



Easy care plants that can brighten your space and help put you *at ease*

The new year brings with it a tendency to gravitate towards all things new and fresh. It's common to want to organize and spruce up your home. One of the easiest ways is with a welcoming houseplant. Besides their aesthetic appeal, plants can help purify the air in your home by removing harmful toxins while expelling oxygen.

Ask a serious gardener why they enjoy caring for plants and many will tell you how it relaxes them and puts them at ease. However, not everyone has a green thumb or the physical ability to care for a needy plant. The good news is there are plenty of hearty, and quite tolerant houseplants that can be forgiving and lend a touch of that freshness we all long for.

Take a look at your space - do you have a lot of direct sunlight, or does the room stay shady? This will help you determine the best choice of plant to try for your home. If you need a zero-maintenance plant, then certainly go with artificial greenery as they are still appealing and brighten a room. However, if you want to give live plants a go, here are a few that may work for you and provide much enjoyment.

ZZ Plant

The ZZ plant (*Zamioculcas zamiifolia*) is referred to as the "king of indestructible plants." It has wide, dark green leaves that are waxy and smooth which reflect sunlight and brightens a room. It's tolerant of drought, low light, and ex-

Eat healthy. A balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, dairy and oils can lower your blood pressure. Talk to your doctor about the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) eating plan.

Cut down on salt. As we age, our blood pressure is more sensitive to salt (sodium), which is added to many pro-

cessed and prepared foods. Become more aware of the amount you are taking in on a daily basis and find ways to reduce it, if necessary.

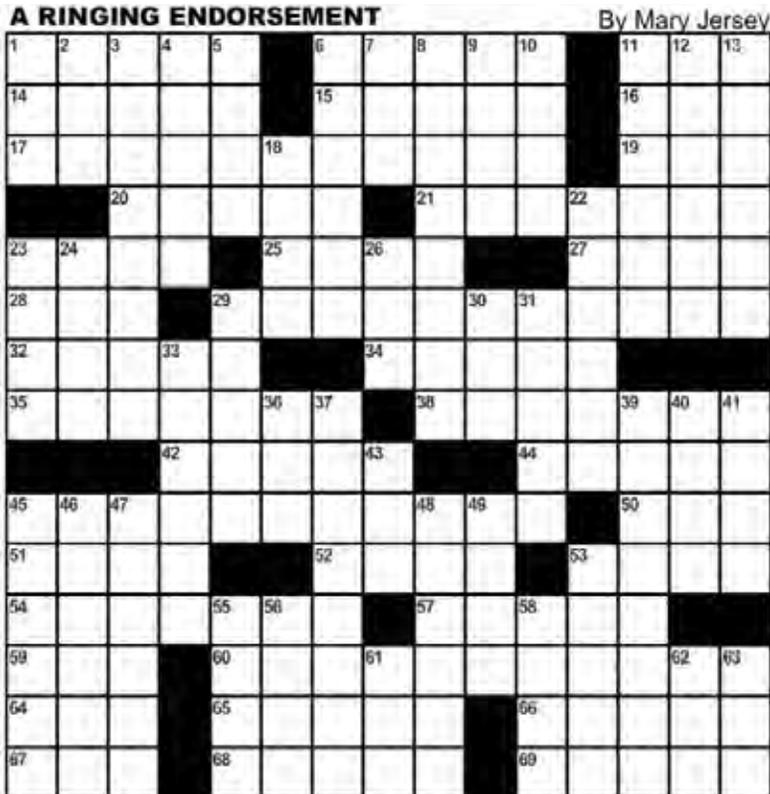
Don't smoke. If you smoke, quit. Smoking increases your risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke and a myriad of other health problems. It's not too late - the health benefits of quitting can be seen at any age.

Drink less alcohol. Alcohol intake can affect blood pressure. For those who drink it, men should not have more than two serving size drinks a day, and women no more than one a day to lower the risk of high blood pressure.

Get enough sleep. Let your doctor know if you've been told that you snore or sound like you stop breathing for a few moments when you sleep. This may be a sign of sleep apnea. Treating this condition and getting a good night's sleep can help lower your blood pressure.

Manage stress. Changing how you cope with problems and learning to reduce stress in your life can help lower your blood pressure. Many people find meditation to be beneficial.

