

# Gardening in shorter days



by **Clodagh & Dick Handscombe**  
Practical gardeners and authors

OVER THE past month we have been asked a wide variety of questions at talks, on mountain walks and on the river bank fishing, some of which are worth sharing with RTN readers.

## WHERE CAN COMFREY BE OBTAINED?

Import from UK suppliers and try healthyplants@live.com by the way, we try to always take a few plants to talks we are invited to give, as we did at the oasis garden club in Rugat last week and talks to the U3A Javea and Moraira rotary groups this week.

## DO OLD FASHIONED ROSES DO WELL IN SPAIN AND WHERE CAN THEY BE OBTAINED?

The answer is they can do. In theory they can be grown everywhere but they will do best



Abraham Darby variety

in the cooler areas and when planted in clay top soils to which plenty of composted horse manure has been added before planting and used to mulch plants each winter.

They are available from some better garden centres but these are often plants imported from Austin Roses from the UK. However, for the best choice contact Austin Roses via [www.davidaustinroses.com](http://www.davidaustinroses.com) email [wholesale@davidaustinroses.co.uk](mailto:wholesale@davidaustinroses.co.uk) and buy direct by mail order or bring out by car. Ensure you order early as there can be a two year waiting list for some of the best known varieties. By the way, over the years, Austin's old fashioned roses have been bred for continuity/repetitive flowering and perfume.

## WHAT PLANTS CAN BE PLANTED IN WINDOW BOXES DURING WINTER MONTHS?

This question is considered in chapters 2.2 and 4.5 of our latest book, 'Apartment Gardening Mediterranean Style'. The choices include pansies and violas, ageratum, cyclamens, freesias for very early spring, poinsettias, chrysanthemums, decorative, brassicas, heathers, and red lettuces

We would like to buy some pruners for gardening friends who have arthritis and find it increasingly painful to keep their garden tidy. Can you suggest anything?

Yes, look out for the Fiskars range of pruners in the better stocked garden centre and horticultural shops and Leroy Merlin who we notice now stock them. If you look up Fiskars on the internet you will find that they are recommended by the National Arthritis Association in the United States.

During the summer months we forgot to



Beautiful window box

top up our mini worm composter and as a result lost a lot of the worm population.

## WHERE CAN WE BUY A TOP UP SUPPLY?

The easiest thing is to contact the mail order shop on [www.wigglywiggles.co.uk](http://www.wigglywiggles.co.uk) and ask them to send a supply by post from the UK. From our experience they travel well.

Autumn and winter fishing can be spoilt by the amount of loose weed that catches on ones line both on the beach and in rivers. Can the caught weed be added to a compost heap?

Yes. However beach weed can be added directly to asparagus beds but is best left to dry and be washed free of excessive salt deposits before adding to compost heaps.

River weed is also full of nutrients and does not have a salt problem. If you want to combine collecting river weed with catching lifetime best carp or catfish, especially during winter months, contact ace fishing coach/ghillie Nick Chaddock, who fishes a wonderful stretch of the river Ebro, an easy drive from the Costa Blanca. Dick recently spent a great day's fishing with Nick discussing fishing and growing vegetables as Nick and his wife Mandy have a productive riverside allotment.

His mobile number is **680-820-728**.

We still have problems finding bottles of Neem Oil, except in large bottles in agricultural cooperatives. Have any of the major garden supply companies started to pack bottles suitable for gardeners?

Three reputable current suppliers are Sepaisa, Trabe and importing from Germany - Niem-Handel. Interestingly, Flower is launching a handy spray as well concentrated oil for dilution for 2011. So start to look out for it at your local garden centres.

Next week we will review some interesting products seen at the annual Iberflora Gardening Trade Show a fortnight ago.



Nick Chaddock with Dick

Clodagh and Dick have now lived and gardened in various parts of Spain for 25 years. Their books are packed with useful information with vivid illustrations that are gardening bibles for many expats and English speaking Spaniards, whether experienced or beginners. You will find 'Your Garden in Spain', 'Growing Healthy Fruit in Spain', 'Growing Healthy Vegetables in Spain' and the latest one, 'Apartment Gardening Mediterranean Style' in high street and internet bookshops. [www.santanabooks.com](http://www.santanabooks.com) has an autumn offer for the first three. You can always keep the one you don't already have and use the other two as birthday or Christmas presents. © Clodagh and Dick Handscombe [www.gardeninginspain.com](http://www.gardeninginspain.com) October 2010.



