

Autumn JOYS

Enjoy the beauty of the season by potting up one of our 10 favorite fall container gardens.

PRODUCED BY JANE AUSTIN MCKEON
PHOTOGRAPHER: HOPKINS ASSOCIATES

Reluctant to say farewell to the fair days of summer? Think fresh weather instead! Though the nights are getting nippier, there are still plenty of warm autumn days ahead. So don't put your borders to bed—or your pots in the shed—just yet. Replace summer's bedraggled bloomers with fall's finest flowers and foliage.

You needn't limit yourself to the ever-present chrysanthemum. Lots of annuals and perennials can fill the bill when you're fending off winter's chill. Check your local garden center for hardy holdovers from summer sales, as well as new cold-tolerant

hybrids specifically grown for fall display. A light frost won't faze their flowering fortitude.

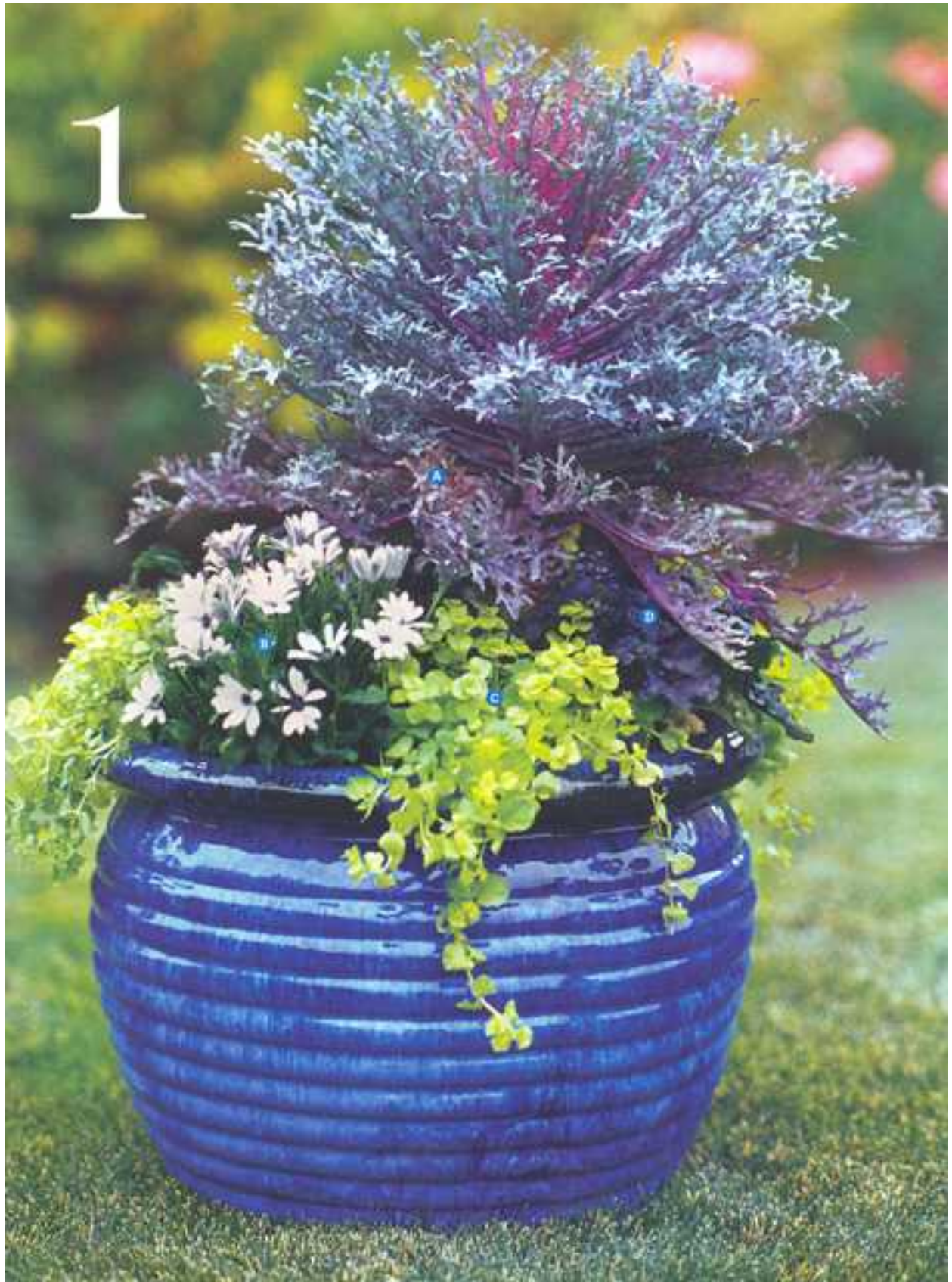
Although some foliage plants turn to mush in cold weather, many others actually wait for fall's fluctuating temperatures to show their bright colors. Only a hard frost can dampen their beauty.

Place containers near an entry where you'll see them most as you come and go. Or use pots to fill spots in borders left bare by fair-weather flowers. Because fall's shorter days make sunlight and its lingering warmth more precious, avoid shady and shivery northern exposures. Before the ground freezes, transplant perennials into an established garden border.

1 SEASONAL SHOWSTOPPERS

Nothing but a hard freeze will ruffle the feathers of flowering kale (*Brassica oleracea* 'Peacock Red') (A). Standing proud in a glazed ceramic pot, this showy prima donna is tough, and even tougher to upstage. But try anyway with an array of showstopping understudies. *Osteospermum* 'Soprano White' (B) sings out from a leafy gown provided by *Lysimachia nummularia* 'Goldilocks' (C) and *Ajuga reptans* 'Catlin's Giant' (D). The blue-centered, daisylike blooms perform from early spring through fall.

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5 SUMMER'S ENCORE

Pick a pack of peppers to tuck into your fall arrangements if you have a burning desire to spread the warm glow of summer into autumn. The fiery-red fruits of chile pepper 'Chilly' (A) turn up the heat in this green-glazed ceramic pot. Companion plants are slanted more toward summer's sun, sky, and grass hues, including *Bracteantha bracteata* 'Sundance Bronze' (B), *Osteospermum* 'Orange Symphony' (C), *Nemesia fruticans* 'Blue Bird' (D), Algerian ivy (*Hedera canariensis*) (E), and *Lysimachia fortunei* 'Super Snow' (F).

6 FINERY IN FOLIAGE

The faux stone of this light composite urn may fool you, but there's nothing phony—or featherweight—about the plants that fill it. Turning a cold shoulder to bitter breezes, maidengrass (*Miscanthus sinensis* 'Gracillimus') (A) coo feigns frailty in its tall, graceful plumes. The movable feast for the eyes also features the vigorous and variegated Algerian ivy (*Hedera canariensis*) (B), *Heuchera* 'Dolce Crème Brûlée' (C), and *Euphorbia amygdaloides* 'Ethanthis' Improved (D).

7 EDIBLE ARTISTRY

Look no further than the cabbage patch to find a foliage plant that shines in autumn's spotlight. Though it's just another plainclothes crop in the summer, *Brassica oleracea* 'Pigeon Red' (A) turns into a beautiful garden swan in fall. The towering rosette of succulent green leaves blushes at its center as soon as the air turns crisp. A faithful flock of *Sedum* 'Angelina' (B) rings the wood-grain-look metal pot. The trailing, needle-shape leaves change from chartreuse to golden yellow as they mature.