

Creating a Texas-Style Cottage Garden

A Brief History of Cottage Gardening:

Though usually associated with England, cottage gardening is indigenous to any culture where people had small plots of land of their own. Cottage gardens were planted in useful plans including cutting flowers, herbs and roses for culinary and medicinal purposes, vegetables and fruit trees. Every square inch of land would be covered with something of purpose-- plants, patios, trellises and other structures or features of interest--without crowding or sacrificing plant health. During the Arts and Crafts movement of the late Victorian Period, cottage gardens took on a more romantic sentiment that remains to this day. Many impressionist painters sought to capture this romantic feeling, perhaps none so well as Monet's garden series. Today, flowers are more prominent and selected for their ornamental value rather than their medicinal uses, though herbs are often still well represented.



Elements of a Cottage Garden:

1. Abundant plants in an informal setting typifies the overall style of a cottage garden.
2. Minimal to no turf.
3. Pathways and patios of flagstone, old brick, gravel or mulch.
4. Picket or wrought iron fences; trellises, birdbaths, gazing balls.
5. Garden bench.
6. Wide variety of plants.

Plants Recommended for San Antonio Cottage Gardens:

1. **Trees:** Ornamental trees such as Redbud, Mountain Laurel, Mexican Plum, Desert Willow, Wild Olive.
2. **Shrubs:** Wax myrtle, Bay laurel (when sheltered), Sweet olive, Loquat, Antique roses, American Beautyberry, Esperanza, Althea (or Rose of Sharon), Plumbago, Fig.
3. **Spire and Tall Perennials:** Sunflowers, Turk's Cap, *Larkspur, *Poppies, Indigo Spires, Salvia. Butterfly weed, Iris, *Cosmos, *Zinnia, Brugmansia
4. **Mounding Perennials:** Dianthus, Lavender, Daisies, Pink Skull Cap, Texas Zinnia, *Columbine, Jerusalem Sage, Shrimp Plant, Cat Whiskers, Fall Aster
5. **Creeping and Filler Plants:** Sedums, *Dahlberg Daisies, French Thyme, *Johnny Jump-Ups, Lamb's Ear, Wild Strawberry, Herbs of all kinds.
6. **Vining and Weaving Plants:** Climbing Roses, Hyacinth Bean, Wisteria, Queens Wreath, Sky vine, *Morning Glories, Trumpet Vine, Pole Beans.

* Asterisks denotes re-seeding annuals.

