



Left: A succulent container garden by Mother Earth Gardens in south Minneapolis. Right: Artist Carole Bersin beautifies Fischer Grocery.



NIGHT IN

We can't all have a Versailles in our backyard. Never fear. **CONTAINER GARDENING** takes all the guesswork out of green-thumbery. Karen O'Connor, owner of Mother Earth Gardens (motherearthgarden.com) in Minneapolis, has a few tips.

▶ **USE ALL SHAPES AND SIZES:** A successful container garden requires plants of varying heights, so make sure your blueprint includes tall, medium and short/trailing plants and flowers. Hearty spikes and grasses anchor containers beautifully, while asparagus fern and sweet potato vine make excellent trailers.

▶ **CONTROL VARIABLES:** Limit your colors and textures to avoid visual overload. If you're into pink, stick with that color. Or choose several crazy-textured plants that have more muted hues. And don't forget that the color wheel knows a thing or two; purple always pairs well with yellow, blue's a sucker for orange and it's really hard to make green and red look like anything but Christmas.

▶ **PICK THE RIGHT POT:** Keep in mind that the texture, size and shape of a pot not only change the presentation of your flower/plant selection but also affect plants' growth. Say you're designing a container garden filled with succulent plants, you want to make sure the container drains well or is made of a porous material like concrete, because succulents don't like to sit in excess water.

▶ **FERTILIZER IS A MUST:** Regardless of what plants/flowers you end up choosing, you will have to fertilize to keep your garden healthy. As the season goes on, all plants deplete their soil's nutrients, which need to be replaced.

—Erin Madsen

NIGHT OUT

Last February, fire destroyed the much-loved Fischer Grocery building at 34th and Nicollet in south Minneapolis, taking with it a mural painted just months earlier by local artist Carole Bersin with help from dozens of Lyndale and Kingfield neighborhood volunteers. The mural was a great symbol of a community getting involved in its own rebranding campaign, and its loss was sad to see. But those neighborhoods aren't interested in mourning too long: Beginning July 23, a small army of artists, sign painters, muralists and volunteers will spend five days painting murals on eight more buildings along Nicollet Ave. It's a joint effort between the Kingfield and Lyndale neighborhood associations and the **WALLDOGS**, a national consortium of sign painters, so-named for the bands of migrant sign painters who once roamed the country in search of barren brick walls. Toss on some overalls, grab a roller and sign up at walldogs.lyndale.org.

Once you've worked up an appetite, head up Nicollet and grab a bite at **CORNER TABLE**, located right in the heart of Walldog territory. This delicious little neighborhood bistro started specializing in locally sourced ingredients long before you heard the word "locavore," and it shows in the versatile, seasonal menu (but not, thank gawd, in the prices). Sunday's "Vino + Vinyl" night, wherein wine specials accompany diners' favorite vintage records, is especially charming. —Chuck Terhark

SUMMER SOUNDTRACK PICKS

[the sound of July]

1 "LOVE OF MY LIFE/BORN IN JULY/WITH YOUR SUMMER SKIN/AND YOUR LITTLE KID GRIN"
—JoAnna James, "Marcy," from a forthcoming album

2 "SUNSHINE CAME SOFTLY THROUGH MY WINDOW TODAY/COULD HAVE TRIPPED OUT EASY BUT I'VE CHANGED MY WAYS"
—Hüsker Dü covering Donovan, "Sunshine Superman," *Everything Falls Apart*

3 "I'M DRIVING IN THE FLATS IN A CADILLAC CAR/THE GIRLS ALL SAY 'YOU'RE A WORN-OUT STAR'"
—Bob Dylan, "Summer Days," *Love and Theft*

"ALL OF A SUDDEN I REALIZE SOMETHING/THE WEATHER IS AMAZING/EVEN THE BIRDS ARE BUMPIN'"
—Atmosphere, "Sunshine" *Sad Clown Bad Summer Number 9*