Top Annuals for Landscapes and Raised Beds

Some annuals are better suited for containers because they prefer well-drained soil, have compact growth, or need specific conditions that are easier to control in pots. On the other hand, there are some great annuals that really appreciate the unique conditions of growing in a landscape. These annuals love the ample space to grow and thrive in the ground where they can stretch their roots. They also love the ground's ability to retain moisture, nutrients and heat. Below are some of the top performers for your landscape.

TALL (THRILLER) ANNUALS:

Cosmos – Cosmos are a pollinator favorite. They are easy to grow, deer resistant, and often come back from seed the following year. They add height and softness to the landscape.

Coleus – Many varieties of Coleus are made for the landscape and grow vigorously to form full, bushy clumps of fantastic foliage. Depending on the variety, Coleus can tolerate both sun and shade.

Snapdragons – Snapdragons tolerate a light frost and can be planted in early spring. They are deer resistant and come in varieties as short as 6 inches and as tall as 4 feet. They are another annual that will often go to seed and return the following year. In landscapes they add both height and are great at filling in spaces throughout the garden.

Argyranthemum – A daisy with a flurry of blooms from spring through fall on tall, bushy plants. It's super versatile, thriving in both cool springs and hot summers in full sun.

Salvia – Salvia's are great for attracting hummingbirds and make a great "Thriller" in your garden bed. They are vigorous and tolerant of high heat and drought conditions. They come in various blues, purples, reds and pinks. They work great in both landscapes and pots.

Verbena bonariensis – This Verbena is a tall, long blooming variety that attracts butterflies and hummingbirds. It's deer resistant and can handle a hot sunny location.

Cleome – Cleome has excellent heat and drought tolerance, is deer resistant and is very low maintenance. Cleome grows best in full sun and grows up to 4 feet tall and 2 feet wide.

MID-HEIGHT (FILLER) ANNUALS:

Petunias – Petunias, especially Supertunias®, are some of the best annuals for landscapes and raised beds. They are top performers, blooming continuously from spring to fall with no deadheading needed. They spread more vigorously than other petunias. They do best in part sun to full sun conditions with some varieties spreading 3 or more feet wide.

Marigolds – Marigolds are deer resistant, low maintenance, and attract pollinators. They even repel some pests. Their long bloom time and bold colors make them a great choice for landscapes and raised bed gardens. They are often recommended as a companion plant for vegetable gardens. They prefer full sun and come in varying heights.

Zinnias - Zinnias are another great, deer resistant, low maintenance choice. They can be used for cutting arrangements and attracting hummingbirds and butterflies. They perform well in landscapes and are often used for a mid-height plant.

LOW SPREADING (SPILLER) ANNUALS:

Impatiens – Impatiens are great because they flower and spread beautifully in the ground while also filling and draping over the sides of patio pots and hanging baskets. They thrive in low-light conditions and well-draining soil.

Portulaca – Portulaca is another great annual for full sun, high heat locations. Their succulent foliage offers great texture, and they are great spreaders and border plants for the landscape.

Creeping Jenny – Great for both sun and shade conditions. Offers great contrast against its lime green foliage. Use it at the front of your garden as a ground cover or to spill over edges.

Tips for Choosing the Best Plants for Your Garden:

<u>Decide on a color scheme:</u>
• Stick to a maximum of 3 colors for a balanced look.
• If you're feeling wilder, then go for 4-5 colors with various textures.
• Try picking one color for a serene monochromatic feeling.

<u>Vary sizes and shapes:</u>
• Taller plants generally go towards the back or middle of the garden (depending on how the garden is viewed).
• Use lower-growing filler and spreaders in the front to fill gaps or drape over the border.

<u>Pay attention to the conditions and needs of your location:</u>
• How much sun does it get? Full Sun is 6+ Hours, Part Sun is 3-5 Hours, Shade is less than 3 Hours. Does it receive morning or afternoon sun? Afternoon sun tends to be much hotter.
• How much water does it receive? Is it irrigated? Would it be more successful with drought-tolerant plants or plants that tolerate moist conditions?

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