



relax in the shade

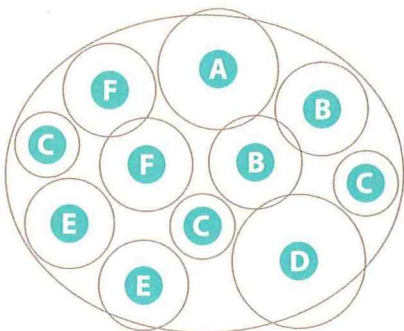
A shady spot on a hot day is the perfect place to be...
especially if you're surrounded by gorgeous containers!

SUBTLE SPRINGTIME

It's that time of year when you want to spend every minute watching your garden come back to life! Celebrate with a basket of spring-blooming perennials that you'll be able to transplant into a shady border when they're done blooming. The old-fashioned beauty of bleeding heart, both pink and white, is a perfect match for this charming basket planter. A plastic liner keeps the basket clean and the soil moist. This basket was intended for planting, so it came lined with plastic. All we had to do was punch a few drainage holes in it. But you can use any basket for planting — a large plastic garbage bag, trimmed to size, makes a good, inexpensive liner. If your basket has a looser weave, you may want to line it with sphagnum moss first, then the plastic liner. That way, you won't catch glimpses of the plastic peeking through the basket.

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A** Columbine *Aquilegia* 'Songbird Dove' (1)
 - B** Bleeding heart *Dicentra spectabilis* 'Alba' (2)
 - ★ **C** Pansy *Viola Matrix™* Mix Coastal Sunrise (3)
 - ★ **D** Coral bells *Heuchera* 'Palace Purple' (1)
 - E** Forget-me-not *Myosotis sylvatica* 'Bluesylva' (2)
 - F** Bleeding heart *Dicentra* 'King of Hearts' (2)
- Basket is 18 in. long x 15 in. wide



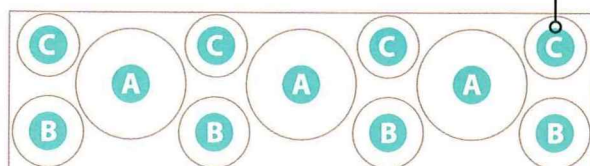
FRESH FLOWERS

A windowbox on the front of the house is a great way to greet guests. And here's a suggestion for keeping your windowbox fresh all the time: When you put plants in the box, leave them in their plastic pots. This allows you to switch them out easily when they start to fade. If you use similar-size containers every time, swap-outs are a breeze. Here, the Persian violets are in three 1-gal. containers, while the pansies are in four 4-in. containers. And for a really quick fix, the Dutch iris blossoms are in small vases tucked in along the back of the container. In cool spring weather, out of direct sun, cut flowers will look good for several days. Pick your own bulbs or spring blooms, or tuck in a handful from the florist or grocery store to change the look of this windowbox whenever you feel like it.

Since the plants are all in individual pots, you may need to water them every day. Top the containers with a layer of decorative mulch, such as Spanish moss or sphagnum moss, to help them stay moist and stand upright. It'll give the box a nice finishing touch, as well.

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A** Persian violet *Exacum affine* (3)
 - ★ **B** Pansy *Viola* hybrid (4)
 - C** Dutch iris *Iris* hybrid (12 cut stalks)
- Windowbox is 36 in. long x 10 in. wide



Three iris stems per vase



SPRING INTO SUMMER

These bright pinks and purples may look like spring...but they'll keep the show going all the way through summer and into fall. And it's not just the colors that make this rectangular planter visually appealing: These plants are perfectly proportioned for the shape of this container. They're not so tall that they look top-heavy, but the fern adds just enough vertical accent to keep it from being boring. And they don't drape down and cover the pretty pattern on the sides of the planter, either. This is a good

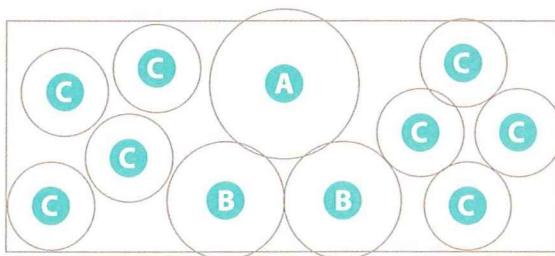
choice for a tabletop planter, as you'll be able to enjoy the detail of the box itself up close. And the plants won't trail out and take up table space, or get tall enough to block conversation across the table.

