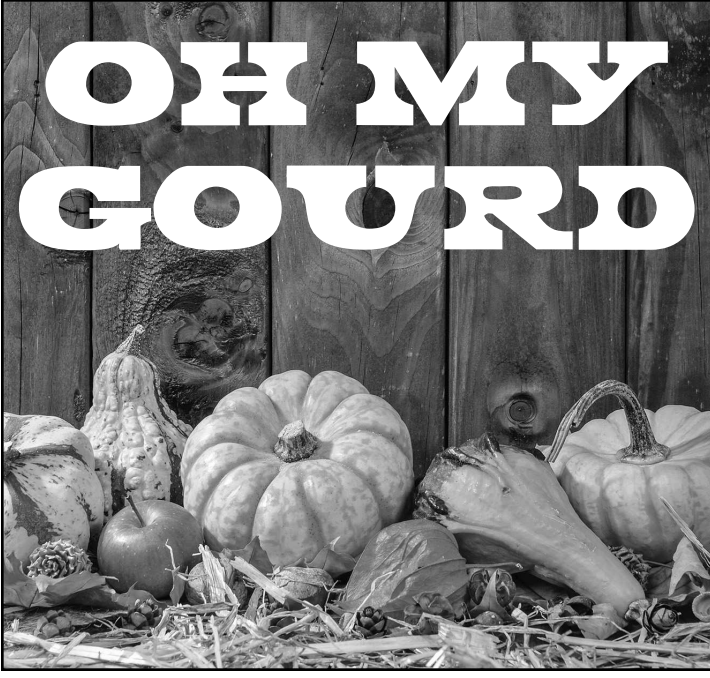


Fall Home Improvement



Differences between harvest season's favorite fruit: pumpkins, squash & gourds

Halloween takes place during a time of year characterized by earthen-colored chrysanthemums, leaf-lined walkways and crisp autumn air. As colorful as the costumes children wear for trick-or-treating may be, nature's beauty is unsurpassed this time of year, and the scores of pumpkins, gourds and squashes on display only add to that colorful mélange.

The Cucurbitaceae family may be best known for pumpkins, squash and gourds, but there actually are 800 species that belong to this family. While they share many of the same properties, these fruits each have their own unique attributes.

The main differences between squashes, gourds and pumpkins is their intended purposes — whether they're ornamental or edible.

SQUASH

Squashes come in summer and winter varieties. Winter ones do not actually grow in the winter; in fact, they're harvested in late summer and early fall, but the name references the hard shell casing that protects the tender pulp inside. Zucchini are summer squash because their outer flesh is tender, while butternut, acorn, spaghetti and Hubbard squashes are winter squashes because they feature a tough skin. Even though it takes some effort to crack that shell, the dense, nutrient-rich flesh inside is well worth the workout.

GOURDS

Gourds are essentially ornamental squashes; they aren't cultivated for eating. Instead they are bred to look beautiful and unique

in autumn centerpieces. Types of gourds include autumn wing gourd, warted gourds, turban gourds and bottle gourds. Each gourd is unique in its shape and color.

PUMPKINS

Pumpkins come in ornamental and edible varieties. Even though all pumpkins can be consumed, some taste better than others. Small pumpkins tend to be decorative because, according to Nutritious Life, they do not have enough meat inside to make them worthy of cooking. However, sugar pumpkins are best for baking and cooking favorite recipes, states the resource Pumpkin Nook.

The festive hues and flavors of squashes, gourds and pumpkins are one more thing that makes Halloween and autumn special.

Seven uses for fallen leaves

By the time autumn hits full swing, many trees will have shed their leaves for the season, and the last vestiges of red, yellow and orange magic will have faded to brown. Raking, blowing and collecting leaves becomes the primary chores of lawn and yard maintenance, and presents most homeowners with large piles of gathered leaves to tend to.

It is impossible to count just how many leaves fall to the ground each year, or just how many pounds of leaves get collected curbside, but the numbers are substantial. Cleaning up leaves is considerable work, but not all of those leaves need to be carted away. In fact, there are several different uses of leaves that can be beneficial.

1. Spread leaves as a protective mulch to cover tender perennials or root crops/bulbs in the ground. The leaves will form a natural insulating cover that keeps the soil and the plants within a bit warmer over winter.

2. Create a pile of leaves that will break down and form a crumbly, compost-like material called leaf mold. Even though leaf mold may sound like a blight, it's actually a good amendment to garden soil, improving its structure and ability to hold water. Leaf mold also attracts beneficial organisms that are vital in healthy soil.

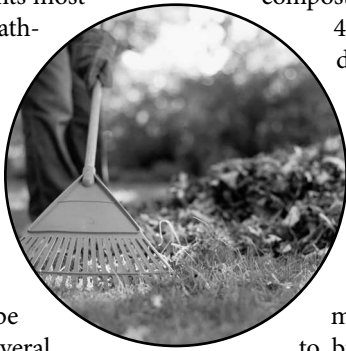
3. Brown leaves can be added to green materials in compost piles to improve the health of the compost being formed. According to the healthy living resource Care2, the ideal ratio is 75 percent brown to 25 percent green materials in compost. Turn compost piles regularly to aerate them.

4. Store dried, mulched leaves in a dry spot so they can be used in the spring as a weed barrier for spring plantings. They will keep weeds at bay and help retain soil moisture to ensure small sprouts have the resources to grow.

5. Use shredded leaves as a lawn supplement. Pass a lawn mower over leaves left on the lawn to break them down into pieces too small to rake. This will help keep the lawn healthy throughout the winter without blocking out needed sunlight.

