

# Gardening in Spain

## Summer planting for apartments

By Clodagh and Dick Handscombe, who have been gardening in Spain for 25 years.

Plants don't get any less expensive nor the summers any cooler so ensure that you don't waste money on unsuitable plants or the loss of plants due to poor positioning, planting and care this summer especially if living in an apartment or town house.

Last month we introduced you to our latest book 'Apartment Gardening Mediterranean Style', the fourth in our series published by Santana Books. In this book we purposely listed the plants with photographs and descriptions under the following headings.

1. Plants that love the sun and are not thirsty – these include an interesting collection of succulents, cacti and aloes.
2. Plants that can tolerate continuous sun but are thirsty so considerably more care is required – these include the easiest annuals for Spain and collections of perennials, climbers and bulbs.
3. Plants that are best grown in semi shade - and there are many such plants to chose from such as hydrangeas, fuchsias and stephanotis.
4. Plants that can live in more shaded positions most of the time if there is reflected light such aspidistras, Christmas cacti and Cinerias.
5. Northern European house plants such as the Peacock plant and Peace lily that can be coaxed to survive in semi shaded terrace positions.

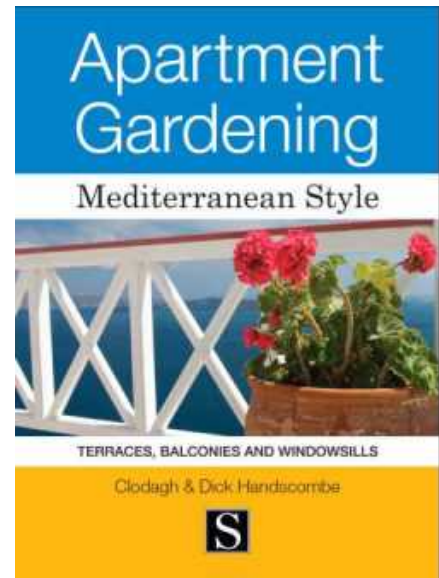
Each description includes a clear indication of the plants thirstiness, salt tolerance in case you are near the sea or salt pans, frost resistance if in the inland towns and villages and whether perfumed such as the Lady of the Night, Carnations or French Marigolds. By the way plants are listed in the descriptions by botanical names but there is also a plant list by English names with the page numbers of the descriptions. So experienced and beginner gardeners will be able to trace plants speedily.

Veer away from these lists and your investment in plants is immediately at risk.

And there are other risks to be taken into account. Firstly the compost in which plants are supplied is often good for growing plants under mass production conditions in hothouses but dries out too quickly under typical home garden and terrace conditions.

Secondly many composts for re-potting plants are not ideal so it is best to make your own blends using a mixes of a peat based compost, worm compost and sand. A good garden centre will be able to advice on the best brands to use.

As we said last month many apartment blocks could do with more colourful balconies for the enjoyment of residents and passers by.



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Please do your bit to re-green the Med.

Our latest book, 'Apartment Gardening – Mediterranean Style', can be obtained from high street bookshops such as Bookworld and Carrefour and if more convenient by mail order from [www. bookworld.com](http://www.bookworld.com) or [www.santabooks.com](http://www.santabooks.com). The latter also take telephone orders on 952-485838. If you wish for autographed copies for presents contact us via [www.gardeningspain.com](http://www.gardeningspain.com) .

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