Needs a Spaghetti Garden by Seolncr

Article published on May 11th 2012 | Career

One of the delightful pleasures of life are herbs. Besides adding beauty to your garden they make foods taste better and provide a pleasant scent to the air we breathe. In George Washington days everyone had a herb garden that they used for culinary, teas and medicinal purposes. That practice is slowly coming back.

A spaghetti garden is one of the most popular kitchen gardens. Anyone that has a sunny patch of ground or a window-box can grow these herbs of parsley, garlic, basil, bay laurel and oregano. A small garden space can easily yield all the herbs that youâ€™ll need for delicious Italian meals. They are even easy to grow in a sunny window for your year-round use.

Let us take a closer look at the spaghetti garden herbs:

+Oregano is a perennial ground cover plant. Oregano is a prolific grower that can send out shoots that grow to six feet in a single season. If pruned and bunched, oregano can grow into a small border plant. It would rather have light, thin soil and lots of sun, so keep it on the south side of your garden. When the plants reach 4-5 inches harvesting can start. Pinch off the top 1/3 of the plant, just above a leaf intersection. The young leaves are actually stronger dried than fresh and are the most flavorful part of the plant. To dry, lay the leaves on newspaper or a drying screen in the sun until the leaves crumble easily. It will retain its flavor for months.

+Bay leaves add a favorable hint of spice to stews, soups and spaghetti sauce. The bay laurel is a small tree that grows about a foot per year, this makes it suitable for growing in a container. If you live in a mild climate zone leave the container outside, but if temperatures go below 25 degrees keep the tree in a pot and bring it indoors during the winter.

+Basil seeds itself so easily that you may never have to buy another plant after the first year. There are many different kinds of basil, but all grow rapidly and require frequent pinching back to prevent them from growing tall and leggy. When the plants have reached about 6-8 inches tall, you can begin harvesting. Pinch off the top 1/3 of the plant, just above a leaf intersection. Pinch off any flower buds before they go to seed. Six to eight plants will provide enough basil for the entire neighborhood.

+Garlic is probably the easiest plant to grow. Break apart a clove of garlic, and plant the cloves about four inches apart, two to four inches deep in a light soil. Lightly water and watch them grow. You may harvest when tips of the leaves turn brown but do not let them flower. Just dig up the bulbs, and use them. To keep a fresh supply take one or two cloves from each bulb and replant them.

+Parsley is probably the most used herb in the world. You will find both flat (Italian) and curly types. They complement the flavor of everything from sauces to hearty stews. It is used as a garnish on plates, or cut up and added to soups, dressings and salads. Parsley adds vitamins and color, and quietly brings

out the flavor of other ingredients in the dish. Parsley is a biennial, flowering in its second season. It prefers a little shade on a hot sunny day, and should be kept watered to avoid wilting and drying. Pinch back older stems to the base, allowing new leaves and branches to grow.

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Article Keywords:
long island contractor, long island mason

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