



The Australian Cottage Garden

The charm of the cottage garden has an appeal which defies fashion trends. What is it we love about the cottage garden? Is it the soft pastels and white shades, the foliage textures and changing seasonal interest. Perhaps this lush chaotic garden provides a welcome haven from our busy lives.

Alas, this style of gardening is perhaps one of the most time consuming, requiring regular water, fertiliser and pruning to keep it looking fabulous. Not many of us have such commitment.

Imagine a cottage garden which requires little maintenance and much less water. Consider the possibility of using our unique Australian plants as part of this dream. Imagine, too, colourful birds and butterflies visiting to sup the nectar of native plants.

There are Australian plants to suit all gardens and situations, in fact, there are over 2000 species found in garden centres around Australia, and even more in specialist nurseries. Each year, plants breeders release new improved and easy to grow forms of favourite Australian plants.



The design

Create an Australian cottage garden effect using the following ideas:

- Select small compact shrubs which have pretty colours and soft shapes. Pastels and white work especially well. Look for interesting foliage and textures.
- Arrange plants informally, using several plants of the same variety. Mix and match to create an informal patchwork effect.
- Ignore normal design constraints which arrange plants in order of size and shape. Use larger plants to frame views through the garden, or hide fences and roads.
- Plant closer than recommended and be prepared to prune a little to provide access. Cottage gardens are typically overgrown and crowded, as are the wildflower displays we see in the bush.
- Use meandering paths through your garden in natural material such as coarse bark, fine gravel or sawdust. Allow plants to overgrow the path.
- Use birdbaths or rustic art as points of interest. A wooden seat gives the opportunity to sit and reflect.



Cottage Plants for sandy soil

Local plants:

- *Brachysema celcianum* (Swan River pea)
- *Hypocalymma robustum* (Swan River myrtle)
- *Templetonia retusa* (Cockies tongue)
- *Hibbertia cuneiformis* (Coastal buttercup)
- *Hemiandra pungens* (Snakebush)
- *Conostylis candicans* (Grey cottonheads)
- *Beaufortia squarrosa* (Sandplain bottlebrush)

Other Oz winners:

- *Pimelea ferruginea* (Rice flower)
- *Correa alba* (Coastal correa)
- *Crocea* sp.
- *Westringia* 'Lilac and Lace'
- *Anigozanthos* Hybrids (Kangaroo paws)
- *Alyogyne huegelii* (Native hibiscus)
- *Eremophila glabra* prostate
- *Olearia axillaris* (Coastal daisy)
- *Ozothamnus* 'Radiance'
- *Grevillea* 'Lemon Supreme'
- *Eutaxia obovata* (Bacon and eggs)
- *Eremophila microtheca* (Emu bush)

Plants to suit hills cottage gardens

Local plants:

- *Acacia pulchella* (Prickly moses)
- *Astartea fascicularis*
- *Billardiera heterophylla* (Formerly Sollya)
- *Lechenaultia biloba* (Blue lechenaultia)
- *Hypocalymma angustifolium* (Coconut Ice)
- *Verticordia plumosa* (Pink feather flower)
- *Thysanotis multifloris* (Fringe lily)
- *Dampiera linearis*
- *Isopogon dubius* (Rose coneflower)

Other Oz beauties:

- *Grevillea thelemanniana* (Spider grevillea)
- *Anigozanthos* Hybrids (Kangaroo paws)
- *Scaevola* 'Mauve Clusters'
- *Astartea* 'Winter Pink'

- *Baeckea virgata* 'Miniature'
- *Chorizema cordatum* (Heart leaved flame pea)
- *Leptospermum* 'Pink Cascade'
- *Thryptomene saxicola* 'Pink Lace'
- *Verticordia chrysanthella* (Yellow featherflower)
- *Philotheca myoporoides* (Native daphne)

Plants to suit those shady spots

- *Correa glabra* (Native fuchsias)
- *Hibbertia racemosa* (Native buttercup)
- *Grevillea thelemanniana* (Spider grevillea)
- *Scaevola* 'Mauve Clusters'
- *Baeckea virgata* 'Miniature'
- *Philotheca myoporoides*
- *Chorizema cordatum* (Heart leaved flame pea)
- *Hypocalymma angustifolium* 'Coconut Ice'
- *Acacia pulchella* (Prickly moses)
- *Billardiera heterophylla* (formerly Sollya)
- *Thomasia purpurea*