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# Did You Know...Tucson is home to the Yume Japanese Garden and Museum?

*By: Debi Ulrey-Crosby, Master Gardener*



The Yume Japanese Garden and Museum is the result of a love of Japanese life created by Patricia Deridder, a native of Belgium. Fluent in Japanese, she lived in Japan for 15 years and developed a love of Japan's history, culture and the healing qualities of its beautiful gardens. Yume means "dream" in Japanese and her dream was to bring the spirit and health benefits of an authentic Japanese garden to the West.

Japanese gardens are not planted with a blaze of colorful plants and flowers but strive for a balance of natural and man-made beauty and simplicity. It is a tradition that shows profound respect for wildness, using local materials while gently reshaping it into idealized landscapes that lead us to reflect on our response and relationship to nature and to quiet our minds.

The gardens at Yume are configured in eight settings, each representing a different aspect of Japanese culture and design. While I enjoyed all of the different "rooms" or settings, these are my favorite. I would encourage each of you to visit a Japanese garden and enjoy the peace and tranquility of the natural setting.

### The Zen Garden



A major influence on Japanese garden design has been Zen Buddhism. Its main spiritual practice is meditation that brings inner strength and composure. This garden is a rectangular bed of gray-white gravel raked into lines and curves to resemble rippling water or waves, and sometimes also heaped into one or more cone-shaped mounds to represent mountains or islands. This is edged with a double border of pale, narrow granite slabs enclosing a contrasting surround of water-worn dark gray beach cobbles.

### The Koi Pond Garden



Yume's most popular garden is a large koi pond. In spring, summer and fall green lily pads float on its surface, bearing delicate pink and white flowers, and year around red-and-white Japanese carp swirl through its waters and around a half-submerged rock representing an island in what is a metaphor for an inland sea. Other rocks represent low mountains, or rocky promontories that jut out above an imagined "shoreline".

### The Dry River Garden



A rock garden arrangement often seen in Japan is a metaphorical river. The Dry River Garden at Yume begins in the mountains, symbolized by large vertical rocks at the head of the waterway. As the stream bed curves gently downward, it widens in the bends, as it would in nature. A mix of real river rocks mimics the rock-moving abilities of an actual stream and stones that are too large for the "current" to move remain in the middle of the stream. Completing the illusion of flowing water, a wooden footbridge crosses the lower end of the river and leads visitors into the next garden.

## The Japanese Cottage



Yume's replica of a traditional Japanese cottage overlooks the Zen Garden. It is completed in a Japanese architectural style called *sukiya*, chosen for its openness to nature, complementing the subtle relationships found in the gardens. A key element is that it opens interior spaces to outside gardens, creating the feeling of being outside even while actually inside. Accenting the verandas are sliding *shoji* doors, some of which are 150 years old from an original farmhouse in the Kansai Region on Japan's main island of Honshu

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## In the Herb Garden

By Priscilla Jurkovich, Master Gardener

The herb section will highlight an herb that can be grown in the South Dakota region.



Caraway (*Carum carvi*) is a biennial edible herb in the carrot family (*Apiaceae*) and can grow up 30 inches in zones 3-9. In zone 4, Caraway is planted as an annual and best planted as a direct seed because of the deep roots.

Caraway expresses its aroma best in well-drained, moist soil in full sun or partial shade. Caraway plants have deep roots which is good for breaking up sub-soil on heavy, wet land and is a good companion

plant for shallow-rooted plants. The pink or white flowers appear slightly flat in umbel shape and attract parasitic wasps which prey on aphids.

Caraway is a well-known herb historically used for culinary and medicinal uses. The green leaves have a spicy parsley-dill flavor and can be added to salad, soups and teas. The harvested seeds have been used in cookies, breads, salads and cheeses. The roots can be cooked.

[North Carolina Extension Gardener](#)  
[University of Maryland - Caraway](#)

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# International Master Gardener Conference 2023

*By Debra Brost, Master Gardener*



Last year I attended my first International Master Gardener Conference which was held in Overland Park, Kansas. The conference was very well organized with a wide variety of sessions over two days. A very friendly group of gardeners in attendance and a trade show filled the shopping itch. Several booths displayed seed packets that were works of art and probably my favorite booths. There were some seed packets being given away by Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds located in Mansfield, Missouri. They can be reached at [Baker Creek Rare Seeds](#) if you have questions, or if you would like to order from them.