A few hours of morning sun won't hurt these shade-lovers, but keep them from getting too hot or dry, as you'll notice leaf scorch quickly if they're stressed. Pinch back the wishbone flower and impatiens by as much as half if they get too leggy — they'll bounce right back.

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- ★ **A** Boston fern *Nephrolepis exaltata* (1)
- ★ **B** Wishbone flower *Torenia Clown™* Violet (2)
- ★ **C** Impatiens *Impatiens Accent Mix* (8)

Container is 24 in. long x 10 in. wide





CAPTIVATINGLY CASUAL

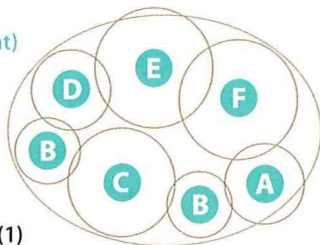


A rustic earth-toned container with a happy jumble of plants adds a colorful, casual note to any garden. But this look isn't sloppy — good design choices give this container lots of impact! First of all, there's color coordination: Pink impatiens echo the showy pink calla lily; and the red-tinged fuchsia foliage, burgundy begonia leaves and red ivy stems pick up the color of the container. But even more important, three big plants make up the bulk of this container. The fern, the calla and the impatiens are big, bold blocks of color and texture, instead of a lot of little pieces. And the trailing stems of fuchsia and ivy break up the pot just enough to keep it from stealing the show.

Calla lilies are an unusual, but gorgeous, choice for a container, as they bloom for a long time. You might think they need a lot of moisture, but it's the big white ones that are water hogs. Although this smaller pink calla likes consistent moisture, it's perfectly happy with your normal container watering routine.

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A** Ivy *Hedera helix* 'Goldheart' ('Oro de Bogliasco') (1)
 - ★ **B** Fuchsia *Fuchsia* 'Autumnale' (2)
 - ★ **C** Impatiens *Impatiens* 'Fiesta Sparkler Hot Pink' (1)
 - ★ **D** Begonia *Begonia* 'Looking Glass' (1)
 - ★ **E** Calla lily *Zantedeschia* 'Lipstick' (1)
 - F** Autumn fern *Dryopteris erythrosora* (1)
- Container is 16 in. long x 12 in. wide



A TWIST ON TRADITION

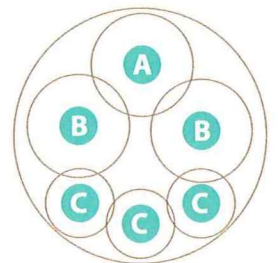


Red geraniums, asparagus fern and a spike...it's the traditional container look. But why not give it a twist with this container for a shady corner? Mother-in-law's tongue is usually sold as a tropical house plant (pick up a few in winter when they're cheap, and hold on to them for summer containers), but it loves to spend the summer outdoors. And it adds some crucial height to this terra-cotta urn. Without it, the planting would still be pretty, but it would feel a little flat. Notice how the coleus echoes the yellow and green of the mother-in-law's tongue for a unified look? And last but not least, bright-orange New Guinea impatiens adds summer-long color, and it picks up the warm tones of the container itself, for a pleasing combination.

These plants are as easy to care for as they are to look at. Just keep them where they'll get a little morning sun for the most blooms and best leaf color. They all like consistent moisture, but you don't want this container to get too wet, or you'll start to see rot problems, so feel the soil before you start to pour. Pinch the growing tips of the coleus every week or two so it won't take over. And in fall, take the mother-in-law's tongue inside to enjoy as a house plant.

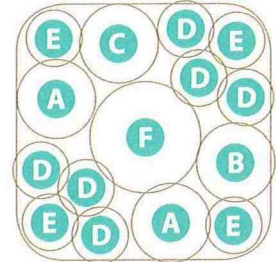
PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A** Mother-in-law's tongue *Sansevieria trifasciata* (1)
 - ★ **B** Coleus *Solenostemon* 'Wizard Jade' (2)
 - ★ **C** New Guinea impatiens *Impatiens* 'Celebration Orange' (3)
- Container is 18 in. in diameter

