

Top 10 Perennials for Sunny Spots

BEARDTONGUE (Penstemon sp.)

Elegant and reliable; valued by gardeners for their spires of foxglove-like flowers. Outstanding color varieties make it difficult to choose just one. Hummingbirds aren't choosy; they like them all. They will perform all summer, with regular deadheading, full sun and good garden soil.

NEW ZEALAND FLAX (Phormium sp.)

Add architectural flair to your garden with a spiky vertical grower. Small (18") to tall 5', in multi-colored stripes or solids. Flax is very popular among landscapers for its wide range of uses. Spice up your pool area with a tropical theme. Delicious!

FLEABANE (Erigeron karvinskianus 'Profusion')

Non-stop flower on a vigorous mound. Yellow-centered pink and white mini daisies flower in "profusion" in a continuous display. Lovely planted beside steps or along walkways. This 1' x 3' perennial is extremely hardy, though it's delicate and airy in appearance.

GAURA LINDHEIMERI

Gaura means superb and it really is. Imagine tall, loose wands of pinkish white stars, dancing on the wind. From spring to fall, this plant will flourish on a hot, dry slope, and in many other water restricted sites. Blended with other perennials, it serves as a softening agent for brighter colors. Give it a full season to establish.

MEXICAN BUSH SAGE (Salvia leucantha)

This distinctive salvia says, "look at me!" Attractive gray and white fuzzy leaves boast long, arching stems with velvety, deep, violet flowers from summer to first frost. One of the larger salvias at 2-3'. Dried flowers retain their color in arrangements. Easy to establish with deep, infrequent watering, ordinary soil, and good drainage. Cold hardy to 25 degrees.

THRIFT (Armeria alliacea)

Armeria is the epitome of cute. An 8" tuft of dense leaves that resemble a green hedge hog. Small, rosy, globe-shaped flower heads grow 4" above the cushion. A tidy rock garden or front of the border plant, it blooms for many months. Dead heading seems to prolong flowering. It prefers lean soil and minimal watering.



Top 10 Perennials for Sunny Spots (cont'd)

LAVENDER (Lavendula sp.)

These heat-of-summer bloomers produce fragrant flower spikes that you'll love. Their lavender blue flowers are great for dry arrangements or may be made into aromatic stove-top potpourri simply by boiling. Cool the water, strain; use as countertop cleaner. Different varieties range in height from 18" to 3' with equal spread. Well-drained soil is essential.

RUSSIAN SAGE (Perovskia atriplicifolia)

Once you grow this, you'll understand why it remains a true favorite, flowering from July into Fall with no grooming. There are no significant pest or disease problems, probably due to its fragrant silver foliage. It grows to 3' and looks spectacular when mass planted with yellow daylilies.

BLACK-EYED SUSAN (Rudbeckia 'Indian Summer')

By planting in good garden soil with great drainage, you will enjoy reliable bloom year after year. They are very tolerant of our hot, dry summers. Rudbeckias produce copious quantities of brown-centered yellow daisies for 2-3 months with their seed heads providing another element of winter landscape interest. Combine with Russian sage and Sedum for a great look that is low maintenance.

STELLA D'ORO DAYLILY (Hemerocallis 'Stella D'Oro')

This miniature golden beauty blooms all summer and grows to only 18". When planted in good soil, this plant will grow rapidly and require minimal care. Just remove faded flowers to promote even more rewards. To reduce the size of the clump or to add to your collection, plants may be divided every 2-3 years in the Fall. Flowers are edible and make a great garnish on main dish or dessert plates.