Classroom sessions made up two and a half days of the conference. There was a wide array of topics presented by experts, there was not enough time to see all that sounded so interesting. There is something for everyone. The highlights for me were the keynote speakers. Jim Richardson, National Geographic photojournalist; Abra Lee, author and historian; Dr. Charles Rice, Nobel Peace Prize winner; Jessica Walliser, Horticulturist and author and Scott Beuerlein, horticulture speaker, writer and humorist. I hope this quick summary encourages you to attend future IMG conferences. It was a great experience. The only thing I would do differently would be to go earlier.

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## Landscaping Basics

*JoAnn Christensen, Master Gardener*

We would all love to be that home that has the best curb appeal in the neighborhood. After several attempts at my last home, I received many compliments from people that passed my home on their daily walks. Each summer I changed out the annuals to give my home a new look. One person told me my yard was the best part of their day. A child came by one day on a bicycle shouting “Hey lady, I like your yard.” Sometimes our landscaping needs a little makeover or we have a blank slate to work with such as a new home. One may be involved with a church or business landscape renovation. Regardless of the nature of a project, start with a plan and a budget. Review space and light requirements. This may take some time to follow light patterns around your home or business. No matter how much you like a certain plant material, if the location isn’t right, it will not do well. My first South Dakota home was in a very windy area. I love evergreen materials and especially arborvitae. They worked well in

Minnesota for me but they were in a protected area. I followed the steps for protecting them with burlap and anti-desiccant but the wind was still too much for them. I found that junipers worked much better because of the oil content in the leaves and they withstand the harsh South Dakota winds. I enjoy using juniper tips in holiday floral arrangements. Evergreens also buffer road noise.

Other things to consider are soil conditions. Are your landscaping areas wet or dry? Many trees and shrubs now come in smaller versions. For example, hydrangeas used to be one type with massive blooms. However, there are several options available today in many sizes and bloom colors. Be sure to read your landscaping tags very carefully before purchasing plant materials. The Sioux Falls area is now 5a. I like to choose plant materials that are my current zone or lower. Take into consideration the maximum space for your materials. If it looks too open, you can always fill in with annuals or perennials. It is easier taking out a perennial than a tree or shrub. It is very easy to tuck in colorful annuals until the permanent materials grow up. Some plant materials take more time than others but all require some effort. Familiarize yourself with the care requirements of each plant material so you are aware of the time commitment.

Beyond basic care there are other factors such as deer and bunnies to consider. The bad winter a couple of years ago forced many deer and bunnies to scavenge our landscapes to stay alive. Even the most resistant plant materials were affected. Evaluate and learn from those situations and plan ahead to protect your plants for those extreme weather conditions.

As you move forward with a plan, keep in mind neighbors may grow large trees blocking sunlight or a new building may go up around you. Likewise, trees may come down bringing in too much light on your shade plants. Landscaping may change for any number of reasons. The important thing to remember is to start with a plan. Save your receipts the first year in case they don't make it. Most retailers allow returns the first year. Have fun and always start with a plan.

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## Pretty Support for Tomato Plants

*By Carla Goetsch, Master Gardener*

Hopefully by now your tomatoes are growing well. So, it is time to think about how to give them support. If the tomato plants are not supported, the tomatoes on the ground are more susceptible to disease and rot. Of course, there are the good old tomato

cages that we are all familiar with, but the supports might as well be pretty to add architectural interest to the garden.



**Concrete Reinforcing Mesh Wire:** Cut a length of wire about 5ft long to make into a cylinder about 18" in diameter. Overlap the ends and wire together.



**Wooden Ladder Cage:** Use rot resistant wood (1x2" boards) such as cedar. Cut the cross pieces all 16" long (12/cage) and then 4 pieces that are 4-5' long for the corners.



**Handmade Trellis:** Make from 2-3" branches or bamboo poles. Use 4 poles for an outer frame, one for central support and cross pieces for stability.





Leaning Wire: Mesh Panels (A frame): Advantage is the panels can fold and can be stacked for saving on storage space.

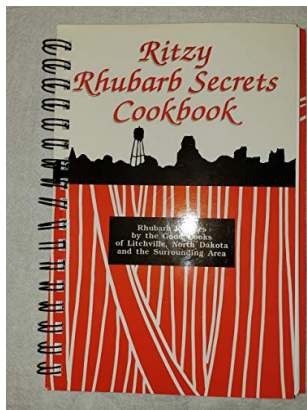
Obelisk: Many decorative styles are available at garden centers to give your garden a formal feel.

