

# In the garden with Shobha Vanchiswar



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Finding inspiration in the winter

The holidays put the garden on the back burner, which is just fine. There is not as much to do, so take advantage of the break. In the midst of all the holiday frenzy, try going for walks in the woods, forest preserves and botanical gardens.

This can be very relaxing and inspiring. Pay attention to what you see and are attracted by - shapes, sizes and colors. Take note of trees with interesting barks and unusual colors of bare-limbed shrubs. Write down your thoughts and consider the possibilities for including them in your garden. Certainly this depends on the size of your property, but dream big.

## **The New York Botanical Garden—an inspiration for all gardeners**

Botanical gardens are a valuable resource and highly underutilized. I recommend becoming a member of the New York Botanical Gardens, as well as Wave Hill, another public garden in the Bronx, and visiting them often. You will get to see trees, shrubs and other plants in combinations and settings that you can recreate in your own space. One gets to learn about the new and unfamiliar. Best of all, you can talk to knowledgeable staff who are more than happy to share information.

This month, go see the “Holiday Train” show at the New York Botanical Garden. I’ve been going with my family and friends for years and have never

been disappointed.

### **Your indoor plants still need you**

Don't forget about checking on indoor plants. Keep up with water, humidity and light requirements. Turn pots around every week so growth is uniform. Keep them away from heat sources including candles and lamps.

About paperwhites - they are so pretty to look at but their fragrance is debatable. What is heavenly to some is disgusting to others. The scent can even induce headaches in some people. The only smell that truly bothers my husband is that of paperwhites. I love them, so we compromise—I keep him in a different room! I do not give them as gifts. Amaryllis is a much better and safer choice.





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