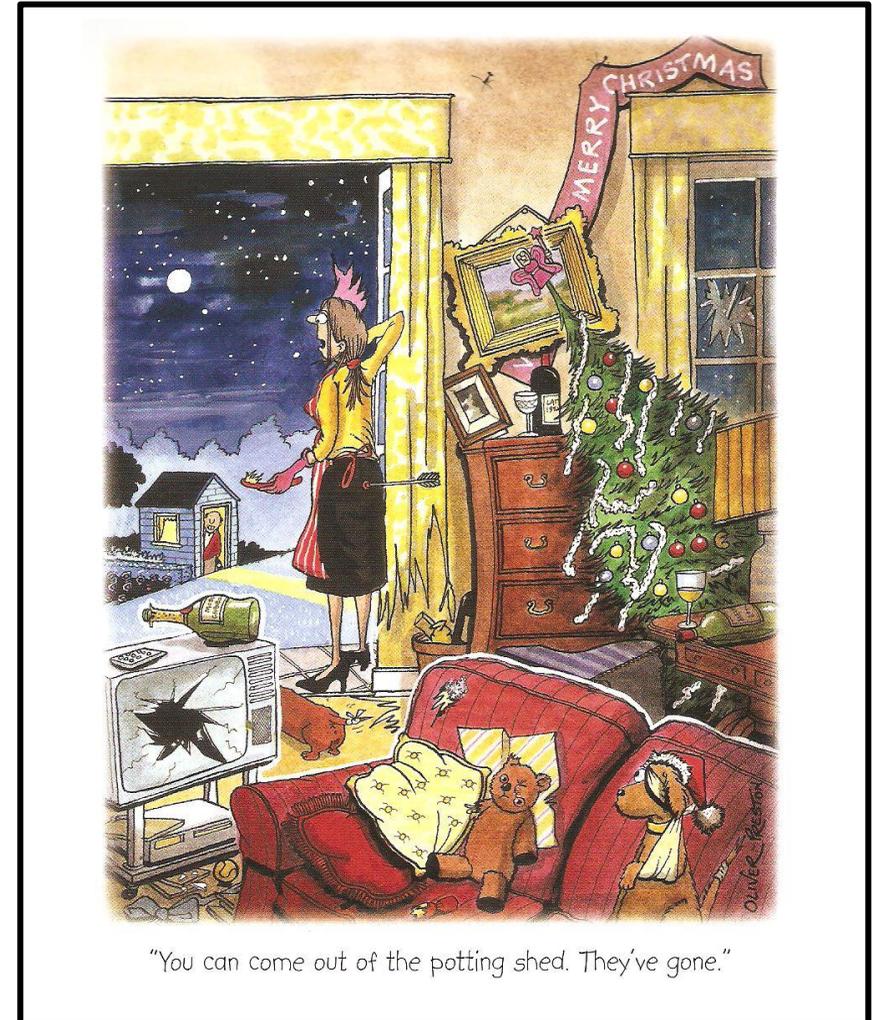


Ash Parish Garden Club

www.ashparishgardenclub.org.uk

 ash parish garden club



Monthly Newsletter Dec 2019

ASH PARISH GARDEN CLUB OFFICERS

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EDITORS NOTES

Brian –Stories to ernestperry33@gmail.com hard copy to Chris

R.H.S. LONDON AND WISLEY

We are affiliated to the RHS who's benefits include competitive insurance cover, free gardening advice, a free group visit to an RHS garden, (54 members to visit Wisley *club trip in Summer*) access to medals (*Banksian medal*) and show stationery and a free monthly copy of The Garden magazine (*see Brenda Winton if you wish to view*).

Our membership number is 10564709.

