



What are you eating in your yard!

How does eating your yard sound? No, I am not talking about eating grass and leaves. “Edible Landscaping” is the new garden trend which incorporates edible plants into the landscape. An edible landscape is the concept of mixing and mingling plantings that include planting edibles in every space available while achieving an aesthetically pleasing landscape design. Of course, an added advantage of edible landscaping is that it can be used to feed your family! Edible landscaping combines berries, fruit trees, herbs, vegetables, and edible flowers into pleasing designs. These designs can be used in any garden style and can include as many edible species as you would like.

Here are some reasons to incorporate edible plants into the residential landscape:

- The home-grown fully ripened fruits and vegetables will be fresher and have more flavor
- You will have more control of the kinds of pesticides used on the foods
- Growing your own food will save on the grocery bill
- You can grow varieties that are not available in stores
- This is an opportunity to get outside and commune with nature and to have fun!

Like the rest of your plants used in the landscape, remember that edible plants grow best in certain conditions. Many of the fruits and vegetables do best with at least 6 hours of full sunlight a day. It is also best to ensure that you have well-drained soil. Look for that part of

your yard that satisfies these growing conditions as a place to start an edible landscape. Now ask yourself, "What do I like to eat?"

Unlike some of your ornamental plants that can survive with minimal care, most edible plants require a certain amount of attention to produce to their fullest. This may mean extra watering, pruning, fertilizing and pest management. You will also want to stay abreast of any disease problems. Make sure that whatever you are using in and around your edible plants is safe. Also remember to start small. You don't want to overwhelm yourself! This project should be treated as a hobby, not a job.

This is just a little something to get you thinking about edible landscaping. The possibilities are endless! At my own home, I have a pear and peach tree to go along with a few vegetables that I grow. There is nothing like stepping outside to snip a fresh fruit or vegetable to go with the meal! Until next time, happy gardening!



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