

SimpleSolutions

for everyday ORGANIC™

Here is where I'll share my ideas, gardening tips, crafting, sewing, carpentry, home decorating, entertaining ideas, and simple solutions for everyday organic. The inspiration for this magazine was born when a woman told me, "I wish I could have your life!" I thought, "Why not?"

MaryJane's

2 Host a Planting Party

Launch a new season of garden glam by inviting girlfriends to a planting party. The gist: Everyone dresses up and gathers to swap seeds and seedlings. Flowers, herbs, and berries are big hits. Encourage guests to share other gardening goodies, too (books, tools, and garden-themed gifts like glitzy gloves). Prepare by setting separate tables for plants and seeds, containers and organic potting soil, and refreshments. At the gathering, each guest will pot at least one special plant whose blooms will remind her of your friendship.

3 Beautify Your Rain Barrel

Doll up a basic plastic or metal rain barrel with dazzling designs. Here's how: Scrub the barrel using warm, soapy water and let dry completely. Lightly sand it with very fine sandpaper (1200 grit) to help the paint stick, and brush off dust. Apply a latex-bonding primer coat to guard against cracking or peeling. Using colorful outdoor paint, get creative! After your artwork dries, seal it with a protective clear coat of polyurethane spray. Inspiration abounds at Pinterest.com/msmense/painted-rain-barrels.

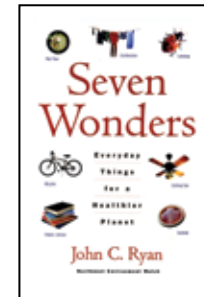
4 Pretty-up a Plot

Add flair to your green space by thinking "outside the garden." Drape trellises with favorite fabrics—gauzy white cotton or richly hued velvet. Create Alice in Wonderland whimsy by nestling vintage mirrors among plants. Scatter antiques and cute ceramic kitchenware. Pin a resplendent row of aprons to a clothesline. Fashion floating flower candles for an elegant evening glow. "When it comes to garden art, there are no rules, except that it should definitely make you smile," says garden designer Vanessa Johanning (www.VanessaJohanning.com).

A Few Tips for a Simple Life

by Michael Guilfoil, *The Spokesman-Review*

Organic farmer MaryJane Butters long ago embraced Thoreau's dictum to "simplify, simplify." As a Forest Service ranger in the 1970s, she spent two summers roaming Utah's Uinta Mountains with her home on her back. Later, she maintained the most remote wilderness ranger station in the Lower 48. Today, Butters and her family live eight miles outside Moscow, Idaho, on their farm, headquarters of her mail-order dry-foods business. But even e-commerce hasn't tempered Butters' enthusiasm for simplicity.



In December 1999, a newspaper reporter from Washington called. He was writing a review of the book *Seven Wonders: Everyday Things for a Healthier Planet* by John C. Ryan. Michael Guilfoil of *The Spokesman-Review* newspaper asked me if I had my own "seven wonders." The story that ensued was headlined

"Simple Solutions." Here, then, is the continuation of that story.

Each issue of *MaryJanesFarm* will feature in detail new solutions, and will give you all the information you need to make them your own.

Solutions from previous issues are available in the magazine section of my website: MaryJanesFarm.org/SimpleSolutions.

7 ways to garden like a girl

Who says gardening can't be glamorous? Girly gals simply sow in style! After all, tulle looks terrific with the right rain boots. So spiff up, sport a sun hat, and make your debut on the "green carpet" with these seven ways to make planting a garden positively pretty.

1 Gussy Up

Fashionable gardenwear is first priority. Not only will you look fabulous, but you'll have oodles of confidence when it's time to dig in. I love the style of GardenGirlUSA.com. Their clothing flatters the female body in beautiful designs, and accessories include ravishing rubber footwear, gloves, aprons, hats, scarves, knee pads, and umbrellas.

seven wonders

5 Grow a Getaway

Use your gardening gumption to grow a unique getaway. Create a "floor" using two wooden pallets (a third pallet can be dismantled to fill between pallet slats). Place 5-gallon pots full of potting soil at each corner; insert a sturdy, 6' bamboo pole deeply into each. String rows of twine between the poles to create three enclosed sides. Plant climbing plants in pots—peas and pole beans for veggies, clematis and wisteria for flowers. Water and watch as your sanctuary sprouts. Guide the growing vines along the poles and twine, creating privacy "walls."

6 Save Your Nails

Garden gloves work wonders to protect hands and nails, but a little dirt always finds its way in. Protect your nails from grime with this simple tip: Wet a bar of soap and drag your nails across its surface, digging in to embed soap beneath each nail. The soap will keep soil out, and washing up is a snap! Then moisturize hands with Goddess Garden Organics Lavender Mint Lotion (GoddessGarden.com).

7 Grow Edible Flowers

If rutabagas seem a little rustic for your garden repertoire, consider edible flowers instead. Lavender, chrysanthemums, daylilies, nasturtiums, and geraniums are just a few of the pretties you can plant for brilliant color and fab flavor. Add blooms to salad, stir-fries, lemonade, ice cream, and more. Your guests will go gaga! Learn more at TreeHugger.com/green-food/42-flowers-you-can-eat.html.