Twine Trellis: If you are growing your tomatoes close to a porch, try stretching twine from a ground stake to an eye screw at the porch line. It does take frequent training of the tomato to wrap around the twine. Loosely secure with twist ties to get the plan growing vertically. This also works to get plants to grow up a simple stake next to the tomato. However, frequent pruning of side branches of the tomato is also required. This method of getting support is better used with pepper plants.

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## Ritzy Rhubarb Secrets - A Short Story

By: *B. Fredrickson - Intern*



Saturday morning, May 10th, 2024, the first one up on this year's Mother's Day weekend visit. The sun is turning the horizon pink as it breaks above the trees. I can see the dew hanging from the blades of grass on the newly mown lawn of this crisp 46-degree morning in Aberdeen, SD.

While waiting for the rest of the family to wake up, I am enjoying a cup of cold coffee, my favorite, and reading the unexpected recipe book lying on the kitchen table. Last year, Leann, my mother-in-law, shared this delightful story about the Ritzy Rhubarb Recipe book that she had tried to order.

One of her many friends in Mesa, AZ shared this great recipe book during one of the many morning coffee get-togethers. It had some fantastic recipes. She wanted a copy of it, so she went to Etsy, purchased a copy of it for \$20.00 and waited. Delivery was expected in 3-5 days.

Three to five days later she had not received the book. Being a patient person, Leann waited a few days more. She then got on the phone to ask, 'Where was her book?' The customer service representative, "Oh, it must have gotten lost in transit.," was the response she received. "We'll refund your money."

Leann's response was what I would have expected, "I do not want my money back. I want the book."

There was nothing she could do about it. They did not have another copy. They refunded her money. Leann went to Etsy a second time to order another copy. Imagine her surprise when she found a copy could not be found for less than \$75.00. No wonder the book was 'lost in transit' wink, wink, nudge, nudge.

"Seventy-five dollars! Can you imagine?" said Leann.

Keep in mind, this is not a 'professional' recipe book produced by a major publisher, hard bound and filled with photos. This is a recipe book made by X individuals in 1991 in Litchville, North Dakota to raise funds for their community. We are talking about one of those multitudinous church or group recipe books found at rummage sales across the United States with many contributors of tried-and-true recipes bound by rubber coated spiral wire. Not that this recipe book was not well constructed, because it is. Included is a brief history of rhubarb, growing instructions, an index, and substitutions. The recipes are all winners of recipe tasting contests, with easy-to-follow directions. This is not a recipe book that cost a thousand dollars to construct. Leann shared this story with her Hymn Sing group. And there we shall let it rest, until.

A new year, a new winter, and a resumption of coffee conversations in Mesa, AZ. The very first Hymn Sing, Leann had a surprise gift. Knowing my mother-in-law, I can picture a laughing excited Leann with her bright smile and her twinkly eyes digging into a gift bag, a joy to behold. At the bottom, under the tissue paper, was a soft, rubber coated, spiral wire recipe book titled Ritzzy Rhubarb Secrets Cookbook by Litchville, ND Community.

It so happens that the lady that shared the recipe book last year lived close to the Litchville community. She was able to find a new book just for Leann.

So why the build up? There I was drinking my coffee and reading the recipe book. Of course, as with many recipe books, I opened the recipe book to a random page, just to see what one of the recipes looked like. It was a rhubarb ice cream recipe, turn the page, turn the page. This looked interesting, so I turned to the beginning. There was a

brief history of Rhubarb. Did you know that rhubarb has been used for the last 2100 years? Recipes for its use have been dated back 2100 years and earlier usage by Chinese herbalists as a laxative.

This short history was followed by a “How to Grow” your rhubarb. This backed up my own knowledge that most perennial plants appreciate a side dressing of compost/manure at least once a year.

One of the reasons that we were in Aberdeen was to plant the yearly garden. In addition, we brought new raspberry bushes. They needed to be planted. New plantings, such as these, appreciate a well-balanced start with a mix of compost and manure. So, one of our tasks was to pick up a ‘bag of manure.’

Leann’s response “Do you know anyone that has manure? We have never bought manure in a bag. Dale, would be horrified, that we are buying a bag of manure.” I had to admit that I did not know anyone that had manure. Off we go to Walmart, to buy a bag of composted animal droppings.

We are in the gardening section, looking all over the place for our soil amendment. I finally found it. There were three bags left, with giant holes in the bags! No way am I going to place these holey bags in the van. Dirt getting all over the back of the van is not my idea of fun. The only thing to do was to cross the road to Menards to see what we could find.

