



PORTSTONE

Garden · Gifts · Cafe

December Newsletter

So here we are...another year just around the corner. I can't help feeling that time seems to be getting faster and faster and I'm getting older and older! But the good news is that it is December, which heralds bountiful gardens! Everything looks healthy and happy and just keeps on growing like nobody's business. Even the tomato plants look so green and dare I say it free of any pests and ailments as so often happens later in their lives...just like us humans really.

At this time of year we look forward to summer salads with beans, tomatoes and cucumbers fresh from the garden, and let's not forget about the humble **beetroot**. It is a powerhouse food full of many antioxidants and minerals, and it is also said to be good for your blood. It is easy to grow, grows quickly and is therefore ideal for those who are starting out their journey of growing your own. Traditionally preserved and bottled beetroot is now a regular feature in roast vege medley, soups and grated into coleslaw. Furthermore it jazzes up a kiwi hamburger any day. You can plant out seedlings for most of the year.

Mix some compost with your garden soil before planting, keep well-watered during the summer months. Also liquid feeding every so often doesn't go a miss. Transplant seedlings approx. 10cm apart and keep their surroundings well weeded. Thin out the small ones to make room for the others to grow larger. Protect young seedlings from slugs and snails that might want a slice of the cake as well!

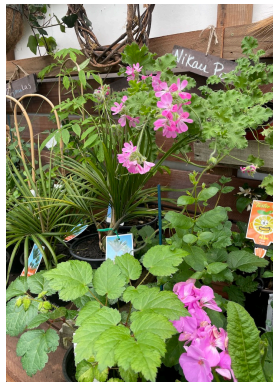
Keep planting – lettuces, silverbeet, spinach, coriander, basil, parsley, onions, beans, leeks, corn, beetroot, cucumbers, courgettes and pumpkin seedlings Also tomatoes, we have a few left for sale.

In Store

- Great selection of Bonsai trees – a very cool Christmas gift
- A good variety of perennials including: Tall white Phlox, Japanese Anemones, Gypsophila “Bristol Fairy”, Variegated Ivy and many more.
- Berries many, many, many varieties Blueberries, Gooseberries, Boysenberries, Blackberries, Raspberries (including the delicious Ivory) Cranberries, Currants and Grapes
- Avocadoes looking amazing, big and chunky. Makes a beautiful specimen tree.
- Chilies already in flower and setting fruit, Dwarf chili “hot joker” and variegated chili “purple tiger”
- Tamarillo with their beautiful big leaves, just stunning. Will fruit in 18 months prolific
- Casana – new to Portstone dramatic small tree with large deep green hairy leaves. Sweet and juicy yellow fruit. Looks fab
- Swan Plants – let's remember those beautiful butterflies – 2 different grades.

The little Market

A very full little Market, basking in all sorts of plants bursting at its seams really, but not complaining. We have some lovely scented Geraniums, big Sunflowers, cool groundcover "Lysimachias" with yellow flowers and quite likes wet feet. Some Astilbe and great Zinnia plants in peat pots, big bright showy blooms. Large size Coleus, very colourful and bright foliage for a shady spot. And finally, we have some potted up Kumera ready to be planted, both red and orange. Easy to grow, easy on the eye. Also, just in some wreaths that look very organic, made from native vines. Perfect for Christmas decorations – available in different sizes. And a little dog....looking for a mate!



Shallots should be ready soon for harvesting, stored and to cook with.

Glazed Shallots:

1Tlb olive oil

12 small shallots, peeled and halved

1 tsp lemon zest

½ cup fresh orange juice

½ cup white vinegar

4 Tlbs brown sugar

Sea salt and freshly ground pepper

In a large frying pan, heat olive oil over med-high. Add shallots and sauté, stirring frequently until lightly brown (about 5 mins) try not to brown shallots too much, as this can draw out bitterness. Add 2 cups water along with lemon zest and orange juice, vinegar and sugar. Season with salt and pepper, bring to the boil and cook over med heat until most of the liquid has evaporated and becomes syrupy, and shallots are easily pierced with tip of knife (35-40mins). Serve immediately as compliment to roast chicken or bbq steak.

Steps to Hydrangea Success

Spring or Autumn are the best times to plant **Hydrangeas**. Chose a shady or partially shady spot as the flowers will last longer. Prepare your soil well with organic matter like compost and sheep pellets, and feed hydrangea in spring and late summer to promote flowers and lush green leaves. Prune back hydrangea in autumn or early spring.

Currently we have a wonderful selection of hydrangea on hand including;

Bridal Bouquet – A variety that features large and showy balls of pure white flowers through summer and autumn. Grows to 1.2m tall and wide.

Strawberries and Cream – dark strawberry red flowers off set with a forth of lacy white/pink buds. It is perfect for patio containers and gardens in single or mass plantings.

Blueberries and Cream – the dramatic blue/white lace cap flowers cover the whole bush all season.

We have two grades in all the Hydrangeas to choose from, making them the ideal Christmas present for the gardener in your family.

Table top Xmas trees are also in and selling fast.

In the Shop

Come in and have a look at our gift ideas in the shop. The Michel Design Works range of soaps, serviettes, etc make lovely gifts. A couple of interesting patterns include the black, gold and silver gardenia pattern and the pretty pink shades of royal rose range. Their serviettes make a nice gift by themselves or add a wee collection of the same design for a more personal touch.

We have a range of Annabel Trends bags, kneeling pads, and gloves in very pretty floral designs. The bags are insulated so ideal for carrying packed lunches, BYO drinks or shopping.

The Ecofelt growbags are proving very popular, Many of our customers have posted them nationally and overseas as they are light and compact. The Ecofelt tote bags can be used as an everyday bag and are multifunctional. This range is all made up of 100% recycled plastic bottles and comes in a range of colours and patterns with a lovely story explaining the inspiration behind the designs.

We still have our extensive range of Scully products, and have recently added The Herb Farm range. Both very popular and complement each other.

The Living Light range from Takaka has had a facelift with regards to their packaging so they icicle candles now match the range of room sprays, aromastones, diffusers. These never fail to please either as a gift or for your personal use.

We still have a good range of houseplants. Calatheas, Hoyas, Peace Lilies, two varieties of Monstera, at least four varieties of Ficus, including the more compact form (Fiddle Leaf Fig). Poinsettias are due in soon – these shout Christmas.



Love your Garden

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