



MIXED GREENS

Tips for Creating Colorful Year-Round Container Gardens

In the heat of summer, the cold days of winter and under a canopy of shade, it's easy to have pots that always brim with plants that seem immune to the stresses of the season. The following are recommended plants to create inviting patios and instant curb-appeal to entry-ways. You can't go wrong with crisp, vibrant foliage and splashes of annual color.

- 1) **Green and Variegated Ivies** - *Hedera helix*.
- 2) **“Creeping Jenny, Gold Moneywort”** - *Lysimachia nummularia* 'AUREA'. Good as a ground cover or trailing in pots. Runners up to 2-feet long. Yellow flowers in summer. Took freezing temps at my house, north of 1604, down to 29 degrees uncovered. Would like some shade during the heat of the summer but OK with full sun in winter.
- 3) **“Big Blue Lily Turf, Large Liriope”** – *Liriope muscari*. This is the large, dark green version that grows to 2-feet tall. There is a smaller variegated version, *L. spicata* 'SILVER DRAGON' which is 12-inches tall.
- 4) **“Polka-Dot Plant, Freckle Face, Baby's Tears”** – *Hypoestes sanguinolenta*. There is a Splash Series that comes in Pink, White, Red and Rose. There is also a Confetti Series that comes in White, Red, Carmine-Rose and Pink.
- 5) **“Flowering Maple, Chinese Bellflower, Chinese Lantern”** – *Abutilon hybridum*. These come in many different sizes and shapes and with various colored flowers. Ours have an orangey/salmon color flower. We have some in the ground and in the pots.
- 6) **“Bloody Sorrel, Red Veined Dock”** – *Rumex sanguineus*. You can also use Swiss Chard (*Beta vulgaris* var. *flavescens*) in winter. It comes with white, yellow, pink or red stalks and midribs.
- 7) **“Ghost Plant”** – *Graptopetalum paraguayense*. Some are in pots and some we've planted in the ground.
- 8) **“Angel Wing Begonias”** – *Begonia lucerna*. It has cream-colored flowers.
- 9) **“Florist's Cyclamen”** – *Cyclamen persicum*. They come in red, white and many shades of pink and purple. We use these for winter color. In summer you can use various varieties of **Coleus** (*Coleus blumei*) or a number of different **Sweet Potato Vines** (*Ipomoea batatas*). There are 8 different types.
- 10) **“Soft Shield Fern”** – *Polystichum setiferum*. It has survived at my house in the ground at 29 degrees. We have divided it up and placed it in many different places around Center. Prefers some shade, especially in summer.
- 11) **“Hot Pink Kalanchoe”** – *Kalanchoe blossfeldiana*. Don't forget that these plants bloom from the end of January through the spring for some nice winter color. Mine have been left outside at 30 degrees with no problems.

As seasons change, replace fading plants with new annuals from your favorite garden center or nursery.

Recommended Planting and Care

ALWAYS make sure you have a drainage hole in the bottom of the pot! If the hole is too large, you can place some small stones or broken shells over it to slow the rate of water flow. Water containers twice a week, since containers tend to dry out more quickly than beds. A layer of mulch around the plants will help to keep the soil moist.

*The source of this GVST Gardening Guide is **Louise Suhey**, GVST Volunteer and Master Gardener. Examples of container gardens using the plants described above can be seen in the sidewalk pots Louise created for the San Antonio Garden Center. For other GVST Gardening Guides, visit our website at www.GardeningVolunteers.org.*