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ORNAMEDIBLES - THE CLIMBERS

By Angela Chandler
The Garden Academy
(www.thegardenacademy.com)

Ornamentable gardening is the practice of growing edible plants in ornamental ways, including blending them right into our existing landscapes as features. It's a lot of fun and is a great way to put your creativity to work. Any edible plant that is attractive to you can be used as an Ornamentable. One of my favorite groups is climbing edibles.

There are certain edible plants that can be real space hogs in a traditional row-and-furrow or wide-bed garden, such as melons, cucumbers, pumpkins, and sweet potatoes. Many gardeners forego growing them because they can take up more space than is practical in a suburban garden. But these plants, and more, can be grown vertically, taking up no more garden space than a rose or a clump of iris.

The key to success with climbing Ornamentables is strong trellises and healthy, fertile soils. You will need to give some thought to varieties as well. Opt for ice box melons and sugar pumpkins, not their larger cousins, which are better suited to a farmer's field. There are a few cultural techniques to apply, such as providing slings for heavy melons, and training the plants to the support.

Sweet potatoes grown this way will produce fewer tubers since they are only produced on the portion of the vine that is anchored in the ground at the base of the trellis. But the bonus is the greens. Yes, greens! Sweet potato greens are not only edible, they are a delicacy. Chefs have written cookbooks dedicated to them. You might be surprised at how much you can grow when you grow upward and onward! Read more about Climbing Ornamentables on my blog at <http://arborgate.com/blog/ornamentables-the-climbers/>