



THE RESULT WILL BE A GARDEN THAT VISUALLY BRINGS YOU JOY.

INTRODUCTION

By Mickey Robertson



When I was invited to write the introduction to this exciting new publication, I could see immediately that there would be plenty of practical information forthcoming about how, what, when and where to grow.

And believe me, when you start out on the thrilling adventure of growing your own produce, you need all the information you can get! It isn't that it's rocket science, but there is just so much you can learn from those who have done it all before, from those who have gardened the good seasons and the bad, and have come up with interesting and practical solutions to problems you are also bound to encounter.

I believe that once you start growing your own, you will never look back. It doesn't matter how much or how little you grow, or indeed what you grow (I often joke I have better luck with majestic globe artichokes than the humble carrot and am therefore ecstatic whenever I DO manage to grow a good bunch of carrots!). If you are short on space, it is amazing how prolific you can be using various different containers, and if nothing else, I urge you please to grow your own herbs.

You are entering a world where a sense of camaraderie and enthusiasm run rampant among those who grow. A world where you get your priorities straight as well as good dirt under your fingernails, fresh air into your lungs and the opportunity to exercise your body without even thinking about it.

The result will be a garden that visually brings you joy, as well as baskets of fruit and veg for you, your family and your friends. You will cook, and eat quite differently to non-growers, and learn the true meaning of seasonality. You will have, as an example, the thrill of plucking and popping into your mouth, the very first peas or broad beans — absolutely no chance of those ever hitting the kitchen bench! Then a week or so later, a handful of peas might make it to your plate ... and so it goes until, with any luck, you might have enough to make your own soup. By this time, the peas will be over, but the broad beans will be in full flush, and at any time, each of these will join chard

of different varieties, as well as fennel, kale, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, chicory, endive and a plethora of salad leaves.

With this in mind, you will, at times, be more likely to have small quantities of four or five veg on your plate rather than the old standard two; and you will surprise yourself with how rarely you need to go to the shops. This is an added bonus, although you must also be prepared to go searching for your dinner in the dark (and sometimes wet), which is less appealing and will encourage you on occasion to plan ahead...

It goes without saying really, that kitchen gardening begets all sorts of fun in the kitchen itself, where you are bound to be more inspired than ever before — perhaps you have yet to discover the delight of making your own fruit jam or tomato sauce, pumpkin soup, elderflower cordial, baked rhubarb and ice cream of many scrumptious varieties. All this fun awaits the kitchen gardener!

This flourish of domestic activity may sound old fashioned, but growing, preparing and cooking your own food is rewarding on so many levels ... not to mention the still lifes that abound; the way pea pods are translucent in the golden afternoon light, the taste of a tomato just off the vine and still warm from the summer sun, the smell of just-watered herbs on a hot summer morning — the list is endless, and there will always be something to lift your spirits and make you smile... I wish you good luck with your own journey...*

Mickey Robertson

THIS PAGE:
LEFT Mickey Robertson of Glenmore House.

THIS PAGE:
FAR LEFT & OPPOSITE PAGE
The extensive gardens at Glenmore House.

GLENMORE HOUSE
Kitchen gardening and seasonal cooking days as well as other related events are held monthly at Glenmore House. To learn more, join the mailing list at www.glenmorehouse.com.au