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DECEMBER 2005

Viburnum

Meet the family that offers winter flowers, fragrance and evergreen foliage

PLANT & STAKE A TREE

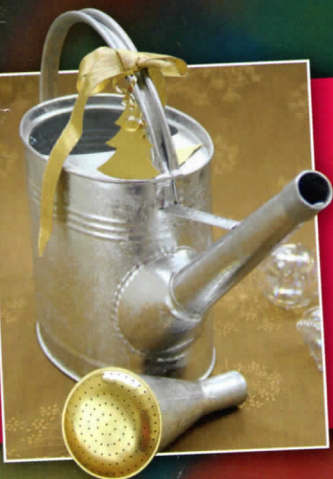
How to choose a new tree and give it the best possible start

Growing for gold

In the greenhouse with veg champion Medwyn Williams

Winter sun

- Discover the gardens of Tenerife
- WIN a holiday **worth £1,500**



Christmas bonus!
36 carefully selected gifts for gardeners, all under £50



Daphne bholua 'Alba' is a choice shrub for winter perfume and flowers

Flowers and fragrance

Although most of the garden has gone to bed for the winter, there are a few brave plants that choose this time of year to produce their flowers. Introduce a few of these special plants to your garden and you'll be able to enjoy their fragrance on a mild December day, or even pick a few sprigs to decorate the Christmas table. If you have a sheltered courtyard or patio area, try classy *Daphne bholua*. It will grow happily in a large container. *Mahonia* 'Winter Sun' opens its lily-of-the-valley-scented sprays of flowers in November and makes a compact evergreen. With its pervasive and delicate perfume, *Viburnum x bodnantense* 'Dawn' is a must-have shrub. Smaller in stature but big on scent is *Sarcococca confusa*. This tidy evergreen fits into most planting situations.

Your winter garden can sparkle with colour, says Sadie Stowell



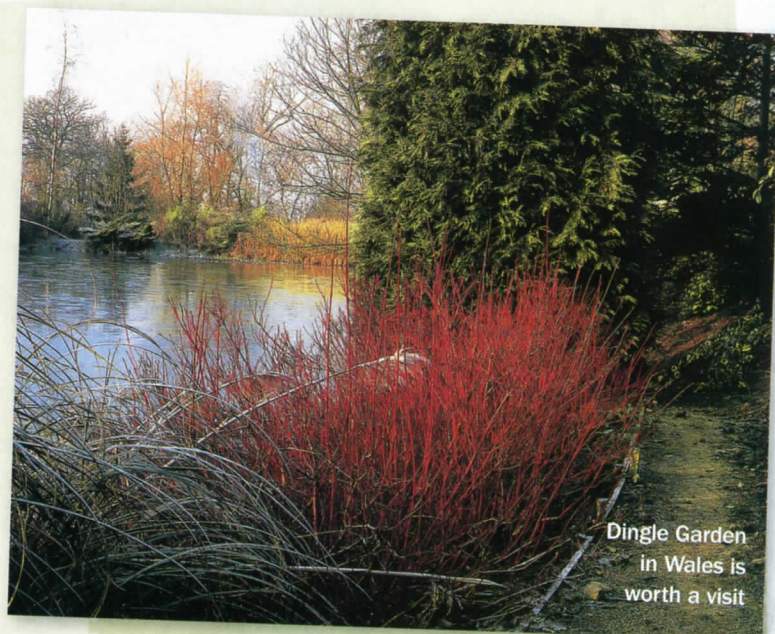
Time to shine

SADIE'S tip

Add an extra element to your garden in winter by leaving plants and shrubs with structure to stand until late in the season. Seedheads can provide both winter interest and food for birds. When frosted, the seedheads of perennials such as *Eryngium*, *Sedum* and *Miscanthus* add a magical form and texture, bringing the garden to life.

This season's essentials

An essential tool for autumn and winter pruning are secateurs. I wouldn't be without my own good-quality pair and their handy leather holster. They make a welcome Christmas gift for gardeners (see page 63 for more ideas).



Dingle Garden in Wales is worth a visit

A winter wonderland

One of my favourite gardens to visit in winter is the Dingle Nursery and Garden near Welshpool in Powys, Wales. The four-acre garden, situated in a sheltered valley, is a treasure trove of unusual trees and shrubs. Winding pathways reveal delightful views across the lake, tempting visitors to explore further. The nursery carries a wide range of good-quality trees, shrubs and perennials. The estate has been developed gradually over generations by the Joseph family, and their passion shows through in every detail of the garden. Dingle Nursery and Garden is open daily (except Tuesdays), 9am to 5pm. Call 01938 555145 or visit www.dinglenurseries.co.uk.



The pink flowers of *Cyclamen coum* are the perfect partner for ferns

Garden design project

Create a focal point for a shady corner in your garden using an old tree stump or weathered logs, and a selection of hardy ferns and cyclamen. For interesting textures and shapes try the ferns *Asplenium scolopendrium*, *Asplenium trichomanes*, *Dryopteris filix-mas* 'Linearis', *Gymnocarpium dryopteris* and *Polystichum setiferum* 'Congestum'. Position the ferns around the base of the log and top dress with a bark mulch. Try intermixing *Cyclamen coum*, as its pink spring flowers will complement the greens of the ferns. Ensure that any logs you include in such a scheme are from a sustainable source by asking your supplier.