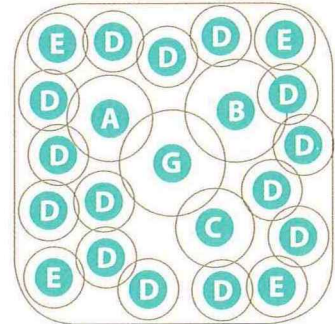




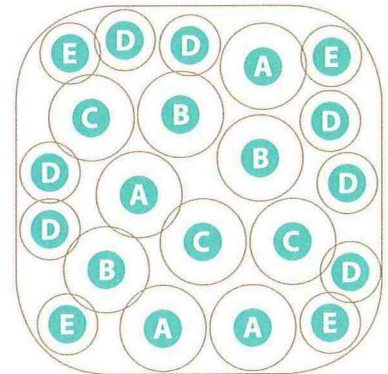
tip These baskets are lined with brown landscaping fabric instead of ordinary basket liners. It's inexpensive, and it's flexible enough to conform easily to any shape of container.



Container is 16 in. square



Container is 18 in. square



Container is 21 in. square

A TOWER OF COLOR



This is a container you can't miss! From the tiered baskets to the bright colors, it will be a standout anywhere in the garden. Set it in a shady border to perk up a down time among perennials, or keep it on the patio for a stunning focal point.

Although the bright oranges and yellows of begonias and impatiens are the main focus, take a closer look at that ivy. The variegated leaves show up against the dark background of the basket liners better than solid-green leaves would. And the ivy drapes just enough to help tie the tiers together, without covering up the pattern of the wire.

A missed day of watering won't hurt the ivy, but you might see scorched leaves on the begonias. If you do, pick the leaves off and keep watering regularly — the plants will perk up soon. Set this tower somewhere out of the wind. Falling over won't help any of the plants, but it would be particularly hard on the brittle stems of begonias.

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

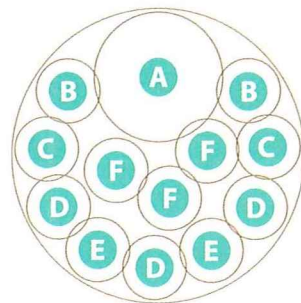
- A** Tuberous begonia *Begonia* Nonstop® Yellow (7)
- B** Tuberous begonia *Begonia* Nonstop® Orange (5)
- C** Tuberous begonia *Begonia* Nonstop® Mocca Orange (5)
- ★ **D** Double impatiens *Impatiens* Fiesta Ole Salsa Red (27)
- E** English ivy *Hedera helix* 'Goldchild' (12)
- ★ **F** Boston fern *Nephrolepis exaltata* (1)
- G** Dwarf asparagus fern *Asparagus plumosus nanus* (1)



BRIGHT ON BRIGHT

Why should the plants have to do all the work? This glossy bright-blue container would be striking anywhere, but it'll really be noticed against the subdued tones of a shade garden. On the other hand, you don't want the container to steal the show, so make sure the plants inside are equally eye-catching. This Australian tree fern and gaudy, color-splashed caladiums are pretty hard to miss, too. Speaking of the caladiums, maybe they are a bit loud, but they're the theme that ties the whole planting together, as each leaf sports the pink, white and green of the other plants.

You can buy caladium tubers in early spring, but they take a while to get started, and it'll be difficult to get them going among other plants. It'll cost a little more, but you're better off buying them as started plants. Keep this container well-watered — large containers usually don't need to be watered as often as small ones, but this many plants tucked in tight will take up moisture quickly.



PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A** Australian tree fern *Cyathea cooperi* (1)
- ★ **B** Euphorbia *Euphorbia hypericifolia* Diamond Frost® ('Inneuphe') (2)
- C** Alternanthera *Alternanthera* 'Brazilian Red Hots' (2)
- D** Bacopa *Sutera cordata* Snowstorm® White (3)
- ★ **E** Impatiens *Impatiens* 'Fiesta Burgundy' (2)
- ★ **F** Caladium *Caladium* 'Gingerland' (3)

Container is 24 in. in diameter



WINDOW DRESSING



Brighten a shady path without taking up valuable planting space. There's not a lot of room in this side yard, but a windowbox gets those colorful annuals up where you can see them, both from the garden and from inside the room. The planting in this box is symmetrical — the fern is in the middle, and the plants are in the same order on each side. But because the plants are all just about the same height, there's not a strongly defined center of the box. That means that the symmetrical planting doesn't feel too formal, which would seem out of place near this easy-going stepper path.