# Mavericks



Book Review by **Danny Collins**  
[copy@dannyjcollins.com](mailto:copy@dannyjcollins.com)

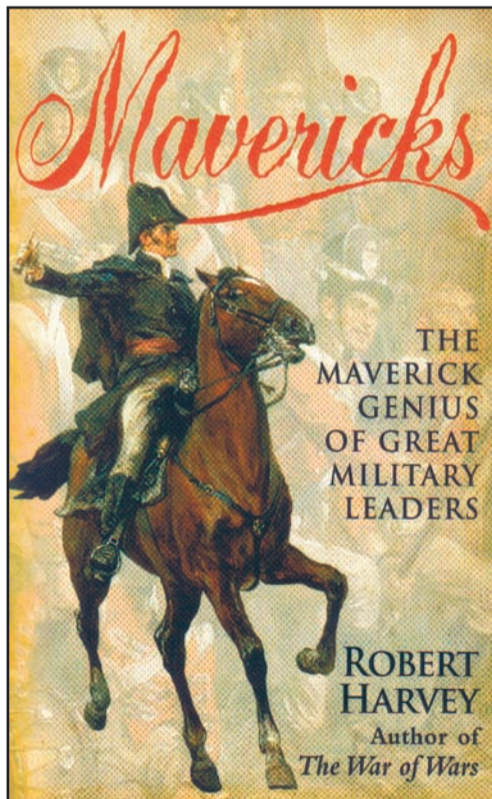
AUTHOR ROBERT HARVEY is a military historian so we can expect the title to have some reflection on historical war leaders. Indeed it does, providing twelve pen portraits of such unconventional warriors as Clive of India; Nelson; Field Marshal Montgomery of Alamein; Wolfe of Quebec and that old warhorse George Patton.

It is the author's contention that such men who commanded in the thick of battle won or lost on the personality of their leadership, making snap decisions that often countermanded the orders of backroom generals who commanded from far behind troop lines. Thus Harvey's book is a gripping investigation into what made these maverick commanders so different as they emerged as charismatic leaders of men, rational under fire, unafraid to improvise and lead their loyal troops to victory against the odds fate had stacked against them.

The book is illustrated with contemporary photographs in black and white and

Author: **Robert Harvey**  
Publisher: **Constable & Robinson** (paperback)  
Price: €11.70  
ISBN: 978 1 84529 929 3

contains maps of some of the most famous campaigns: definitely worth slipping into Grandad's stocking.



# Pear pressure

- 2 Pears
- Cucumber
- 1 Carrot
- Ice

THIS IS a simple juice to make, containing some great ingredients. Another great one for kids as the sweetness of the pears disguises the goodness of the carrot and cucumber. It is very refreshing on a hot day. Juice all the ingredients and add ice as required.



**PEARS** contain Vitamin C, potassium and fibre. Their juice helps protect the colon  
**CUCUMBER** contains Vitamins B1, B2, B3, B5 and B6, folic acid, calcium, chlorine, iron, potassium and beta-carotene. It is highly diuretic, a fantastic cleanser, good for the hair, skin and nails. Cucumber is also good to reduce cholesterol.  
**CARROTS** contain Beta-carotene, vitamins A, B and C, folic acid, magnesium, potassium, iron and calcium. They help to cleanse the liver and digestive systems. They are great antioxidants: anti-cancer, antiseptic, diuretic, immune booster, anti-bacterial and they help to lower cholesterol. And aid eye and skin problems.

These recipes are supplied by The Kamala Centre. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us at The Kamala Centre on [office@thekamalacentre.com](mailto:office@thekamalacentre.com) or call us on **965 985 869**. If you would like a copy of any of these recipes you can download them at our website [www.thekamalacentre.com](http://www.thekamalacentre.com)

Andy and Carol, The Kamala Centre



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