

Aloysia citrodora – AKA Lemon verbena. Rub the leaves to release the scent of lemon sherbet sweets! Forever linked with 2015: the year Mary Berry featured it in one of her recipes and we were inundated with requests for it!

Cosmos – We have never ever been left with unsold Cosmos! Superb for filling the gaps in borders that often arise from cutting back early-flowering perennials. Keep deadheading and new daisy-like blooms keep forming until the frosts.

IN THE POTS

Trixi mixes – A brilliant break-through in horticulture in the last decade. No need to work out your own plant combinations – it is all done for you with the Trixi mixes!

Angelonia Archangel – A big hit with staff and customers alike from the moment we introduced them. These annuals are sometimes compared to snapdragons but we always thought their intricate blooms were very reminiscent of orchids.

Osteospermum 3D – Cape Daisies have long been a favourite at Katie's Garden, for their incredibly cheery summer blooms. The 3Ds are the next stage of evolution!

Nemesia Wisley Vanilla – Nemesias are wonderful upright plants for pots, baskets and fronts of borders. Huge numbers of new varieties have been introduced in the last few years, but 2004's Wisley Vanilla still holds the crown thanks to its delicious scent.

Anagalis Skylover – We just love the stunning blues of this basket plant. Best planted before they get too unwieldy!

Basil Aristotle – In 2016 we had a staff jolly to a plant breeder's annual showcase: amongst the thousands of plants on display this micro-leaved Basil caught our attention.

Euphorbia Glamour – Another headturner first seen by us at the 2016 showcase. The delicate white flowers make your summer pots and baskets sparkle!

Rosularia sedoides alba – Our first Rosularia was bought on holiday in Scotland in 1999. We are pretty sure every one of these easy-care succulents we have grown since has been propagated from its descendants!



THE DESIGNER BED

Installed June 2022

'THE BEST OF 25 YEARS OF KATIE'S GARDEN'

“This bed is a celebration of some of our favourites of the last quarter-century of growing and selling in Suffolk.

Some are long-standing must-haves, cherished for their exceptional growing habits. Others are among the finest introductions of the 21st century, all captivating us from first sight!

There are nods to design rules of repetition and echoing of colours, of blending shapes, textures & seasonal interest, but this is above all - unashamedly - a plant lover's border.

We like to think it is a good representation of 25 years of Katie's Garden: bright, busy and cheery!”



Designed by Katie's Garden's Catherine McMillan, author of 'Gardening for the Uncommitted'

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Erysimum Bowles Mauve – Well-known, well-loved and well-deserved of its reputation. This shrubby wallflower reaches its full size in a very short period, has a ridiculously long flowering season, is evergreen, and is bee and butterfly friendly. What's not to love!

Erigeron karvinskianus – Another plant that is almost permanently in bloom and thus one of our best-sellers. Mexican fleabane is superb as ground cover, for edges of borders, gravel gardens and infilling patios and paths.

Verbena bonariensis – Another long-standing top-selling plant: every batch we grow is sure to sell out in no time! Considered half-hardy in our early years, it now over-winters easily: a clear indicator of climate warming. For comparison we have Buenos Aires, and the shorter Lollipop, rigida and Santos Purple, along with bedding Verbenas.

Salvia Amethyst Lips, Salmia, Mystic Spires – We could fill the whole garden with Salvias, as they have been such a key plant for us over the past 25 years, with new introductions every year. This plant family provides huge variety, and we are lucky in Suffolk to have the right growing conditions for them.

Geranium Rozanne, Mavis Simpson – There is a Geranium for every occasion, whether you are growing in sun or shade, want light height, ground cover or just some reliable “filler”. Most Geraniums will give two flowering seasons a year, but Rozanne powers on through without a break, making it a favourite of garden designers. It was even voted Plant of the Centenary by Royal Horticultural Society members! For long-lasting pink ground cover, go with Mavis Simpson.

Stipa tenuissima – Another “garden designer” plant. Excellent for providing light wafting movement to the garden. Nicknamed “Katie Hair” by Rick & Susie in the early days, in tribute to the infant Katie's ultrasoft blonde hair!

Geum Totally Tangerine – Try a Geum and you'll never look back! Really excellent border plants which mingle well with other perennials. Totally Tangerine is credited with reviving interest in the genus when it was introduced in 2010.

Fuchsia Hawkshead, Lady Boothby – The popularity of Fuchsias has waxed and waned over the years but we have maintained our position they are a hugely valuable plant to have in the garden. They are particularly good for brightening up partly shaded borders with their long-lasting blooms. Depending on variety you can grow them in borders, baskets or pots, many are bee-friendly and all are low-maintenance. They can be big and blousy, but Hawkshead is a particularly elegant variety. We are setting Climbing Lady Boothby the challenge of getting to the top of the trellis by the end of summer!

Trachelospermum jasminoides – We couldn't count how many times we have been asked for evergreen climbers over the years. Despite our efforts to extol the many benefits of ivy, it is usually the fragrant Star Jasmine customers plump for!

Heuchera Marmalade – Heucheras rocketed in popularity in the 21st century. Don't try to collect them all, because the breeders keep coming up with more! Although they are mainly grown for their colourful leaves, they also have sprays of bee-friendly flowers in summertime. Marmalade has been a firm favourite of ours since we first grew it around 15 years ago. We're also fond of Chocolate Ruffles, Plum Pudding, Blackberry Jam and Caramel: blame a sweet tooth!

Penstemon Harlequin Pink – Penstemons are invaluable in perennial borders because their evergreen leaves provide interest year-round. Big pops of colour in summer into autumn, and great for pollinators. We have at least one new-to-us variety just about every year!

Anisodonte Elegance Princess – We grew Anisodonte for the first time in 2021. Easily mistaken for normal mallow, their big selling point is their lengthy flowering season – some were still flowering in winter!

Convolvulus cneorum – Happy is the gardener who embraces their growing conditions. In Suffolk we have much in common with the Mediterranean (yes, really!) which means we are able to grow and enjoy plants such as the beautiful Silverbush.

Pittosporum – Another genus that would struggle in many other parts of the UK, in East Anglia we benefit from being able to grow these very low-maintenance evergreen shrubs. Here we include Wrinkled Blue which would ultimately grow to around 15ft, alongside Bannow Bay, one of several newer dwarf varieties.

Rose Ballerina – Impossible to choose from the very many bush varieties we have grown over the past 25 years, so we have gone with the very floriferous, mound-forming, bee-friendly Ballerina instead!

Hydrangea arborescens Annabelle – A stunner of a shrub. The spherical white flowerheads are both bigger than usually found in the family, and also more delicate to look at.

Delphiniums – One of the stories of 21st century horticulture has been the development of dwarf plants: smaller gardens means more demand for smaller plants, most coming with the additional benefit of not needing staking. Here we showcase some of the Delphiniums now available, from the traditional Pacific Hybrid Series which can grow up to 6ft, to the newer Aurora, Guardian and Magic Fountains Series (apx 3-4 ft height). We also had to include Red Lark – new to us for 2022, featured at Chelsea Flower Show, and heralded as the first really good red. We will watch them grow with close interest!

Festuca Intense Blue – An evergreen grass which always flies off the shelves. The name sums it up!

Chocolate Cosmos – Very unusual flower colour, but much more importantly: they smell of chocolate!