

A Way We Grow

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What about next year!

Fall is the best time to assess your garden's strengths and weaknesses and also to design

new gardens and plan for next year's blooms. Maybe you already know that you want to add some roses, make a new bed, or do a complete redesign of your gardens. If you are thinking of rose garden enhancements, why not consider the following options:

Plant a garden of fragrance: Design a space dedicated to roses that add the dimension of fragrance. Most people expect roses to have that lovely rose scent, but not all modern roses are bred to produce that aroma. But there are a lot of scented roses available, such as fragrant climbing roses, shade tolerant scented roses, fragrant miniature roses, fragrant hybrid tea roses, heirloom scented roses and fragrant hardy roses. Most of the English Roses bred by David Austin are fragrant. Some are variable in terms of growth and hardiness but all have excellent fragrance. Begin by plotting out your garden of fragrance design on graph paper. Perhaps you would like fragrant roses that are also disease resistant or you want just scented Hybrid Teas. Fragrance is usually better in the mornings and when weather is cool, but some roses such as 'Chrysler Imperial' and 'Sutters Gold' are fragrant on sunny days as well as cooler days. Review all your favorite rose catalogs and jot down roses that claim fragrance. For reliability, compare that list to the following James Alexander Gamble Fragrance award winners. This medal is awarded to outstanding new and "classic" very fragrant roses by the ARS Prizes and Awards Committee for the rose considered the most fragrant. These roses must be registered and have high ratings. Here they are:

Angel Face
Crimson Glory
Fragrant Cloud
Granada
Papa Meilland
Sheila's Perfume
Sutter's Gold

Chrysler Imperial
Double Delight
Fragrant Hour
Mister Lincoln
Secret
Sunsprite
Tiffany

The above fragrant roses are the best of the best and growing any of these will bring a strong and steady perfume to your garden.

Add companion plants: Many garden designers believe that gardens should be a reflection of nature (minus the weeds). So why are so many of our rose gardens designed with hybrid tea roses all in a row and nothing but mulch below them? Maybe roses, like people, need partners to bring out their best qualities. Good rose companions should enjoy the same growing conditions but not compete too aggressively with the roses. Roses do best in full sun and well-drained soil, and so should their companions. Plants that are too aggressive may crowd the roses and absorb too much water and nutrients from the soil. Many sun-loving annuals such as snapdragon, lantana, and verbena hold up well throughout the summer. They all have modest water requirements and will benefit from the heavy feeding that roses require. Here are some additional partners to consider:

Delphinium & Larkspur
Dianthus carthusianorum
Salvia 'Coral Nymph'
Salvia 'Lady in Red'
Poppy 'Double Tangerine Gem'
Lilies
Feverfew
Bronze Fennel

Salvia 'Blue Spires'
Lavatera 'Pink Beauty'
Geum chiloense
Coreopsis 'Sunray'
Geum 'Lady Stratheden'
Alyssum 'Carpet of Snow'
Shasta Daisy
Mexican Feather Grass

Remember to plant rose companions at least one foot away from your roses so that you do not disturb their roots.

Recommended Reading:

[*Landscape with Roses*](#) by Jeff Cox

References: simplegiftsfarm.com; sheridangardens.com; gardening.about.com; bellaonline.com; dianeseeds.com

