



Lake & Country



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Constant Color

Creating a Dazzling Landscape from Spring through Fall

By Amy Derksen – When you think about the perfect landscape, chances are you envision a scene in early spring that's all in bloom, or mid-summer when perennials are at their peak. But you can't plan for just one landscape—in reality, you'll enjoy three or more distinct landscapes each year as new plants come into season and areas become more shaded.



While some groundcovers and foliage will remain at their peak throughout the growing seasons, many colorful flowers will come and go, giving way to new varieties from one month to the next.

Your spring garden, for example, may come to life with tulips, crocus and other bulbs, golden forsythia and flowering shrubs. In summer, perennials of all shapes, sizes and hues take center stage, bringing a fresh, vivid palette to the landscape. As trees fill out, areas that might have been sunny just weeks before will best support hostas, astilbes and other shade-loving plants. Finally, as the days grow shorter and fall is on the horizon, late-season plants in rich autumn hues can carry your landscape through the first frost.



“Planning for constant color that evolves through the seasons is one of the key reasons homeowners work with professional landscaping firms,” offers David Van Zelst, a well-respected landscape architect whose firm has worked with clients in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin for more than 30 years. “Our familiarity with plants that are not only well suited to the climate and soil, but will complement one another as the seasons progress, helps us ensure colorful blooms that extend the landscape’s beauty throughout the season.”



If you're considering updating your landscape, think in terms of three environments, instead of just one, and remember that your garden will change significantly from Mother's Day to Halloween. That's an important first step in planning a landscape that will increase your curb appeal, contribute to the value of your home, and enhance the enjoyment of your outdoor spaces for as long as the warmer weather draws us outdoors.