mosses or thyme are wonderful groundcovers that can tolerate foot traffic often called 'Steppables.' Place them between flagstones or where they will touch your toes

Slope planting areas away from the water to stop the soil from washing onto the pool deck and remember to mulch the beds to retain moisture. Bring your houseplants outside for a lush tropical look. Poolside gardening can be simple with fun, pool friendly perennials.

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