Success! Many bags of composted manure greet my eyes as I walk along the aisle. Fortunately, I only need two, one for the raspberries and one for the rhubarb. Home, we go. By the end of the day, my son and I planted the raspberries and side dressed half of the rhubarb.

The following morning, Leann asked “Why did we have to buy manure.” I am sure I had explained it but maybe not. Sometimes, I become excited and miss some of the finer details. My response, “Didn’t you read your Ritzy Rhubarb Secrets Cookbook? At the very front there is a ‘How to Grow Your Rhubarb.’ It says that you should fertilize your plants once a year.

Leann’s response, “Ohhh...”

Following up on our conversation, the next day, my husband’s driving with Leann to Council Bluffs, Iowa. I realized; I do know someone that has manure. I had to text Leann right away. “Do you think Harlan, the farmer that plows the garden, may have some spare manure?”

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# How to Start Your Own Rhubarb Patch

## Rhubarb, *Rheum rhabarbarum*: Aka Pie Plant

*By: B. Fredrickson - Intern*

Rhubarb, a vegetable that is treated as a fruit, grows in hardiness zone 3-8. To start your own Rhubarb Patch, you will wish to choose your site carefully because if everything goes well, it will be there for the next 10-25 years, possibly longer, with proper maintenance. Rhubarb likes sunny, well-drained, 1-2 feet deep-rich soil but will tolerate light shade. It has been my experience that over time, the light shade may become denser and impede the growth.

You can try starting your plants by seed, but it is far easier and more reliable to purchase a rhubarb crown from your local nursery or by division from your neighbor. Plant in spring when temperature is over 40°, one to three plants spaced 3 feet apart with the crown level with the soil. The key to establishing your plants is consistent watering, particularly during the first year. Do not harvest for the first two years and keep the weeds under control because they will use up your soil nutrients and choke the plants. There are various varieties available at the local nursery, choose your favorite.



[Wisconsin Horticulture Extension](#)

'Canada Red' often produces shorter, more slender stalks than other varieties but is tender and very sweet with a good red color. It tends to produce few seed stalks.

'Cherry Red' (also known as 'Cherry' or 'Early Cherry') has long, thick stalks that are a rich red inside and out. This vigorous producer is juicy, tender, and sweet.

'Crimson Red' (also called 'Crimson,' 'Crimson Cherry,' or 'Crimson Wine') produces tall, plump, brightly colored red stalks.

'MacDonald' produces well and has tender skin on the brilliant red stalks.

'Valentine' has broad, deep red stalks that retain a good rosy color when cooked. It is much less acidic than green stalked and other red varieties and produces few or no seed stalks.

'Victoria' is a speckled type that produces medium-sized stalks of excellent quality and good flavor. Although there is some variation in stalk color depending on the strain, in general the light green stalks develop pink speckling, especially at the bottom of the stalk." \*

As the plant matures and the temperature warms, it will sprout a seed stalk. Cut that seed stalk out as soon as you see it. This will encourage deeper roots in the first two years and as you go forward, prolong your harvesting season. Finally, as with most perennials, in the fall, fertilize with well composted material once a year.

If all goes well, you should be able to start harvesting by year three, no more than 1/3 of the stems at a time. Pull the stalk with a quick twisting movement or with a clean rust-free knife or scissors, cut the stalk close to the base when the heart shaped leaves reach 8-12 inches wide, and the stalks are 10-12 inches in length. Remove the leaves, which are poisonous, and discard. The stalks will keep refrigerated for about a week or cut into small pieces and freeze. Use the 'fruit' in pies, cakes, bars, sauce, ice cream, jam, and jellies. I have also found a recipe to make a sauce to be served with pork chops.

There are many people that like to include food and herbs in their ornamental gardens. The Rhubarb plant is an excellent choice as a foliage plant for just such a garden.

#### Problems & Disease

The most frequent problem will be crown rot because of poor drainage. The best way to fix this problem is to choose your spot wisely before planting. Check your drainage before planting by digging a hole one foot wide by one foot deep, fill it full of water and wait overnight. The next day fill the hole again, recording how fast the water drains.

Excessive drainage such as more than four inches per hour could result in a dry plant. Adequate drainage would be 1-4 inches in an hour. Poor drainage is water that does not drain in a 12-hour period. How to correct it? The easiest solution is finding a better spot. If that is not an option, add soil amendments to either increase or decrease the drainage. If you do experience root rot, you will have to start over in a new spot.

