



03 June 2024

## The art of sensory gardening: Engaging the senses with British Garden Centres

**Sensory gardens are thoughtfully planned and designed spaces that engage and stimulate the senses, offering numerous health benefits. A sensory garden aims to engage all five senses - sight, sound, smell, touch, and even taste. British Garden Centres has curated a selection of plants specifically tailored for creating a sensory garden that can be enjoyed by everyone.**

### **Fragrance**

In a sensory garden, the inclusion of fragrant plants is essential for creating a delightful atmosphere, with sweet perfume filling the air. By incorporating aromatic plants such as lavender, rosemary, and jasmine, you can infuse the air with enchanting scents that have the power to elevate your mood and bring a sense of tranquillity to your surroundings. These plants are well-suited for the UK climate and require minimal maintenance, making them ideal choices for both novice and experienced gardeners and enhancing the sensory experience in your outdoor space.

Roses provide a rich, classic fragrance and need fertile, well-drained soil with regular watering and feeding. Jasmine and honeysuckle, with their intense and sweet evening scents, thrive in full sun or partial shade with well-drained soil. Sweet peas, known for their heady scented fragrance, require support for climbing and well-drained soil in full sun.

### **Texture**

To add a tactile dimension to your sensory garden, consider plants with interesting textures. Plants like Lamb's ear with its soft, velvety leaves, or the spiky texture of cordyline can provide a sensory experience that is both visually appealing and engaging to the touch. Incorporating a variety of textures will create a dynamic and stimulating environment in your garden, heuchera offers smooth, sometimes ruffled leaves. Ornamental grasses add graceful, flowing foliage and feathery flower spikes, respectively. For touch, why not include silver sage with large, felt-like leaves, and the delicate, feathery fronds of various ferns?

Incorporating a mix of textures such as the broad, ribbed leaves of hostas, the small, densely packed leaves of Thyme, and the scalloped, fuzzy leaves of Lady's Mantle will enhance the garden's sensory appeal. Adding plants like sea holly, with its spiky, metallic-looking foliage will create a visually pleasing and engaging environment that invites touch and exploration, enriching the overall sensory experience in the garden.



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## **Colour**

Adding plants with vibrant colours can enhance the visual appeal of your sensory garden. Consider incorporating flowers like tulips, dahlias, and pansies in a range of hues to create a visually stunning display. The contrast of colours and shapes will not only be aesthetically pleasing but will also engage your visual senses, creating a feast for the eyes.

Why not try roses which come in a wide range of colours including pink, red, white, peach and yellow? Different lavender varieties provide shades of purple, blue, and white, while fuchsias can add vivid pinks and purples to your summer garden. We also love hydrangeas which offer large flower heads in pink, blue, and white, and dahlias that come in vibrant reds, pinks and oranges. Other colourful options include lupins, delphiniums, foxgloves, tulips, crocuses, and peonies, which offer a variety of hues and striking colourways for pots and flower beds.

## **Edible delights**

Including edible plants in your sensory garden can be a rewarding experience for both adults and children. Herbs like mint, basil, and chives not only add flavour to your meals but also release enticing scents when brushed against. Additionally, planting fruits such as strawberries or raspberries can provide a sweet treat straight from your garden, uniquely engaging your taste buds.

Fruits such as strawberries, blueberries, and apples offer sweet rewards, while vegetables like tomatoes, peas, and carrots provide fresh ingredients straight from the garden to plate. Edible flowers like nasturtiums, calendula, and violas not only add vibrant colours but also introduce unique flavours to salads and dishes, enhancing the sensory experience out of your own back door.

**Julian Palphramand, Head of Plants at British Garden Centres** said: "Sensory gardens are fantastic ways to use your outdoor space to awaken and indulge our senses, nurturing our well-being in the process. At your local British Garden Centres, store you will find a great selection of plants tailored to create a sensory experience, through sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. With fragrant blooms like roses and jasmine, textured foliage such as Lamb's ear and cordyline, vibrant colours from tulips to dahlias, and edible delights like mint and strawberries, our team are on hand to create the sensory experience you are looking for."



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**ENDS:**

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**Notes to Editors:**

About the business:

British Garden Centres (BGC) is the UK's largest family-owned garden centre group with 62 centres around the country. The group is owned and led by The Stubbs family, who also own and operate Woodthorpe Leisure Park in Lincolnshire.

BGC was launched in 1987 with the opening of Woodthorpe Garden Centre funded by brothers Charles and Robert Stubbs. Since 2018 it has expanded rapidly with the acquisition of 50 garden centres allowing it to grow from its heartland to the business it is now with 62 garden centres spread from Carmarthen to Ramsgate, Wimborne to East Durham.

The group has a team of 2,700 colleagues working across the garden centres, restaurants, 2 growing nurseries, 4 distribution centres and Woodthorpe Leisure Park and Woody's Restaurant & Bar.

**Social Media**

Facebook: British Garden Centres

Twitter: @BGCentres

Instagram: @BritishGardenCentres

Website: [www.britishgardencentres.com](http://www.britishgardencentres.com)

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