

Pairing plants is as easy as coordinating your clothes. Here's how to plan wisely and pull it all together.

# Mix & Match

 **Pamela's Favorites for Hot Weather**

- 'Dragon Wing' begonia
- sun coleus
- SunPatiens
- lantana
- melampodium
- Summer Wave torenia
- Serena angelonia

*Life is an endless trial for Pamela Crawford*, but she's not complaining. Her gardens serve as an ever-changing testing ground for hundreds of different flowers and shrubs. A master at creating containers, she makes spectacular displays that inspire beginners to embrace bright colors.

The author of several popular gardening books, including *Easy Container Gardens* (available from [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)), Pamela has developed concepts for using color to delight and astonish visitors. Here are a few of her ideas.

## Recipe for Success

### ● GARDEN THE WAY THAT YOU DRESS

"What I try to get everyone to do is use the part of their brains that they use when deciding what pair of pants goes with which shirt or when picking out throw pillows for their couch," she says. When shopping, fill a cart with different plants to see what looks best together.

### ● STACK COLORS

"I recommend three layers of color if you want a big show," Pamela says. This means combining something low with medium-size and tall plants.

### ● LOOK AT THE LIGHT

Bright light demands bright flowers and foliage. Pale colors will wash out in a sunny area but can make the most of what light there is in shade.

### ● RAISE COLOR TO NEW HEIGHTS

Don't make the mistake of putting all of your flowers on the ground. "There's a whole different impact when you put them at eye level," Pamela says.

### ● MAKE IT SIMPLE

"Growing plants in containers is a lot easier," she declares. "You don't have

to deal with poor soil, and you're not expecting them to live as long as those in the ground do. If they do well for three to four months, you're gonna say, 'Great!'"

### ● USE A BRAND-NAME SOILLESS POTTING MIX

Pamela uses Miracle-Gro Moisture Control Potting Mix. Don't use topsoil or soil from your garden. "Putting soil in containers is a death sentence for plants because it's too heavy," she states. Heavy soil stays wet, and the roots will rot.



