

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

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The Real Estate Quarter in Review

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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Endless Summer

By Cynthia Brian



Manzanita is a native shrub.

Photos Cynthia Brian

"Magnificent Autumn... It is the funeral anthem of the dying year." Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

When I was young, I was a surfer girl. I spent many weekends catching waves in Santa Cruz, Bolinas, and Hawaii. My favorite movie was *The Endless Summer*. I dreamt of traveling the globe in search of the perfect ride.

Today, I surf gardening catalogs and magazines looking for the waves of new plant species and hardy specimens that are deer-resistant and drought-tolerant to thrive in our clay soils.

The first few days of autumn were refreshing. The cooler temperatures prompted me to start digging and enhancing the soil as I anticipated the joys of fall plantings. But Mother Nature had other plans and decided to shower us with an endless summer of sizzling sunshine and stifling nights. The winds have been so ferocious that I awoke to my patio umbrellas blown across my backyard. Until recent years, summer has always been a favorite season, but as our globe warms, an endless summer portends a major drought in the future. While the East Coast suffers from torrential rains, hurricanes, floods, and tornadoes, the



Tomato vines intermingle with Jacobinia Justica Carneia.

West Coast endures another heat wave and increased risk of deadly wildfires.

As temperatures soared to 103 degrees, our street suffered a fire hydrant leak this week, resulting in our neighborhood's water being shut off for twenty-four hours without warning. It was disconcerting to turn on the tap with no drip available. My empathy for those anguishing in disaster areas and war zones soared when water and basic necessities are unavailable. Water is life.

Before I provide tips on drought-tolerant plants that you may wish to include in your landscape, I want to remind you that although fire season in California is considered year-round, October is an especially monstrous month for wildfires. Make sure you have your home Go-Bag up-to-date and ready to go in the event of an emergency. It's a smart idea to keep an additional Go-Bag in your car in case you get stranded and can't make it home.

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