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What to Cut, Now!

Roanne Gregory of Nature Contained brings her garden into her home



EXPERT TIP

Grass Ponytail

I love using grasses in bouquets—they lend a feeling of movement that few other plants can. However, they can be tricky to work with.

I like to fold back the blades of grass and tie them into a noose. Allow a few stray blades to spill out—these are what really add a soft cascading effect—R.G.



WITH THE COMING OF FALL, THE SELECTION of gorgeous textures provided by pods, leaves, and berries come to the forefront. The garden, once abundant with flowers, shifts to a more quiet, contemplative palette of rusts, browns, and oranges.

When making bouquets from the garden, I like to think of each arrangement in three parts: a floral element, a textural element, and a foliage element. In this particular bouquet, I've added grass to give the arrangement a feeling of movement.—Roanne Gregory runs *Nature Contained*, a garden design company, with Richard Magnuson, in Greater Boston.



What to Cut, Now!

FLORAL ELEMENT

DAHLIA 'BABYLON SALMON' OR 'KEITH H' (D)

Dahlias are excellent long-lasting cut flowers. Their bloom provides a robust and reliable splash of color in the garden.

TEXTURAL ELEMENTS

SEDUM 'AUTUMN JOY' (F)

A magnificent garden staple and sturdy cut flower. Light green spring foliage metamorphoses into a gorgeous pincushion of rich coppers.

PHYSOCARPUS 'DIABLO' (B)

Great shrub for three seasons of color. The dark eggplant leaves and its textural bright red seed pods tie the bouquet together. In the garden in late fall, the foliage takes on festive pumpkin-orange and reddish-purple undertones.

FOLIAGE ELEMENT

SWISS CHARD 'BRIGHT LIGHTS' (A)

Edible, crinkly, colorful, and strong. Its red veins add character, charisma, and good old fun to any bouquet or fall container planting.

MOVEMENT

MEXICAN FEATHER GRASS (C)

Grasses move and dance in the border—and in a bouquet. By cutting handfuls of grass and swirling the clumps around the edges of the bouquet, your arrangement will feel softer. But don't cut too much of your grasses for fall arrangements, for they are marvels of beauty when kissed by the frost.

ASTILBE 'RED SENTINEL' OR 'FANAL' (E)

The frothy cone of the astilbe adds color and sensitivity to the arrangement. Its deep burgundy plume seems to hover and picks up the chard's blood-red veins.