What to do in the Garden in May

In our busy worlds that are filled with concrete, asphalt and screens, plants help us to reconnect with nature as we enjoy the delights of new growth, colour and everchanging freshness. There is plenty to be achieved in the garden during May as we prepare for the coming winter days.

More Time Indoors
May is a fabulous time of year to add to our indoor urban jungles with a huge selection of wonderful indoor plants now available. As well as the normal great selection of lush, healthy plants to grow inside, this is the time of year to find some great plants for inside homes for the cooler months. Chrysanthemums are a great gift to thrill Mum with and are often kept indoor while flowering and then can be cut back and planted to be enjoyed in the garden. In cooler regions, Cyclamen and Cymbidium Orchids are beginning to flower. Warmer areas of the country do not need to miss out on growing orchids. Phalaenopsis or Moth Orchids are stunning orchids that are available in most parts of Australia.

Mulching
Adding a nice thick layer of mulch to garden beds now will help keep the soil warmer, help to suppress weeds and have gardens looking great.
Sugar Cane, Lucerne and Pea Straw mulches are particularly good in vegetable, herb and flower beds. With low nutrient value but filled with a rapidly available carbon source, they will increase microbial activity in the soil allowing fertilisers a natural soil fertility to function better. These mulches encourage earthworms to be working with us as they aerate and purify the soil.
The Veggie Garden
The planting of the veggie garden is a highlight of this time of the year. Cool month vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, leeks, lettuce, onion, peas, beans, radish and snow peas can all be planted now for the harvest of freshness to come.

As southern Australian states begin to shiver and frosty weather is arriving, gardeners in northern regions are planting tomatoes. Queensland tomatoes become a highly prized commodity at this time of year. If your climate is suitable, what a great time to grow your own tasty tomatoes that only need to travel from your garden to the kitchen. In southern states broccoli, brussels sprout, cabbages, cauliflowers, garlic, kale, leeks, lettuce, radish, silverbeet and onions can all be planted now. Seed potatoes are also being planted now in many regions. Check with your local garden experts for the best advice for local conditions.

The Colours of May
The days are now noticeably shorter, and the changes of the season are all around us. Deciduous ornamental trees are beginning to shed their displays of autumn foliage and the landscapes around us are being transformed. There are lots of flowering annuals to plant now to continue a fabulous colour display as winter approaches. Pansies, violas, dianthus, sweet peas, nemesia, primula and polyanthus all love the cooler weather. Plant garden beds, hanging baskets and pots now for a harvest of colour over the months ahead.