If you experience a virus called leaf spot (*Ascochyta rhei* or *Ramularia rhei*), remove the affected leaves during the summer. At the end of the season remove all leaves and dispose of debris off site.

Insects are few but there are two to mention. The rhubarb curculio, a dark snouted beetle that bores holes into the crowns and stalks. Stalk borers do what the name suggests, bore holes in the stalks. Control them by removing weeds from around the plants, especially curly dock which is a host plant for the insects.

Sources:

Personal Experience, \*[Wisconsin Horticulture Extension](#), [Growing rhubarb in Home Gardens – University of Minnesota Extension](#)

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## Vermiculture, Part II

*By: Jason Cruse, Master Gardener*

Here is part II of beginning vermiculture. In the last article, I wrote about getting started and some ins and outs of vermiculture. In this article, I'm going to talk about how I got my farm started. In part 3 (next month), I'll talk about harvesting castings and what I've been doing with them. In part 4, I'll talk about expanding my worm farm into additional buckets.

There are lots of different "systems" you can purchase for starting a vermiculture, ranging from \$35 – over \$100. I made mine out of 2 Rubbermaid containers and 2 bricks.



You are going to need to buy worms. As mentioned in my previous article, there are only really 7 species of worm that are suitable for vermiculture. I ordered mine from Uncle Jim's on Amazon. I paid \$40 for 500 worms.

To begin, I drilled 3/4" holes on the sides of the one container, about 2/3 of the way up from the bottom. Then I drilled a couple dozen holes in the lid. These will allow air circulation in the tub. Then, drill a dozen holes in the bottom of the container. This will allow for drainage.



Next, place several layers of wet newspaper in the bottom of the container, covering the holes. The newspaper will allow for excess moisture to seep out, but keep the worms in the bucket.



After this, place about 3” – 4” of base material in the tub. In my first bucket, I used mushroom compost, which the worms loved. In my second, I used coir, aka coconut fiber. I had read that the coir would be suitable material for worms. However, I can tell that, at least for European night crawlers, coir is not suitable material! Once I put the worms in that bucket, they tried getting out for several days until I replaced the coir with mushroom compost.

When your worms arrive, follow the directions on the container. As the instructions say, it will look like they are all withered and dried, but they will perk back up pretty quickly. When you put the worms in your container, it will look like this...

Now, it’s time to feed your worms. This will be some trial and error on your part. I make my own veggie juice every morning, consisting of beets, spinach, celery, carrots, and cabbage. I use the juice detritus in my worm bins. However, don’t be surprised if there are things they won’t eat. Mine don’t like cabbage, as you can see from the picture!



Mine DO however like fruit. My general food for the little buggers now is cantaloupe, or cantaloupe mixed with veggies. In this picture, I’ve just dumped cantaloupe in the container. More often now, though, I don rubber gloves and mix the fruit into the top inch of the compost/castings that are in the container.

It will take a couple of weeks to learn the behavior of your worms. My red wigglers are very active and escape artists. If I put the lid on their container, they will crawl up the box and try to get out. Inevitably, some do get out and either into the drainage box below or worse onto the floor (I keep mine in my basement). So I have to keep the lid off and a light on to keep them under ground, so to speak. For my European nightcrawlers (ENCs), they are happy for me to keep the lid closed and do their thing.

Next month, I’ll talk about my first (and probably second) harvest of worm castings, as well as what I’ve seen thus far in how using worm castings have improved my garden.

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# FYI Garden tips!

*By Pam Conklin, Master Gardener*

1. Plant zucchini late to avoid squash vine borers from attacking and killing your squash.  
<https://extension.umn.edu/yard-and-garden-insects/squash-vine-borers>
2. Feed a little bone meal to your irises after spring blooms dieback. Work it into the soil, near the rhizomes. Re-bloomers will thank you later in the season. [Iris borers | UMN Extension](#)
3. Pruning? Keep your pruner blades sharp and spray the blades with Lysol, letting them air dry, between cuts to prevent the spread of disease.

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Do you have comments, questions, or topic ideas that you would like us to explore? Email us at [MinnehahaMGnews@gmail.com](mailto:MinnehahaMGnews@gmail.com). We would love to hear from you!

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*All articles are researched and written by Minnehaha County Master Gardeners and Interns. Thank you to all, for sharing your knowledge!*