

# Fall Seasonal Container Plants

These plants are all great for fall planters to brighten up the landscape. To make them Halloween themed, add a 'Jack O' Lantern' or other Halloween decorations to the container. For Thanksgiving you could add a harvest time decoration, like colored corn bundles or ornamental gourds.

## **Common Upright Fall Blooming Container Plants (Thrillers)**

**Mums (*Chrysanthemum* spp.):** Garden mums (*Chrysanthemum x morifolium*) are especially hardy in the landscape and will survive some winters. Their stout stems and long-lasting flowers make them excellent fall cut flowers. Chrysanthemums bloom in a variety of colors including white, red, yellow, pink and orange and the size and shape of the flower varies depending on the cultivar. Pinching the mum plants back in early summer will result in a fuller, bushier shape and more flowers in the fall.

**Asters (*Aster* spp.):** Several different aster species are available to home gardeners and many more are hardy. All asters have beautiful fall blooms and are real stars in the autumn landscape. Rich, moist soil will provide the best growth for these fall beauties and full sun or light shade will bring the best autumn flower show. Tiny daisy-like flowers appear in late summer and last through the fall months displaying bright colors of purple, white or pink.

## **Common Rounded Form Fall Blooming Container Plants (Fillers)**

**Ornamental Kale or Cabbage:** These not-so-edible members of the kale family have highly ornamental foliage that is often bi-colored or tricolored and tolerates cold temperatures very well. The large, ruffled brightly colored leaves look almost like colored flowers and are perfect for the fall container or garden. Start ornamental kale seeds in mid-summer or purchase transplants in the fall since hot weather is not tolerated by them. These autumn stars can be eaten but are much bitterer than traditional kale, cabbage and broccoli.

**Pansies (*Viola wittrockiana*):** These cool weather annuals are fantastic plants for autumn containers. Cherub-faces in many colors make pansies a perfect plant for beds, borders, containers, mass plantings and more. Grow pansies in the sun or part shade and give them rich, moist soil with plenty of nutrients. They will flower in the autumn and can continue blooming all through the winter and early spring until hot weather begins.

## **Common Trailing Fall Blooming Container Plants (Spillers)**

**Greater Periwinkle (*Vinca Major*):** An evergreen ground cover hardy to zero degrees; *Vinca major* is a great choice for autumn container plantings because of its hardiness. Flowering year round, you can expect flowers in the fall, as well as attractive green leaves that will cascade down the edge of a container or planter box. Full sun to part shade is best for the periwinkle plant and moderate water. Greater periwinkle can be somewhat invasive in some areas of the country, which is why savvy gardeners will confine *Vinca major* to containers.

**Moss Verbena (*Verbena tenuisecta*):** Verbena is a fragrant trailing annual that blooms almost nonstop from spring through winter's first frost, making it a great container planting for autumn containers. The flowers of this trailing plant are very fragrant, attract butterflies and are brightly colored in a wide variety of colors. Moss verbena tolerates a wide variety of soil types and is drought tolerant, making it an excellent choice for dramatic containers.