

# Right plant, right place

You know when you visit a beautiful plant nursery and are seduced by the colours, scents and look of a particular plant. You take a close look at the label and decide it will be perfect for your garden. You purchase said plant, take it home, plant and water it. You might even give it a dose of seaweed solution to help it on its way. And you know the disappointment when the plant never looks as good as you imagined it would, or it doesn't flower as spectacularly in your garden as you remembered in the nursery or, worse still, it dies. You are not alone. We have all been there.

So what went wrong? Was it in the wrong conditions? Did you under or over water it? Did it need more (or less) fertiliser? The secret to a successful garden is choosing the right plant for the right place. Selecting the right plants for your garden means less maintenance and more time to enjoy.



## Some simple steps to getting the right plant for the right place:

- 1** Consider the light conditions of the space you want to fill. Does it get full sun or is it shaded all day long? Or perhaps it gets some sun for part of the day and shade for the rest. A plant that prefers a sunny position may, if planted in a shady spot, grow towards the light (giving it a lean) and get quite woody.
- 2** Consider other microclimate conditions such as wind, rain and salt. Is it a wet spot in the garden, or perhaps it is in a rain shadow under the eaves?
- 3** Consider the soil type. The soil in the City of Whitehorse is predominantly clay and is not free draining like the sandy soils of the bayside suburbs. Plants that love good drainage, such as Lavender for instance, do not do well in clay soils. If you do want to grow lavender then it's best to plant it in a raised bed with a good mix of compost through the soil so that the water drains away from its roots.
- 4** Consider the characteristics of the plant you want for the space, e.g. shrub, tree, evergreen, deciduous, height, spread, colour, scent.

So, next time you find yourself in a nursery, mesmerized by the beauty around you, consider the points above. Think about the space where you might plant what's on offer and take guidance from the nursery staff as to whether it is the right plant, right place. It will save you time, money and heartache.

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