Just for FUN



ACROSS

- 1) Run-of-the-mill
- 6) Raised
- 11) -30-
- 14) "101 Dalmatians" Dalmatian
- 15) Birthday bash
- 16) Fish eggs
- 17) Collegians' getaway time
- 19) Scientist's eggs
- 20) Pool growth
- 21) What some skirts are
- 23) "Step aside!"
- 25) Volcanic output
- 27) Evening hour
- 28) "___ got it!"
- 29) Houseplant necessity
- 32) River mouth
- 34) Unsettling
- 35) Narrowly restricted in outlook
- 38) Reveal to Customs
- 42) Confused struggle
- 44) Fancy cravat
- 45) Useful thing for dirty pans
- 50) Enter a marathon
- 51) Duke's counterpart
- 52) Labor strenuously
- 53) Crumbly white cheese
- 54) Burger flipper
- 57) ___ New Guinea
- 59) Young child
- 60) Preparing for a kiss
- 64) Helm heading, sometimes
- 65) TV studio sign
- 66) Discharge through the pores
- 67) Baseball great Williams
- 68) "Out crowd" members
- 69) Ascends

courtesy of www.freedailycrosswords.com

DOWN

- 1) ___ and downs
- 2) Conciliatory bribe
- 3) Figures out, as a mystery
- 4) Quick-witted
- 5) "___ time, no see"
- 6) Cheerful
- 7) Golf norm
- 8) Ready ahead of time
- 9) "And others" abbreviation
- 10) TV legend Dick Van ___
- 11) Titillating
- 12) Nine-day period of prayer
- 13) Use novocain
- 18) Festive party
- 22) Cherubim, e.g.
- 23) Skirt for the modest
- 24) Baking chamber
- 26) Neck shape, for sweaters
- 29) Australian horse
- 30) State of seeing red
- 31) Battery type
- 33) Commotion
- 36) "Fight of the Century" loser
- 37) Budget item?
- 39) Farmers' holdings
- 40) Defeat decisively
- 41) Volcano in Sicily
- 43) One of a Freudian trio
- 45) Duo, trebled
- 46) Ness adversary
- 47) Addressed a crowd
- 48) "Eleventh day of Christmas" gift
- 49) Banned apple reddener
- 53) Mold
- 55) Fairy tale's second word
- 56) Crescent-shaped piece
- 58) Marina sight
- 61) Young goat
- 62) "___ it or lose it"
- 63) The eight in a gal.

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You are never too old to set another goal or dream a new dream.

—C.S. LEWIS



Simply Delicious

BLACK BEAN QUESADILLAS

If you prefer, Pinto beans work well too. Like a little heat? Be sure to use pepper Jack cheese in the filling. Serve with: A little sour cream and a mixed green salad.

Prep Time: 15 mins; **Serves:** 4

Ingredients

- 1 15-ounce can black beans, rinsed
- 1/2 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese, preferably pepper Jack
- 1/2 cup prepared fresh salsa (see tip), divided
- 4 8-inch whole-wheat tortillas
- 2 teaspoons canola oil, divided
- 1 ripe avocado, diced

Directions

- Combine beans, cheese and 1/4 cup salsa in a medium bowl. Place tortillas on a work surface. Spread 1/2 cup filling on half of each tortilla. Fold tortillas in half, pressing gently to flatten.
- Heat 1 teaspoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add 2 quesadillas and cook, turning once, until golden on both sides, 2 to 4 minutes total. Transfer to a cutting board and tent with foil to keep warm. Repeat with the remaining 1 teaspoon oil and quesadillas. Serve the quesadillas with avocado and the remaining salsa.
- Tip: Look for prepared fresh salsa in the supermarket refrigerator section near other dips and spreads.

– courtesy of eatingwell.com

HEALTHY SLOW COOKER YELLOW CHICKEN CURRY

This healthy slow cooker yellow chicken curry recipes packs plenty of veggies and makes the perfect dinner with warming spices, coconut milk, and a hint of peanut butter.

Prep Time: 15 mins; **Cook Time:** 3 hours; **Yields:** 4

Ingredients

- 1 (15 ounce) can lite coconut milk
- 1/4 cup chicken broth (or water)



- 2 tablespoons natural creamy peanut butter (or cashew butter)
- 1 tablespoon gluten free soy sauce (or coconut aminos)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon of freshly grated ginger
- 1 tablespoon yellow curry powder (or regular curry powder)
- 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 pound boneless skinless chicken breast
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, cut into 1/2 inch cubes (about 2 1/2 cups cubed sweet potato)
- 2 medium carrots, sliced
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, julienned
- 1 cup frozen peas

Garnish:

- Fresh diced cilantro

Directions

- In a large slow cooker add coconut milk, broth (or water) peanut butter, soy sauce, garlic and freshly grated ginger. Whisk to combine, then stir in spices: curry powder, turmeric, cayenne, pepper and salt.
- Add chicken breast to slow cooker followed by sweet potato, carrots and onions. Gently stir so that the sauces covers all of the chicken and vegetables.
- Cook on high for 3-4 hours or on low for 6-7 hours. Remove chicken with slotted spoon and shred with two forks. Add shredded chicken back to slow cooker.
- Before you're ready to serve, stir in julienned red bell peppers and peas, cover and cook on high for another 10-20 minutes until bell peppers have tenderized a bit. Serve as is with a side of naan bread or with brown rice, quinoa or cauliflower rice.

– courtesy of ambitiouskitchen.com