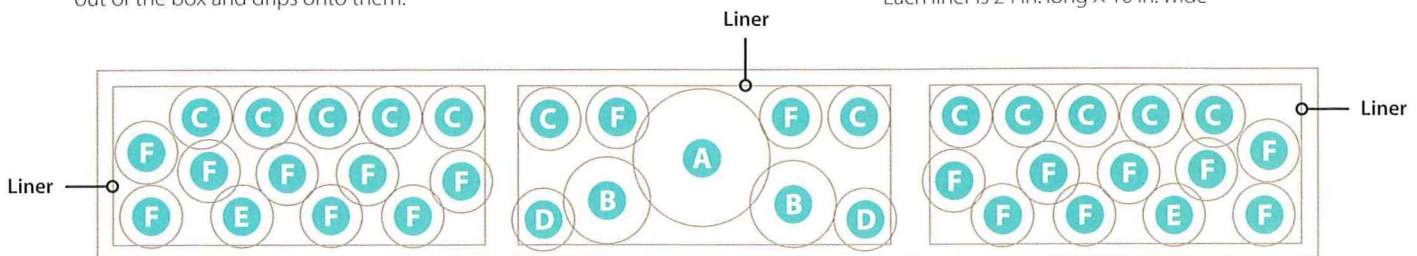
Like most windowboxes, this one doesn't have a huge volume of soil. That and the fact that it's mounted on the wall means it tends to dry out quickly. But guess what? That nearby path makes it super easy to water this windowbox without having to lean over or tiptoe through other plantings to reach it. And the hostas below the box won't mind a little extra moisture if some water drains out of the box and drips onto them.

tip Three plastic liners tucked into a wooden windowbox mean it's easy to plant this early and pull the liners out if there's threat of late frost in this cool Minnesota garden.

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A** Australian sword fern *Nephrolepis obliterata* (1)
- B** Tuberous begonia *Begonia* Nonstop® Mocca White (2)
- ★ **C** Coleus *Solenostemon* 'Black Dragon' (12)
- D** Licorice vine *Helichrysum petiolare* Licorice Splash (2)
- ★ **E** Sweet potato vine *Ipomoea batatas* 'Sweet Caroline Sweet Heart Light Green' (2)
- ★ **F** Impatiens *Impatiens* Super Elfin™ Lipstick (18)

Each liner is 24 in. long x 10 in. wide



FLASHY FOLIAGE



Charming little fuchsia flowers dangle like tiny lanterns, but it's really foliage that's doing most of the talking here. A starburst of fern fronds stands out against the brick wall, and also creates a great backdrop for shorter plants. Bold caladium and begonia leaves form the heart of this planting. And a fringe of variegated lilyturf keeps the near-black begonia leaves from fading into the background container color.

When you're planting a container, don't be afraid to divide plants for the best effect. When this was planted, we only had one 6-in. container of lilyturf, but the plant was quite large. To extend the color all the way around the rim of the pot, we cut the lilyturf into three smaller chunks and tucked them in. With plenty of water and a cool, shady spot, necessities for all these plants anyway, they never missed a beat!

How a container performs depends on the weather. In a cool, wet summer, this fuchsia looked gorgeous for months. But fuchsias can start to look rough in hot, dry weather. You can either cut the fuchsia back and let it regrow when the weather cools down again, or pull it out and replace it. Here, the impatiens we planted as a "backup" would've filled in the space if the fuchsia had crashed, but they look great together, too!

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A** Australian sword fern *Nephrolepis obliterata* 'Kimberly Queen' (1)
- ★ **B** Fuchsia *Fuchsia Diva*™ Cherry and White (2)
- ★ **C** Impatiens *Impatiens* 'Fiesta Pink Ruffle' (1)
- D** Lilyturf *Liriope spicata* 'Silver Dragon' ('Gin-ryu') (3)
- E** Begonia *Begonia* 'Black Coffee' (2)
- ★ **F** Caladium *Caladium* 'Red Flash' (1)

Container is 16 in. in diameter

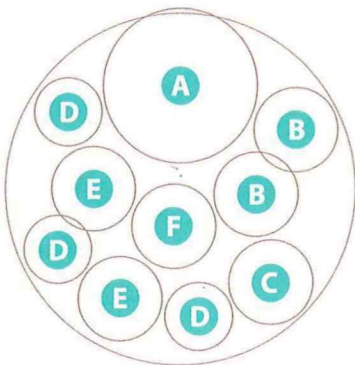


PHOTO: Brent Isenberger

love this look? Pairing dark foliage with white-streaked or silver foliage is a great way to show them both off — see how great the 'Black Coffee' begonia looks against the variegated liriop here? For a more sun-tolerant variation, combine burgundy-leaved 'Purple Knight' alternanthera with white-streaked 'Morning Light' maiden grass — it'll give you this look but on a big, bold, sun-loving scale.



