

Sucker-Free Gardening

Grow indoor herbs without falling for it

There's a sucker born every minute, and I'm not going to be one. That's why I'm not shelling out \$175 for the TV-touted AeroGrow indoor gardening system. I recently sat through that infomercial just to find out how much it was—love how they leave off the details until the very end. The AeroGrow can be yours for \$19.95 in shipping and handling and three easy payments of \$49.99—all so that you don't waste throwing away that \$1.99 pack of herbs you bought at Freddy's last week.

But wait! There's more! With the AeroGrow, you have to use their seeds and growing pellets—so you're suckered in even more. And about that infomercial? It was all about "indoor gardening." *Oh sheesh.* If you want to do some indoor gardening, get yourself a grow light at Costco and pot up some herbs in the window. You're certainly not going to have to haul out a contraption to sell at a garage sale in five years that doesn't work. Oh, and you know who got her start with infomercials? Sandra Lee of *Semi-Homemade*. *Enough said.*

If you want to fend off the guilt of buying herbs you don't use, I hear ya—that's why I love the self-serve buffet of herbs at New Seasons Market. But not everyone has a New Seasons nearby, and there's always the wonderful feeling of snipping a few herbs from your homegrown rosemary plant to feed the ones you love.

If you're tired of paying too much money for a package of herbs from your local grocery store only to use a wee bit and watch the rest waste away in the bot-

tom of your refrigerator's produce drawer, yes, try growing herbs inside in a sunny window. *Sun* is the key word here, because they will need at least five hours of that glowing orb, so site your pots in a southern- or western-exposed window. Regular indoor potting soil should be fine. "Treated for indoor use" means it's less likely to have critters growing in it.

Herbs don't like drafts, and they don't like to have a heater blasting on them, either. Try to plant several together, as the humidity they create will help each other out. Fertilize them with an organic fertilizer every two weeks during the winter and about every three weeks during the summer. When it comes to harvesting and using your indoor herbs to season and cook with, pick sparingly, snipping tips and leaves in small amounts. Indoor herbs won't grow as quickly as outdoor, in-ground herbs, but they are a great way to ensure you have access to them when you're working in the kitchen. *Bon appétit!*

A weird side note: I went to the garden show last month at the Oregon Convention Center. Did you go? Did you notice what I noticed? All those men with fire pits, fire



bowls, fake fire, real fire? It's like garden toys for men are now fire. What's with that? Nothing wrong with it, *just sayin'.*

I do like the combination of fire with water and the reflection it provides at night. It's kind of magical, and as long as it's not a smoke-spewing "chimney," I'm cool with that. *Seriously.* Have you ever lived next door to a

chimney? The smoke can be miserable. Plus, who wants to contribute to smog? *Cough cough hack hack.*

On a bright note: Are you good with roses and interested in putting those skills to work? Our House of Portland has 20 or so roses around its property that could use a little tender loving care. Maybe check in with the beauties once a month or so, prune and fertilize them, you know, work your rose mojo. Contact volunteer director Kathryn Siebert at 503-234-0175 or ksiebert@ourhouseofportland.org for more information.


A note for your calendar: Metro has some excellent seminars, workshops and events scheduled for gardeners, including an upcoming seminar by one of the nicest (and cutest) guys in the hort scene, Sean Hogan of Cistus Nursery on Sauvie Island. He will give a talk about carbon-neutral gardening and how we can maintain and design our landscapes to reduce our impact on local natural resources and global climate change. The seminar is from 7 to 8:30 p.m. March 27 at Metro Regional Center, 600 N.E. Grand Ave. Registration is free, but you do need to register in advance. For more information call 503-234-3000. **10**

LEANN LOCHER welcomes your gardening questions at sassygardener@gmail.com. For more explorations and photos of her garden, visit www.sassygardener.com.



Fire meets water in a display at the Portland Yard, Garden and Patio Show.

June is Celebration Month



AINSWORTH HOUSE GARDENS

Every party in June benefits BRO. **PLAN YOURS NOW!**

- Call for our BRO packages and to make your reservations!


503.656.1894
www.ainsworthhouse.net
 19150 Loc Whitcomb Drive Oregon City, OR 97045

BUFFALO GARDENS



Edibles, herbs, ornamentals and organic supplies

3303 NE Alberta St.
 503-288-0220



CISTUS NURSERY
 22711 NW GILLIHAN RD
 SAUVIE ISLAND, OR 97231
 503.621.2233 www.cistus.com
 open daily 10am to 5pm

little  baja

GARDEN, DECK & PATIO DECOR

Portland's best selection of Terra Cotta & Concrete

- Statuary • Planters • Sunfaces
- Asian • Birdbaths • Baja Chimneys

2 Locations
 1510 E. Burnside St • Portland, Oregon • (503) 236-8834
 10525 SW Hall • Tigard, Oregon • (503) 432-8959

www.little-baja.com

Keeping Oregon green, one tree at a time.

WHOLISTIC TREE CARE
 CERTIFIED ARBORISTS
 TREE HOUSES

villagegreearborists@gmail.com
 503.246.2635



VILLAGE GREEN
 ARBORISTS LLC