

# YUMMY NORTHWEST

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## Five fabulous years

Yummy Northwest is five years old!

This year, instead of cups of hot chocolate, Yummy celebrates with the latest thing in chocolate plants. The Growing Gardener shows Yummy readers what kind of plants can make a garden look tasty. Many of the plants are edible, too, so you can enjoy them in the same meal as your cup of hot chocolate.

Spring is almost here – take a sip of hot chocolate and get digging!

## Chocolate Gardening

By The Growing Gardener

Who knew there were so many way to flavor your garden with chocolate! From edible to ornamental . . . you don't have to stay in the kitchen to get your fix.

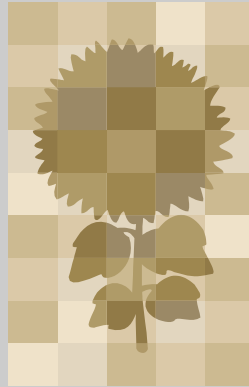
Here's a list of plants to consider for your chocolate garden, beginning with edible varieties.

### Edible

#### Milk Chocolate Calendula

(*Calendula species*)

Not your typical marigold. The milk chocolate variety, available at the Chocolate Flower Farm ([www.chocolateflowerfarm.com](http://www.chocolateflowerfarm.com)), is so pretty with its milk chocolate middle and pale yellow petals with burnt toast edges. Use the petals on your salad. Bees, butterflies, and birds love calendula, too.



### Where to find plants and gardening information

Chocolate Flower Farm  
Langley, Wash.  
[www.chocolateflowerfarm.com](http://www.chocolateflowerfarm.com)

Great Plant Pick  
Seattle, Wash.  
[www.greatplantpicks.org](http://www.greatplantpicks.org)

Log House Plants  
Cottage Grove, Ore.  
[www.loghouseplants.com](http://www.loghouseplants.com)

### Warning

Do not eat flowers from the florist or ones that have been sprayed with pesticides.

Watch for allergic reactions.

Eat only the petals of a flower, unless you know for sure other parts are edible.

### Chocolate Corn

(Corn 'Mayes Double Red')

Another Chocolate Flower Farm edible. I have no experience growing corn, but I'm excited to try it out. You can see pictures of this beautiful, edible corn on the Chocolate Flower Farm Web site. Sow these seeds outside in the spring when it's warm enough. Grow it and report your results to Yummy!

### Native Chocolate Lily

(*Fritillaria camschatcensis*)

The maritime Northwest has a native chocolate lily. Don't you want one? Local scientists do, too, as this native is listed as a sensitive species. It has deep purple, almost black, nodding bell-shaped flowers. And, interestingly, 18th-century explorer Captain Cook reported that he boiled the tubers and ate them as potatoes. The flowers are dainty looking, grow in meadows, tolerate some shade, and like moist, acid soil. Also, the flower is stinky and attracts pollinating flies.

### Chocolate Mint

(*Mentha piperita species*)

Don't plant this anywhere near the native chocolate lily! It will most definitely grow there, but, like all mints, it makes itself a little TOO comfortable in the earth. This mint is wonderfully aromatic and smells like chocolate. Grow mint in a container. Harvest and cut back frequently to avoid reseeding.

### Chocolate Nasturtium

(*Nasturtium 'Black Velvet'*)

Nasturtiums add extra fun to veggie gardens and will bloom all summer long. Both the flowers and the leaves are edible. Add the large, flat leaf of the Nasturtium to any sandwich (like you would spinach leaves) and enjoy the peppery flavor.

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### Chocolate Cherry Tomato

(*Tomato* 'Cherry Chocolate')

Every gardener has a story or two that started him or her down the garden road. Growing tomatoes in pots on my sunny south-facing patio rocked my world. I didn't know heaven existed on earth until I ate one of those amazing vine-ripened tomatoes. I haven't yet ventured into growing tomatoes in the ground. My sister, Amy, grows her "toms" in the ground every year in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains with amazing results. I'm going to do pots again this year and try these chocolate ones. If you decide to grow this heirloom variety (again, from the Chocolate Flower Farm), we want to know how you like it!

### Frosted Chocolate Viola

(*Viola x williamsii* 'Velour Frosted Chocolate')

A must-have for any garden . . . those happy-face violas (or pansies) are wonderful all year round in our climate. A chocolate-brown pansy with a yellow face and a frosted wing. Start this edible flower now (Feb./March) inside your house. I've started mine. Note that the seeds are teensy.