ORANGE CRUSH

Containers with loads of different colors are pretty but sometimes a color-themed container is easier to design. Who could have resisted those flaming red-orange begonias at the garden center? We didn't even try! Instead, we chose an orange-hued coleus to complement them. And the sedge's bright olive-green summer foliage looks great with the edge of the coleus leaves. In fall, it'll turn a soft shade of orange — I bet you notice a pattern here! And one more touch of color coordination: The glossy bronze leaves of the

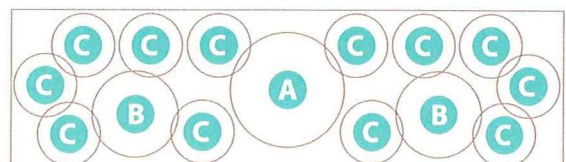
begonias really set off the color of this composite container, helping to tie the whole planting together.

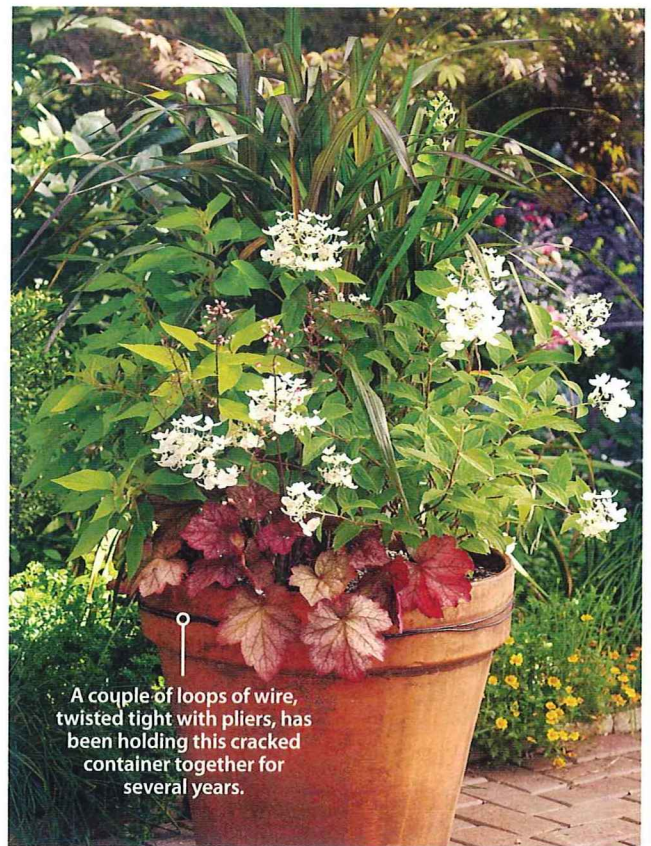
You want your containers to look great right away, so the temptation is always to pack them full of plants. That's what we did here, but as the begonias started to get too crowded, it's easy to slip a couple of them out of the container. (You can reuse them in another container, or just toss them in the compost.) There'll be a bare place for a week or two, but it'll fill in quickly.

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- ★ **A** Coleus *Solenostemon* 'Rustic Orange' (1)
- ★ **B** Orange sedge *Carex testacea* (2)
- ★ **C** Wax begonia *Begonia* 'Harmony Scarlet' (12)

Container is 20 in. long x 9 in. wide





A couple of loops of wire, twisted tight with pliers, has been holding this cracked container together for several years.

