#HOBBIES

A Season of Blossoms: Getting Your Garden Winter-Ready

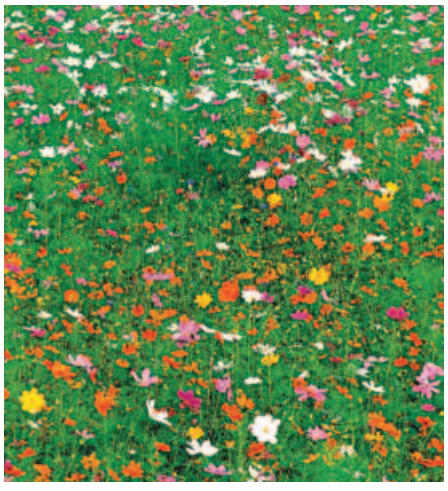
Winter is on its way, and those who know well are already preparing their gardens for a stellar display of winter blossoms. While much of the world associates the cold season with dead flowers, dry leaves, empty pots, and a garden longing to be rejuvenated by spring, we know all too well that this does not apply here in our country.

With a large variety of flowers that bloom exquisitely in our type of winter, not utilising the cold weather to maximise your garden would be a big waste of opportunity.

Some very popular varieties for this season are densely petalled flowers like marigolds and dahlias. Marigolds are widely available in local markets and nurseries, sometimes even long after winter, making them a durable choice for gardening. Among dahlias, the red ones are most common, though they bloom in many other colours too.

Light-petalled and more dainty flowers like the colourful cosmos and petunia also bloom wonderfully in such weather. While cosmos come in different soothing shades of pink and white, petunias are available in multiple vibrant colours.

Different varieties of chrysanthemum and gerbera are also some winter favourites. Both come in many different colours and shades. But, of course, talking of winter flowers and not mentioning the





forever fan favourite, roses, would be an absolute disgrace.

Roses continue to be one of the most beloved and sought-after winter flowers, be it red, pink or white. The classic red rose is most commonly associated with the cold season. While both gerberas and roses are often widely available in flower shops almost throughout the year, they grow best during winter.

For many gardeners, the fruits of their labour and the joy a blooming garden brings far outweigh the difficulties of gardening. Yet still, for many, some comparatively low-maintenance flowers can make home gardening more accessible.

Such flowers include calendula, also known as pot marigold, and cosmos. Both of them not only flourish in dry weather but are said to, in fact, prefer dry soil and fewer fertilisers.

Marigolds are also at the top of this list, due to being fast-growing and very well adapted to the dry season. They are said to naturally repel common garden pests, thereby protecting themselves and their surrounding plants.

All of these plants have relatively low watering and fertilising requirements, making them a good choice for new gardeners or people with less time on their hands.

Whether it has been nurtured for years or is just starting out, every garden needs a "reset" before the seasons change, especially before winter arrives.

A few important things to do before planting any new seeds include pulling out weeds and removing dying flowers and plants. Shrivelled-up or dying leaves and stems should also be trimmed from existing plants and flowers. Sometimes, adding a new layer of compost and manure is highly recommended, followed by a proper examination of the soil condition to decide on fertilisers.

Dry season does not necessarily mean more water is needed; adjusting to the plants' specific requirements and considering how soil retains more moisture on gloomy days is crucial before watering. Aside from the garden bed itself, cleaning the gardening tools properly is essential in preventing pests and disease.

Be it on the rooftop, balcony or lawn, your humble garden can be maintained and made beautiful even in winter, as long as you prepare in time and take good care.

By Raidah Hasan
Photo: Collected



