



Hailing from the peach-laden fields and muddy river portion of Middle Georgia, James T. Farmer III, is president of James Farmer Designs, which specializes in residential landscape design, floral design, and interiors. James graduated from Auburn University.

As a native of the Deep South and enthralled with all things Southern, James was influenced by great Southern architects as well as antebellum architecture, having been influenced by the land and flora of his family farm—an old plantation in Kathleen, Georgia, just outside of Macon, complete with rock walls, boxwood parterres, and European influences. Summering on Sea Island also dictated a touch of that particular coastal style in his work. His design practice is about bringing the classicism of the past to the needs of modernity. Find him at www.JamesFarmer.com.



Gardening

A TIME TO PLANT

JAMES T. FARMER III



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Southern-Style Garden Living

\$40.00 U.S.

To everything there is a season . . . a time to plant, and a time to harvest. Whether you are a novice dirt dabbler or a well-seasoned gardener, timing is crucial in gardening. And with proper timing, nature provides us with not only sustenance but trimmings for the home and table, provisions for a garden lifestyle.

Garden living, or weaving the garden into your daily life, is a lifestyle filled with rewarding promise and new adventure. Harvesting your own vegetables for a dinner party, arranging your own garden-grown goodness in a bouquet, or entertaining within the garden provides the gardener, cook, and decorator alike an opportunity to meld these talents into a harmonious blend for garden living.

A Time to Plant is a guide to garden living—an invitation to walk through the garden, see the possibilities of its bounty, smell the perfumes that abound, taste the produce, and hear the symphony of nature. With photographs, tips, and methods, *A Time to Plant* will become your guide to a successful gardening way of life.

From holidays to every day, the garden can be your source of all things fresh and elegant. Sprigs of mint in your iced tea and lemonade, hydrangeas gracing your tablescape, mantels and halls decked for the season, and a kitchen filled with garden flavors—all are a part of a garden life, garden living, and life well lived.

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A Time for Tea

Rosemary, mint, lavender, chamomile, and a host of other herbs can be brewed and steeped into a tea of their own or mixed with tea leaves for an herb infused refreshment. Taking these bits from the garden and incorporating them into daily life is the essence of garden living. For centuries, cultures around the world have branded their own versions of herbal drinks and teas; the American South is no exception. With a bond between the garden and lifestyle, the South has shaped its food and drink culture into a culture, a society and people marked by the land and by the garden, down to a simple glass of tea.

I'm known for my tea. Maybe even known more so for my obsession (or addiction) to the amber colored liquid that quenches my thirst and pairs well with most any meal. Tea is the house wine of the South. My youngest sister and her friends call my tea "Flower Tea" or "Fruit Tea," and they are correct in their nomenclature. I use one bag of Earl Grey with four bags of traditional black tea. That one bag of Earl Grey infuses this steeped staple of

the South with a bouquet of floral and fruit essence, thus complementing an array of culinary delights! Teas, as with wines and coffees, herald their flavors as mementos from the regions where they were grown. Earl Grey is natural black tea with oil of Bergamot, an oil derived from the Bergamot Orange, thus is giving the fruity/floral hint my sister always mentions. Such a garden combination of fruit and foliage is ideal for garden living.



Farmers Tea

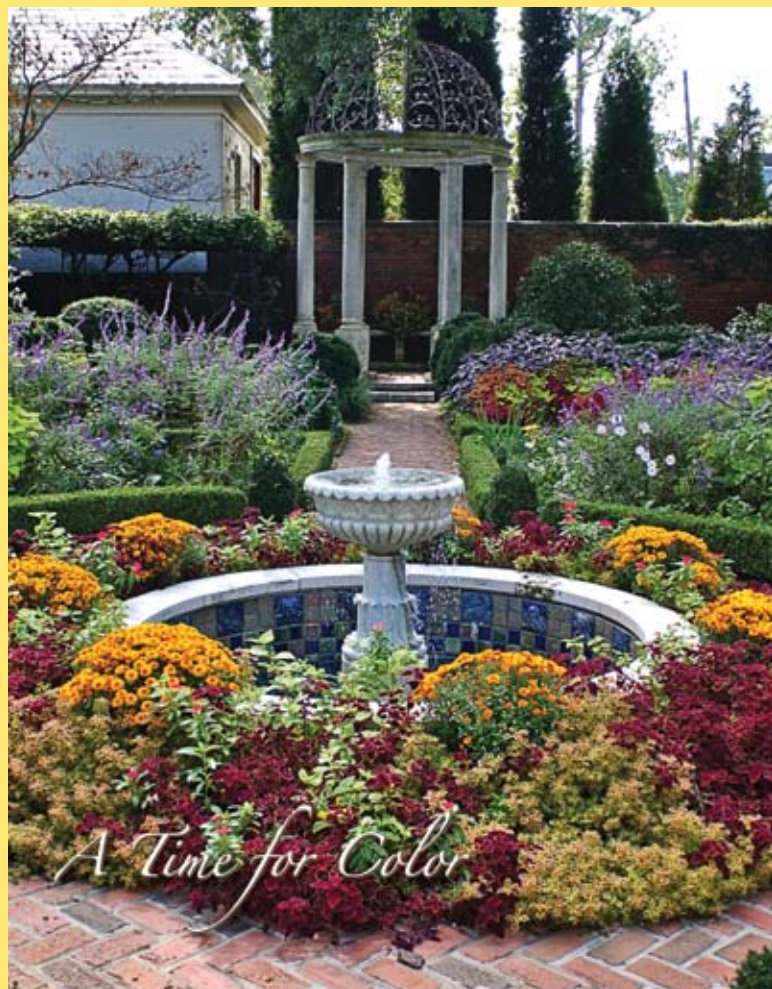
- Bring 6 to 7 cups of water to a rolling boil.
- Add 4 bags of Lipton (or whatever brand you prefer) and 1 bag of Earl Grey and remove from heat.
- Let the tea bags steep for about five minutes near the warm eye of the stove.
- Add 1 to 1½ teaspoons of sugar to about 2 to 3 cups of water (I use a 1 to 2 ratio) and dissolve the sugar in the water over a medium-low heat. Remove immediately from heat once the sugar has dissolved and has become a somewhat clear syrup. If you bring it to a boil, you'll have the makings for candy and not tea!
- Combine the steeped tea and simple syrup in a large pitcher or split between two half-gallon pitchers. If you're using a glass pitcher, be sure to have a metal knife or spoon to pour the tea over so the hot liquid doesn't bust the glass.
- Fill the pot with the tea bags in it one more time with water and add it to the pitcher . . . you can add a bit more water if need be. Stir with a large knife or spoon. This should provide you with about 16 cups of tea, or 1 gallon.
- Serve over ice and with wedges of lime or lemon. Remember that tea continues to steep, or "get stronger," as it sits, so it's weakest once it's first made. **Enjoy!**



Herban Gardening

Herban Gardening is the cultivation and growing of herbs, as well as cooking and decorating with them so they may enrich your life with flavor.

I love herbs. I grow them, I cook with them, and I eat them. Sometimes just smelling them can provide an instant link to pleasant memories and tastes. As a child, our farm provided space aplenty for me to dabble in herb cultivation. It was there, on our farm, that I first learned what organic gardening was, though I did not know that my gardening was "organic." I knew that our cows ate our grass, drank our spring water, and breathed our air. So I knew, somewhat instinctively, that their manure was just good, basic, natural fertilizer—the by-product of the cows' natural digestion. What better fertilizer, compost amendment, and soil conditioner could there be?



March

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