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## TROPICAL ACCENTS FOR INSPIRING CONTAINERS

MARIANNE WILLBURN

*"Great containers should push boundaries with exciting, unusual plants that play well together. Smart, strategic placement elevates both simple and complex combinations."*

### PRELUDE:

Some things to consider before you start:

<b>Soil</b>	High fertility, good quality, average porosity.
<b>Proportion</b>	Match the plants to the pot.
<b>Smart Pairing</b>	Consider cultivation requirements before design requirements.
<b>Longevity</b>	Recognize your weakest links. Have a plan for replacement.

### PLANTS:

Tropical and subtropical accents allow you to wow with strong, statement-making plants, thinking outside the traditional annuals box. But don't forget to soften and play with feathery, frothy, teasing textures.

### Some of my favorite tropicals for containers:

#### *Smaller to Midsize in one growing season:*

*Alpinia zerumbet* 'Variegata'

*Aphelandra squarrosa*

*Begonia boliviensis* 'Bonfire'

*Begonia* Crown Jewel™ series

*Begonia* Jurassic™ series

Bromeliads: *Neoregelia*, *Vriesia*, *Achmea*, *Tillandsia*...

*Caladium* Heart to Heart® series (sun & shade)

*Canna* Cabana *Canna*™ series (compact)

*Canna* Cannova® series (compact)

*Cissus discolor*

*Codiaeum variegatum* 'Gold Fountain', 'Zanzibar'

*Coleus* Main Street™ series, FlameThrower™ series

*Cordyline* sp. 'Harlequin', 'Kiwi', 'Exotica'

*Curcuma alismatifolia*

*Curcuma longa* 'Snowdrift'

*Curcuma* Sawadee series

*Cyperus alternifolius*

*Cyperus prolifer* 'Cleopatra'

*Euphorbia characias* 'Tasmanian Tiger'

*Euphorbia martinii* 'Ascot Rainbow'

*Euphorbia milii*

*Pteris cretica* var. *albolineata*

*Sanchezia nobilis*

*Strobilanthes dyeriana*

*Tradescantia fluminensis* var. *aurea*

*Tradescantia zebrina*

*Mandevilla* Sun Parasol® series

*Manihot esculenta* 'Variegata'

*Muldenbeckia axillaris*

*Strobilanthes dyerianus*

*Colocasia* 'Coffee Cups',

*Musa acuminata* 'Dwarf Cavendish' (compact)

**Larger tropical accents in one growing season:**

*Canna* 'Bengal Tiger' (or Pretoria)

*Canna* 'Phaison' (or Tropicanna®)

*Canna* 'Cleopatra'

*Colocasia* 'Morning Dew', 'Pharoah's Mask', 'Mayan Mask', Royal Hawaiian® series

*Cyperus papyrus*

*Ensete ventricosum* 'Maurelii'

*Musa* 'Siam Ruby'

*Musa x paradisiaca* 'Ae Ae'

*Pennisetum setaceum* Graceful Grasses® series 'Fireworks' 'Rubrum'

**Don't forget to raid the houseplants section! Some easy choices for container recipes:**

*Epipremnum*, *Scindapsus*, *Dracaena*, *Sansevieria*, *Clivia*, trailing *Philodendron* sp., *Alocasia*, *Syngonium*, *Hemigraphis*, *Hoya*, *Schefflera arboricola*, *Dieffenbachia*, *Aglaonema*

**PLACEMENT:**

Using your containers strategically – whether you've just created an incredible container recipe, or simply found the perfect pot for a specimen plant.

**Enhance** problem areas

**Anchor** spaces

**Integrate** container with garden

**And remember:** *"No matter how good it started out.... if it's half-dead, it's not inspiring."*

**Daily**

**Water and Deadhead**

**Monthly**

**Feed**

**Monthly**

**Prune, Replace, Consolidate**

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