THIS MONTHS RECIPE

Golden Persian lamb curry

Jewelled and warmly spiced, this aromatic dish makes for a special supper

SERVES 4-6 TIME 35 MINS TOTAL TIME 2 HRS

You will need

1 tsp ground turmeric
1 tbsp ground cumin
2 garlic cloves
Crushed zest and juice of 1 lime, plus wedges to serve
2 x 400g packs diced lamb
2 tbsp vegetable oil
150g cashews
1 large onion,
Finely sliced pinch of saffron threads (optional)
One & half tbsp medium curry powder
500ml vegetable stock
250g basmati rice, rinsed For the rice
1 cinnamon stick
6 cardamom pods, lightly crushed
2 bay leaves
1 tbsp oil
Half tsp fine sea salt To garnish
2 tbsp mint leaves, chopped if you prefer
25g pistachios, chopped
50g pomegranate seeds

To do

1 Mix the turmeric, cumin, garlic, lime zest and juice with some seasoning. Toss the diced lamb thoroughly in the mixture to coat. Cover and set aside while you start the curry. Preheat the oven to 150°C, fan 130°C, gas 2.

2 Heat the oil in an ovenproof casserole and toast 75g of the cashews until golden, then transfer to a plate. Add the onion and a pinch of salt to the pan; cook on a

medium heat for 8-10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until softened. Put the saffron (if using) in a small bowl and infuse in a splash of boiling water.

3 Turn the heat under the pan up to high and tip in the lamb. Cook for about 10 minutes, stirring once or twice. Meanwhile, grind the untoasted cashews finely in a small food processor.

4 Add the curry powder and the ground nuts to the lamb and mix well. Add the stock, seasoning and saffron liquid (if using) and bring to a simmer. Transfer to the oven and cook for one and half hours until tender.

5 About half an hour before the lamb is ready, toast the drained rice and the spices in the oil in a large saucepan for about 2 minutes. Add the salt and '600ml boiling water, bring to the boil, stir once, then cover the pan and cook on a very low heat for 20 minutes until the rice is tender and all the liquid has been absorbed. Remove the lid, cover with a cloth or kitchen paper to absorb the steam, and set aside until the curry is ready.

6 Skim any fat off the top of the curry, then stir in the toasted cashews and adjust the seasoning to taste.

7 Serve the curry on the rice, topped with mint, pistachios and pomegranate seeds, adding lime wedges to squeeze over if you wish.

KITCHEN TIP

This is also delicious made with chicken thigh fillets cut into chunky pieces. Simply simmer gently on the hob for 30 minutes in step 4 rather than oven-cooking.

POETS CORNER

Upon Appleton House

See how the flowers, as at parade,
Under their colours stand displayed:
Each regiment in order grows,
That of the tulip, pink, and rose.
But when the vigilant patrol
Of stars walks round about the pole,
Their leaves, that to the stalks are curled,
Seem to their staves the ensigns furled.
ANDREW MARVELL (1621-1678)

DESIGNING YOUR GARDEN

A well-designed garden will allow it to work to its optimum all year round by being multifunctional, enabling a space to socialise, entertain and relax, while also producing healthy vegetables and fruit for you to enjoy around the dinner table.

Garden designers can breathe a whole new lease of life into your garden. Not only can their professional expertise help look after and maintain your garden, but they can offer creative bespoke design solutions to re-imagine your garden from the ground up.

There are a full array of services garden designers can offer from simple professional advice on which plants work best to creating year-round maintenance schedules and a full design and build service.

A high-end bespoke design solution which works for all your needs, wishes and budget, is where garden designers excel. Using expertise and in-depth knowledge to analyse your current garden will enable them to find out soil type, gradient and any landscaping issues which will then be considered into the build.

The quality of the build is essential if you want something that will look stunning while also ensuring it will last for years to come.

Architectural services like building walls to create structure or, for the more natural look, green walls, using plant coverage to add stunning visual effects, may also be brought in to the design process.

It's important to ensure garden designers consult with you at all stages of the process, from planning to final completion.

If all these individual services can be offered in house you will ensure a high quality of build and service to realise the design, while also saving money.

Working closely with your designer in the research phase will help them to find designs, styles and materials you prefer. Having a theme will help unify your garden and help influence the plants and materials used in your build.

A modern or contemporary garden is characterised by sleek, streamlined styles and geometric shapes, giving structure and order using slate or granite.

In contrast, a Mediterranean theme will see more olive trees, lavender plants and shrub vegetation planted with palms to give you the feel of Italy in your own back garden.

When redesigning your garden, think about other features. Outdoor natural swimming pools are very popular and there has been a significant increase for people wanting these installed in their own gardens.