### Non-Edible

#### Chocolate Vine

(*Akebia quinata*)

One of my first gardening success stories. I was given an Akebia many, many years ago by my good friend and garden muse, Anja, and this vine flourished, well, took over, but I loved it! This twining vine has dainty chocolate-purple colored flowers and weird-looking non-edible fruit. It's perfect for growing on an arbor or fence but will smother other plants if you let it.

#### Chocolate Cosmos

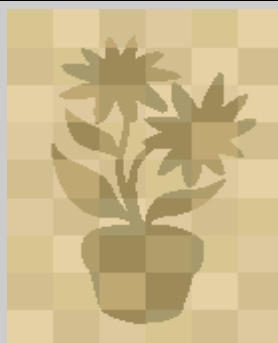
(*Cosmos atrosanguineu*)

When I first smelled this dark maroon flower, I was amazed that it smelled like real Belgian chocolate. Every sunny garden needs one! It's a tender perennial and, unlike other Cosmos, it's a tuber. Dig it up and store over the winter. One idea is to grow chocolate cosmos in a pot mixed with the pale yellows of Calendula.

#### Chocolate Sundae Dahlia

(*Dahlia* 'Chocolate Sundae')

I LOVE dahlias. I dreamt of being a dahlia farmer the first time I visited a dahlia farm



## Chocolate Mint Hot Chocolate

*The original recipe calls for regular mint, but you can use your garden-fresh Chocolate Mint.*

3 cups milk  
3 ounces bittersweet or semi-sweet chocolate, chopped into small bits  
6 to 8 mint leaves

Heat milk in a saucepan just until it begins to boil. Take off heat and add mint leaves and let steep for 10 minutes. Strain out the mint leaves, then reheat the milk.

Add the chopped chocolate, and stir or whisk until well blended.

Pour into 2 or 3 mugs and garnish with a mint leaf.

*adapted from*  
[www.taunton.com/finecooking/recipes/hot\\_chocolate.aspx](http://www.taunton.com/finecooking/recipes/hot_chocolate.aspx)



at the Mount Vernon tulip festival in 1996 or so. Just love those flowers. And, wonderful for us, the Chocolate Flower Farm has the gorgeous Chocolate Sundae Dahlia. Grow these in pots, too!

#### Chocolate Delphinium

(*Delphinium* 'Chocolate')

I'm a practical gardener . . . sticking to mostly natives and reliable, drought-tolerant plants . . . but if I ever wanted to try something a little more exotic, I would definitely take on this Chocolate Delphinium available from Log House Plants in Cottage Grove, Ore. You can read more about it on their Web site ([www.loghouseplants.com/](http://www.loghouseplants.com/)). Look under **Plant Curiosities**. Gorgeous!

#### Milk Chocolate Foxglove

(*Digitalis parviflora* 'Milk Chocolate')

Old-fashioned plants are in again. And you can't get more old-fashioned than Foxglove. This variety, though, with its elegant reddish-brown spikes takes the Foxglove to another level. Find this rare and perennial plant at the Chocolate Flower Farm. This plant is toxic, so although you may be tempted: Do NOT Eat.

#### Eupatorium Chocolate

(*Eupatorium rugosum* 'Chocolate')

If you're interested in non-edible chocolate foliage, this plant is a great one, and it's a 2004 Great Plant Pick ([www.greatplantpicks.org](http://www.greatplantpicks.org)). It reportedly is not prone to reseeding itself around the garden like some of its relatives. You'll attract butterflies and bees to the fall garden. Grow in part shade and full sun.

*The Growing Gardener* is Gina Renee Lozier, a Seattle-area resident, a landscape and container garden designer, and an enthusiastic student of horticulture.

**Editor's note:** The Growing Gardener will soon supply a monthly gardening column for Yummy Northwest.



## About Yummy Northwest

Each monthly issue highlights an edible delight available in the Pacific Northwest and Montana.

## Contact the editor

Comments, corrections, topic ideas, and submissions are all most welcome at [Yummy\\_Northwest@hotmail.com](mailto:Yummy_Northwest@hotmail.com). View archives at [yummynorthwest.com](http://yummynorthwest.com).