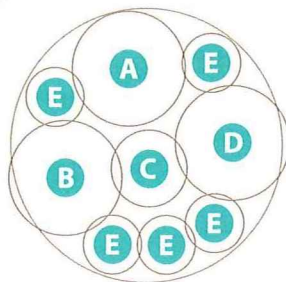
FABULOUSLY FORMAL

The combination of an elegant metal urn and a simple color palette makes this the perfect container to set a formal mood at your entryway. But formal doesn't mean boring! Pale-pink begonias and hot-pink impatiens keep color coming all summer long. And a casual tumble of plectranthus spills over the edge of the urn without looking too stiff. Cast-iron containers can rust, as this one has, which also adds a more rustic, casual air. Or, if you prefer, you can keep it painted with a rust-proofing spray paint, like Rust-Oleum®. Whichever you choose, this is a durable material that can sit outside in all seasons. So it's perfect by a front door — you can swap out these plants for a fall or winter arrangement to keep your entryway gorgeous year-round.

Don't be afraid to swipe plants from your garden to use in containers. The astilbe and hosta here were transplants from the garden, and see how great they look! Spring is a good time to split most perennials, and cool weather will make it easier for them to adapt to being in a container, too.

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- ★ **A** Astilbe *Astilbe* 'Cattleya' (1)
 - B** Plectranthus *Plectranthus* Blue Yonder (1)
 - C** Tuberous begonia *Begonia* Nonstop™ Mocca Pink Shades (1)
 - ★ **D** Hosta *Hosta* 'Francee' (1)
 - ★ **E** Impatiens *Impatiens* Super Elfin™ Lipstick (5)
- Container is 16 in. in diameter



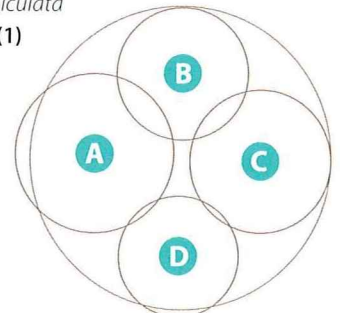
LATE-SUMMER LOVELY

Big and bold is the name of the game in this container. We wanted something for late-summer interest, and we found this pretty hydrangea, just waiting to go in a container! Next, a good-sized plant like this needed some hefty companions. 'Georgia Peach' has bigger leaves than most coral bells, so it stands out at the bottom of this container. And the wide, substantial blades of Napier grass give it more presence than many ornamental grasses.

Speaking of hefty companions, that pineapple sage on the left can take over a container in no time flat. We clipped it back 4 or 5 in. every two or three weeks to keep it in bounds. But you'll want to enjoy the bright-red fall flowers, so stop cutting it back in late summer to let it develop flower buds.

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A** Pineapple sage *Salvia elegans* 'Golden Delicious' (1)
 - B** Napier grass *Pennisetum purpureum* 'Prince' (1)
 - ★ **C** Hydrangea *Hydrangea paniculata* Pink Diamond ('Interhydia') (1)
 - ★ **D** Coral bells *Heuchera* 'Georgia Peach' (1)
- Container is 20 in. in diameter



love this look?

Want to try this container in a sunny spot? The grass and calibrachoa will be just fine in sun. Swap a chartreuse sweet potato vine for the coleus and a blazing-red zinnia for the begonia, and it'll add a blast of color to any sunny garden.



EVER SO EXUBERANT



There is nothing shy about this container. With billows of coleus and calibrachoa, feathery plumes of fountain grass and a shouting orange begonia, it demands attention. And it'll look better and better right up until frost. With all that out-of-control plant material, a low-key wooden planter box is a good idea. You can plant straight into it as we did, or tuck plants into a large plastic pot, then slip the pot into the wooden planter. (The plastic liner method will help the wooden box last longer.)

Trailing coleus grow even faster than the upright kinds, so don't be afraid to pinch or cut them back a few inches at a time as needed. (The cuttings root easily if you stick them in potting mix, so it's a great way to get a few extra plants for other containers.) This begonia is one of our favorites, so we always bring it inside to overwinter as a house plant in a sunny room (but not right in a window, or the leaves might scorch). It gets a little straggly inside, but we prune it back about halfway in spring, and it's ready to delight us again.