Natural pools use plants as filters, rather than traditional chlorinated swimming pools, which mean you can enjoy and swim in natural filtered water.

You can even swim among plants so it feels you are swimming in the wild outdoors rather than in your own back garden.

GARDENS ARE BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE

SIXTEEN members of Old Coulsdon WI took a day off last August to visit the newly reopened Leonardslee Gardens.

The 240-acre gardens were closed for nine years and had become overgrown. Staff faced a mammoth task of clearing pathways and weeds around the shrubs.

The head gardener took them on a 90 minute tour, relating the history behind Leonardslee and how each new owner had put their stamp on the gardens.

The rhododendrons and azaleas were in full bloom; the colours were magnificent with some blooms as large as dinner plates. Some of the rhododendrons had been brought from China but due to industrialisation, are in danger of becoming extinct and the Chinese are buying them back!

Penny Streeter, the new owner, has a project to open the venue for weddings and other functions. There are two cafes and a restaurant on site (it is a cash free zone). The Dolls House Exhibition is beautiful, with shops and houses, done with amazing detail.

Jenny Johnson

BOURNE VALLEY GARDEN CENTRE

MANAGING directors Paul Elding from Bourne Valley Garden Centre and Peter Hulatt of Camden Garden Centre gave a wonderful talk to Ottershaw Night Owls last July.

Paul is the third generation at the helm of Bourne Valley Garden Centre, which was set up by his grandfather in 1948 after he moved from Norfolk. He had market stalls, a shop in New Haw and later bought land at what is still their present site. Paul took over the business when his father retired.

Both gave the Night Owls great tips on products to use to make a lasting hanging basket and then delivered a very entertaining demonstration on how to make one along with a tub. This was very kindly donated as a raffle prize along with leftover plants.

May be we could arrange a visit for us?

GARDENING CALENDAR DECEMBER

As the year draws to its close, and the days are at their shortest, limit gardening work to protecting tender plants and aiding wildlife in your garden.

Feed

Keep bird feeders topped up and make water available.

Water

Although it makes sense to water plants sparingly at this time of year, do make sure that container plants don't dry out completely.

Protect

Protect tender palms and tree ferns. Stuff a few handfuls of straw into the crown, tie up the leaves or fronds, and then wrap the whole plant in horticultural fleece, tying it off securely at the bottom. Don't use plastic sheeting or bubble wrap – on warm days your plants will sweat and rot.

Indoors, keep houseplants happy by moving them away from radiators and into a sunny, cool spot.

Plan ahead

Last but not least, take some time to curl up in a warm spot and plan next year's garden

UP AND AWAY

Make the most of your vertical space by planting a beautiful climber or two in your garden this summer

Whether you have a large, spring-flowering shrub that has limited interest for the rest of the year, or a structure such as a garage or porch you want to pretty up, a clematis is your go-to plant. For speed, *Clematis montana* can't be beaten, but where space is tight, the compact clematis 'Miss Bateman' is ideal. Its elegant white flowers with reddish centres appear around now. Although the flowers are large, the plant itself will stay at a manageable 2.5 metres tall, making it a good option for a large container too. It will be happy in full sun or partial shade and, if you're lucky, will even produce a second flush of its lovely, satiny flowers in August and September. If it's to go in the ground, fertile, well-drained soil is best.

To keep 'Miss Bateman' looking good, all you need do is remove any dead or damaged stems just as new growth starts to appear in early spring, and then cut all remaining stems back to a place where you can see strong buds forming. An application of a slow-release balanced fertiliser and a mulch of well-rotted garden compost around the base of the plant in early spring will help it along very nicely too.

To pick up on the lovely rich central colour of each flower, plant it with companions in similar tones - a swathe of the maroon bearded iris 'Sultan's Palace' and the burgundy Delavayi tree peony would look wonderful around it - both are in flower at roughly the same time.

LONICERA TELLMANNIANA

Although its flowers aren't scented, their rich amber colour more than makes up for it.

PASSIFLORA CAERULEA

Despite its exotic looks, this is relatively hardy, except in very cold winters, and it will quickly cloak a fence or wall.

TRACHELOSPERMUM ASIATICUM

A lovely evergreen climber with jasmine-scented flowers in July