

Diane's Blog  
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## My Kitchen Garden

I'd love to tell you I have a magical green thumb, that I'm a plant wizard that who can grow anything, anywhere. My husband would laugh, and rightfully so. It is a miracle when indoor plants survive my forgetful nature. If the information card on a houseplant I'm thinking of buying states, "This plant loves neglect," then that's the plant I buy. However, I have managed, with the help of my garden-savvy friend, Christine Bellushi, to plant a kitchen garden and two large container gardens of herbs. I step out my back door and right there on my deck is lettuce. Snip, snip and I have a salad. Much as I love our farmers' markets, this is even better.



The planter shown above was the source of our Sunday lunch this past weekend—a mixed green salad with the addition of arugula (from another pot not shown) along with orange segments, sliced avocado, and a golden balsamic dressing.

The previous weekend we were in the Willamette Valley with friends from Toronto. Though we spent most of our time wining and dining, we did manage to stop at a Red Ridge Farms, a fabulous garden center in Dayton, OR. With over 300 varieties of herbs including culinary, medicinal, and landscaping botanicals, plus olive trees, I couldn't help myself. Into our already full trunk, I loaded a garden flat full of herbs—scented geraniums (I didn't know the flowers are edible), two lemon verbena plants, and two celery herb plants. The latter are grown for their celery-flavored leaves, not for their stalks.

Though I haven't yet told my son, Eric, I have planted sugar snap peas and sweet pears at the base of the rebound net that corrals wayward basketballs from the court in our backyard. The court is underutilized now that Eric lives in Brooklyn, so I figured – why not take advantage of the netting and direct sun? I check the vines almost daily to make sure they are finding their way upward.

I'll keep you posted on my progress and success—I haven't killed anything yet and, honestly, that a miracle.