

Tea Thyme

What do you see when you look out your window - a garden brimming with tasty herbs, fruits, vegetables and flowers - or a thirsty lawn? If wasting water is not your cup of tea, then it is time to pass on the grass and consider planting a garden that nourishes both you and nature.

From artichoke to yarrow, our display is steeped in beautiful and beneficial plants, especially those traditionally used for making teas. These herbs also make great additions to salads, soups or main dishes. And they not only taste good to us, the nectar is favored by bees, birds & butterflies. Afraid of bees? Simmer down! They are essential for maintaining crops for farmers. No bees = no food (and no honey for your tea).

Organic gardening practices – such as avoiding pesticides and fertilizers, grouping plants by water needs and adding a thick layer of mulch – will accentuate foliage, retain moisture and supply nutrients to ensure the health of plants, pollinators and the planet.

How do you begin? Create curving rock-lined permeable pathways that lead to delightful destinations – like a bench or small re-circulating fountain. Add raised planting beds to create interest. Amend with moisture retaining compost and accent with boulders, which actually store water underneath them. Install and maintain WaterSmart irrigation components like drip and rotating nozzles to maximize water-use efficiency. Then fill the garden with plants that delight your eyes as well as your palate.

“It is no exaggeration to say the single most vital connection any of us has to the natural world is the food we eat,” says environmental historian William Cronin. Our mission at San Diego Botanic Garden is to inspire people of all ages to connect with plants and nature.

Try connecting with nature and food in your own backyard. Your cup will runneth over!