
Gardening is all about **promise**. Therefore, showcase your **passion** about the promise and take **pride** in your accomplishments. Even with passion, pride and promise on your side you may feel that your garden could/should be better. Here are a few questions and answers to consider.

Q. Are you excited when you open your front door?

A. If your eyes light up and your green thumb starts twitching – you already know the joy of gardening. However, a garden is like an artist's canvas that never dries; a few brushstrokes here, a little more colour there – always room for improvement.

Q. Do people passing your garden slow down or stop to have a closer look?

A. This is a sure sign that your garden stands out amongst acres of boring lawns.

Q. Do you have a lot of shade and feel stymied because there is not enough sun for flowers, only lots of foliage?

A. Think of all the different shades of green: from the brightest yellow-green to the deepest blue-green and every shade in between. Add to that the multitude of textures: large, small, feathery, spiky – a shade garden is anything but dull.

Q. Are you satisfied with your garden overall but feel it lacks that 'something special'?

A. Consider a clump of a large ornamental grass. It provides graceful movement through the seasons, even in winter, and is easier to keep 'down to size' than a shrub would be. Also, a favourite piece of garden sculpture would provide a special point of interest. A note about garden ornaments: carefully consider their placement. A cute little bunny would not look comfortable next to a menacing gargoyle.

Q. Do you like annuals because they provide colour all season long?

A. Annuals are wonderful additions in our climate, particularly in front gardens. However, they do require more water than most perennials; therefore, make sure a source of water is conveniently located in close proximity. Also, try to have a variety of heights, textures, colours. Of course, annuals are the obvious choice for adding interest with colourful planters.

Q. Would you like to plant vegetables 'out front' because your backyard does not get as much sun?

A. By all means! They are doing it in Rosedale and on Post Road, and of course have always done it in ethnic neighbourhoods. A "well-cared-for" tomato plant, surrounded by herbs, is a wonderful sight. A trellis of Scarlet Runner Beans could provide privacy and will be visited by hummingbirds. A rhubarb plant is large enough to add an architectural accent.

Q. What does all this mean?

A. Gardening is a joy – not a chore! What to do is up to you, the gardener. Encourage the promise, show your passion, enjoy the pride! Above all, remember ... **Pickering Blooms is about participation – not perfection.**