



BETWEEN THE ROWS
WENDY SCHMIDT

Gardening for the smell of it

A month or so ago, I caught a fragrance in the air when walking through the alley. The heavenly fragrance was coming from the very small flowers on the neighbor's grapevines. Other years I have caught the same fragrance and been unable to find its source.

This year I suspected the grapes, after remembering that my friend Ronnie told me that his favorite fragrance is grapes. It is biblical: Song of Solomon 4:16. You will find only in the King James version does it say, "fragrant grape vines." In other Bible translations it only says "fragrant vines," without specifying grapes.

After giving it much thought, I now am willing to admit that I plant for fragrance more than I ever plant for beauty. Some herbs only emit a fragrance after you bruise their leaves. Others seem to pump perfume into the air to attract the attention of the entire planet. I suspect there are a lot of plants that have fragrance that humans can't detect.

Many times perfume and beauty belong to the same plant: roses, for instance. I have had gardens where I planted each of the other plants as a companion for my roses. Lots of the flowers and foliage drew attention to the rose planted beside them; either to show them off or to be a background or foreground for the roses.

Let's say that you want to create a little fragrant alcove in your garden, for instance a secret private space. Where do you start? What kind of fragrance do you like? Is there a fragrance you do not like? Do you have allergies? In the outdoors, allergies are not as much of a problem usually.

Bloom time is important. Fragrant plants bloom when they bloom and either you plant them and adjust garden plans, or you don't plant them. Some varieties of the same plant bloom at slightly different times. Great-smelling plants should be placed where you can enjoy them to get the result you hoped for when you purchased the plant.

To maximize your enjoyment you want the plant to do well and flourish. This means meeting the soil, nutrient, light and water requirements will allow you and your plant to benefit from each other's company for years to come.

Fragrant plants for full sun: grapes, peony, jonquil, sage roses, spice bush (golden currant), clove pinks, carnations, fringe tree, honeysuckle, butterfly bush (buddleia), iris, mock orange, lilac (including the later flowering "Miss Kim," Korean lilac), hyacinth, lilies, mint, thyme, rosemary, tansy, santolina, wormwood, basil, monarda, alyssum, crinum, tomatoes, and dill (sorry if I missed your favorite).

For shade and partial shade: lily of the valley, daphne, artemesia, basil, mint, lemongrass, gardenia, jasmine, and citrus (which is a house plant for us — brought outdoors in good weather).

Southern magnolia (the evergreen kind) has a blossom that smells like lemon. It is a sun plant.

Many choices exist for sun and shade locations that I haven't mentioned. In your landscape, fragrance and beauty go hand-in-hand to create an environment to make you happy. Fragrance can bring to mind memories of times gone by. It can also imprint new memories.

Remember to stop and smell the roses, and GRAPES, and magnolias, and juniper, cedar, and mint, and ... There is a lot of hype about aromatherapy these days, check it out.

If you have garden questions or comments, please write: greengardencolumn@yahoo.com Thanks for reading!

What To Do With All Your Zucchini?



Lemon and zucchini cake

Susan Selasky/Detroit Free Press-TNS

THE SWEET SURPLUS

By Susan Selasky
Detroit Free Press

Soon gardens will be awash in zucchini. At first, it begins to trickle in and then — bam! — zucchini is suddenly everywhere.

Neighbors drop it off on your doorstep. Co-workers dump it on break room tables with friendly signs: "Help yourself" or "free" or "please take." What they're really saying is: "I can't take these anymore."

If you don't have a garden or never think about zucchini, consider the summer bounty a blessing. Zucchini is versatile and you can use it in a host of recipes, including zucchini breads, cakes and loaves.

Today's cake calls for pairing it with fresh lemons. The two play nice together and are a natural pairing. Lemon zest and juice go into the batter and more juice is used for the sweet glaze.

I came across the recipe on Facebook. It was one of those posted with a video showing how to make it. The recipe is from the blog momonatimeout.com.

On the easy scale, I'd give the cake nearly a 10. The prep time is minimal, but a bit of time and effort goes into making sure you squeeze most of the excess moisture out of the shredded zucchini. To do this, you will need to put the zucchini in between several layers of paper towel and press on it. This is a moist cake and too much excess moisture will make it soggy.

I thought it was interesting that the recipe calls for almond milk. Every once in a while, I buy almond milk, especially when it's on sale, and I'm always inter-

ested in trying it in different recipes.

At one time, almond milk was a rare find at grocery stores. Now it commands prime shelf space. With almond milk (and other nut milks) keep in mind that not all are the same. There can be big swings in calories. There are also sweetened and unsweetened versions. Be sure to read the labels. In this recipe, I used unsweetened vanilla almond milk, which has 40 calories per cup.

Something else interesting about this cake: It calls for olive oil. But don't worry. The olive oil doesn't affect the flavor and helps make a tender crumb.

This cake, without the glaze, will freeze beautifully. Wrap it in plastic wrap, then in foil and place in a freezer safe bag. You can also freeze individual slices.

LEMON ZUCCHINI CAKE

Serves: 10 / Prep time: 15 minutes / Total time: 1 hour 10 minutes plus cooling time

If you don't have cake flour, substitute 1 cup minus 2 tablespoons sifted all-purpose flour.

CAKE
1½ cups granulated sugar
6 tablespoons olive oil
2 eggs, room temperature
1/3 cup unsweetened vanilla almond milk
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon vanilla or almond extract
2 cups cake flour
1¼ teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon kosher salt
1½ cups shredded zucchini, squeezed dry
2 tablespoons lemon zest

GLAZE
1 cup powdered sugar
1 to 2 tablespoons lemon juice

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Spray a loaf pan with baking spray and line with parchment paper. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the cake flour, baking powder and salt; set aside.

In a large bowl, combine the sugar and olive and oil. Whisk to combine.

Add eggs and almond milk and whisk together.

Add lemon juice and vanilla extract and stir to combine.

Add flour mixture and stir just until incorporated.

Fold in zucchini and lemon zest. Pour batter into the prepared pan and bake for 45 to 55 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out with moist crumbs. The top of the cake should look dry.

Place the loaf on a cooling rack and cool for 15 minutes. Use the parchment paper to carefully lift the cake from the pan. Let cool completely on rack.

GLAZE
In a small bowl, combine powdered sugar and lemon juice. Whisk until smooth. Drizzle the glaze over the cake. Slice and serve.