6. Bag dried leaves and pack them tightly together in cold areas of the home, such as basements or garages. They can act as added insulation. Bags of leaves also can be placed around planting containers to protect them from frost.

7. Gather a few of the best-looking leaves and preserve them. Use an iron on a low setting and press leaves between two pieces of waxed paper until the waxed paper seals together. Or use clear contact paper to achieve the same effect.



Improve entertaining spaces

Some homes are seemingly built for entertaining, while others may need a little help to make them more fit for hosting dinner, holiday gatherings or an evening with friends.

Overall, one-quarter of people entertain guests in their home either daily or weekly across the globe. One-third entertain monthly, according to findings from GFK Insights.

People who open their homes to loved ones may want to make some modifications to their spaces to improve the experience for all involved.

- Tame the clutter. Look for ways to reduce clutter in rooms where entertaining takes place. Built-ins with bookshelves and cabinets can hide electronics and wayward toys or collectibles. Focus attention on the entryway, hanging hooks for collecting coats, keys and shoes, so they do not overrun the foyer. Remove any knickknacks or other breakable items from shelves or on coffee tables to free up more space.



- Improve conversation seating. Arrange tables and chairs to create conversation nooks for guests who want to talk and get to know one another better. Consider moving out big and bulky sofas in favor of love seats or comfortable chairs that will take up less room and improve flow in entertaining areas.

- Find the pieces you like. Think about how you tend to entertain and then cater your space to those preferences. For example, a large dining table with fold-out extensions or leaves is ideal for someone who regularly hosts formal dinner parties. Renovate a room to include a small bar and club chairs for a lounge feel if cocktail parties are typical.

- Improve lighting. Work with an electrician and/or designer who can offer ideas for lighting that can set the mood for enter-

taining. Rooms that are dim can benefit from overhead lighting fixtures if there are none already available. Task lighting in the kitchen under cabinets can make it easy to prepare food for guests. Wall sconces or focused lighting on artwork can establish a dramatic effect.

- Do major construction. Consider working with a builder to make some changes if you simply don't have the space to entertain. Taking down a wall can open kitchens to living spaces, while adding a deck or three-season room off the kitchen or dining room can provide more space for guests to congregate.

- Install a guest bath. Update or add a bathroom near the main entertaining areas. This allows guests to discretely use the bathroom and keeps them from roaming in areas of the house you would prefer they avoid.

Let locations inspire design

Homeowners looking to add flair to their homes can find inspiration anywhere. Style can even be tailored to reflect places homeowners have visited.

Whether they call to mind the narrow streets of London, the sand-bleached beaches of a Caribbean island or the urban buzz of New York City, designs can reflect one's travels and evoke some of the same feelings homeowners got when visiting their favorite places. Professional interior designers often pull inspiration from unique places, and so can homeowners who love to travel.

Those who want to illustrate their wanderlust through their home's decor can consider these tips.

WORK WITH COLORS

Think about the colors that signify a particular locale and bring those hues into the space. The color palettes of the beach, for example, include grays, beiges, blues and greens. The popularity of gray-tone neutrals allows homeowners to bring in these colors as a neutral backdrop, and then add a splash of whimsy with a few decorative accents.

TRY NATURAL MATERIALS

Vacation hotspots like Hawaii, Southern California and other areas of the Pacific tend to put heavy emphasis on natural materials. Items like bamboo, sea grass, stones and woven baskets can invite the outdoors into a home.

EMBRACE THE VIBE

Urban centers are awash in energy and color. This spirit can be reflected with modern architecture, bold prints, metallic accents and innovative lighting.

PICK AN INSPIRATION PIECE

Homeowners can direct their focus to one particular memento from a vacation or excursion. A vivid piece of artwork, a piece of furniture, a sculpture, or even a wardrobe element can serve as a catalyst for an entire room. Use this piece to match colors and textures.

Remember, to evoke the spirit of an area when decorating, keep it subtle. Too many details or over-the-top replication might seem like one is dressing a stage set rather than a home.

Florence Janitorial Services



Robyn, Jason and Connie

"Clean as a Whistle"

New Construction Clean-Up
Commercial

P. O. Box 3257 • Florence, OR 97439

541-997-2385 • Licensed, Bonded & Insured

Property Services Contractor #39458 • SAM: #831298500/7E6J9 • City License #2578

Neil's Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning

541-997-3825 • Certified - Bonded - Insured

Property Services Contractor #39458 • SAM: #831298500/7E6J9 • City License #2578



"Our commitment is to our customers cleaning needs with honesty and integrity"

Craig

Cell: (541) 999-8804
Email: wrckpc@qwestoffice.net

DRAFTING
& DESIGN

William R. Craig
P.O. Box 2018
Florence, OR 97439

997-6926

Custom
Architectural
Design

Serving our community for over 15 years.



TREE & LANDSCAPE

541-999-5083

Tree Removal & Trimming
Brush Cutting & Maintenance
Stump Grinding

"Making Friends One Job at a Time."

licensed, bonded, insured CCB 183908

TheSiuslawNews.com

Insect & Pest Removal

Trapping
Mole/Gopher
Dead Animal Removal
Honey Bee Removal
Crawl Space Cleaning
Exclusion Work
Fumigation of Antiques and Commodities.



(541) 997-4027

The Genuine. The Original.



Overhead Door Company of The Oregon Coast™

Now serving the entire Oregon Coast. Staffed locally with factory trained professionals.

Residential and Commercial Garage Door Installation.

541.997.5008 • OverheadDoor.com

CCB# 50460