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

A Purple fountain grass *Pennisetum setaceum*
Graceful Grasses® Red Riding Hood (1)

★ **B Coleus** *Solenostemon* 'Red Trailing Queen' (2)

★ **C Calibrachoa** *Calibrachoa* Superbells® Coral (2)

★ **D Winged begonia** *Begonia* 'Orange Angels' (1)

Container is 14 in. square

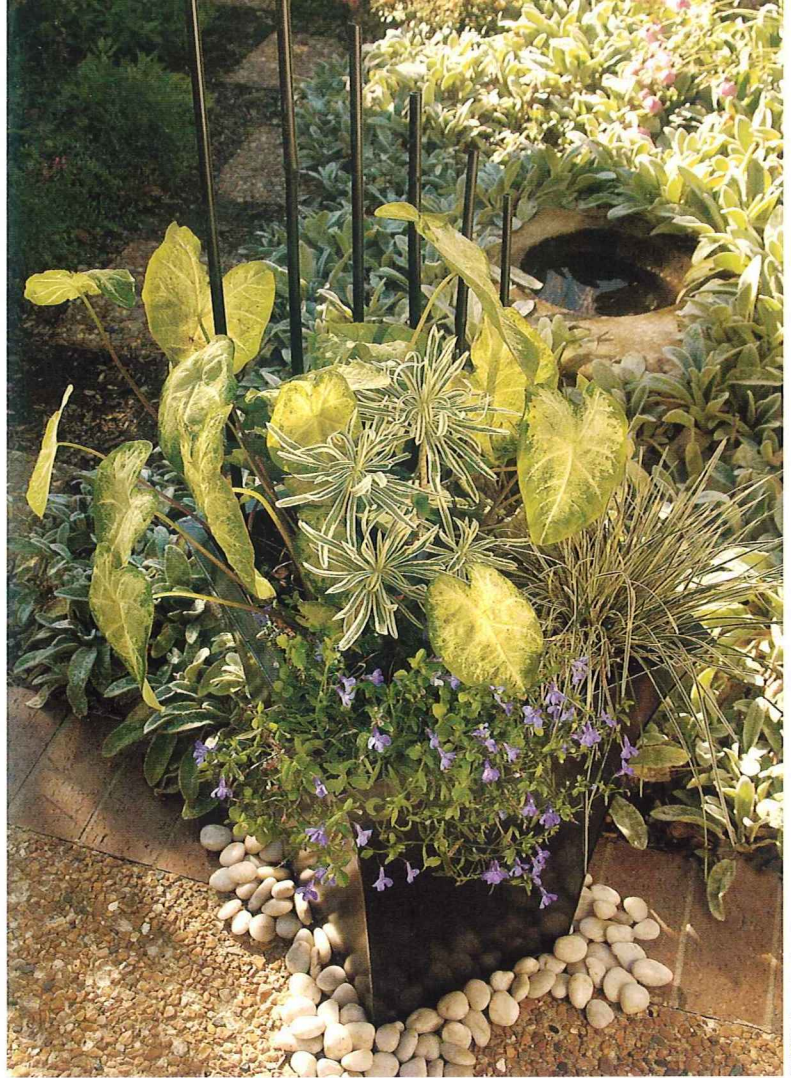
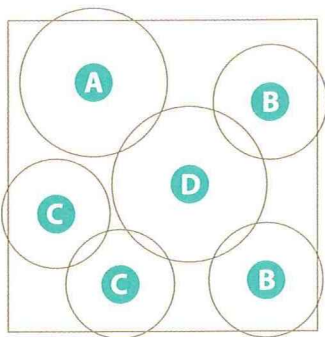


PHOTO: Brent Iserberger

FOLIAGE PLUS



It's all in the details...and luckily, this container has plenty of details to admire! Subtle variegation keeps this Mediterranean spurge, caladium and sedge working together for months. And a burst of blue from the lobelia punches it up just enough. Then take a look at the extras: Those black-painted bamboo stakes at the back of the container add height without distracting from the elegant variegated foliage. The white pebbles around the base echo the white-streaked leaves, too. (Make sure you keep the pebbles close to the container — you don't want to kick them all over the path as you walk by.)

Although Mediterranean spurge is drought-tolerant, it'll be happy with the water needs of the rest of this planting. It won't bloom much in a shady spot, but with those leaves, does it matter? Snip the lobelia back if it starts to get leggy, and remove any caladium leaves that get tattered or ratty. Like any container that depends on foliage for interest, there's not much to keeping this one looking fresh all summer.

Cut the bamboo into graduated lengths for a dynamic addition.

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

★ **A Lobelia** *Lobelia erinus* Lucia™ Dark Blue (1)

★ **B Caladium** *Caladium* 'Grey Ghost' (2)

C Mediterranean spurge *Euphorbia characias*
'Tasmanian Tiger' (1)

D Sedge *Carex* 'Silver Sceptre' (1)

Container is 12 in. square

