

# Complete Guide to Gardening in Venice, California

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## Introduction

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This guide provides comprehensive information for starting and maintaining a garden in Venice, California. Whether you're a beginner or experienced gardener, this resource will help you create a thriving garden adapted to Venice's unique coastal environment.

## Understanding Venice's Climate

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*Drought-tolerant garden in California*

Venice, California has a distinctive climate that influences gardening practices:

- **USDA Hardiness Zone:** 10b to 11a (35°F to 45°F)
- **Climate Classification:** Csb - Warm-Summer Mediterranean Climate
- **Key Characteristics:**
  - No frost dates (year-round growing potential)
  - Mild temperature range
  - Mediterranean climate with dry summers and mild, wet winters
  - Coastal influence with morning fog and afternoon sun
  - Current drought conditions require water-conscious gardening

This climate allows for growing a wide variety of plants and provides an extended growing season compared to many other regions.

## Soil Preparation

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*Soil preparation techniques for gardens*

Proper soil preparation is essential for a successful garden in Venice's coastal environment:

## Soil Amendment Techniques

1. **Basic Soil Improvement:**
2. Add organic materials to improve soil quality
3. Use a recommended ratio of 1/3 compost to 2/3 native soil
4. Blend amendments thoroughly in the planting hole
5. **Raised Bed Preparation:**
6. Consider building reinforced raised beds using redwood planks (2x12)
7. Fill raised beds with carefully amended soil
8. Be cautious when purchasing pre-mixed soil
9. **Mulching Strategies:**
10. Apply 3 inches of small-size organic mulch across open landscape spaces
11. Benefits include moisture retention, weed suppression, and gradual soil improvement
12. Apply mulch promptly to prevent weed establishment
13. **Planting Best Practices:**
14. Backfill planting holes with moist soil
15. When establishing new plants, provide more water than standard requirements
16. Loosen plant roots before placing in the ground
17. Use nutrient-rich mixes when backfilling

## Equipment Needs and Costs



*Drip irrigation system for home gardens*

Based on 2025 market data, here's a breakdown of essential gardening equipment and their approximate costs:

### Basic Gardening Tools

| Tool           | Purpose                      | Approximate Cost (2025) |
|----------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Hand Trowel    | Planting and transplanting   | \$15-25                 |
| Pruning Shears | Trimming and cutting         | \$25-45                 |
| Garden Spade   | Digging and edging           | \$30-60                 |
| Garden Fork    | Turning soil                 | \$30-55                 |
| Garden Hoe     | Weeding and soil preparation | \$25-50                 |
| Watering Can   | Targeted watering            | \$20-40                 |
| Garden Gloves  | Hand protection              | \$10-30                 |
| Wheelbarrow    | Transporting materials       | \$90-150                |

### Irrigation Equipment

| Item                | Purpose                        | Approximate Cost (2025) |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Drip Irrigation Kit | Water-efficient plant watering | \$50-120                |
| Soaker Hose         | Slow, deep watering            | \$20-40                 |

|                |                          |         |
|----------------|--------------------------|---------|
| Soaker hose    | Slow, deep watering      | \$20-40 |
| Timer          | Automated watering       | \$30-80 |
| Moisture Meter | Monitoring soil moisture | \$15-40 |

## Additional Considerations

- Professional gardener services range from \$35 to \$65 per hour
- Full-day gardening services cost between \$280 to \$520
- Weekly gardening services cost \$70 to \$130

The gardening equipment market is projected to grow from \$99.81 billion in 2024 to \$109.12 billion in 2025, with hand tools being the most affordable category.

## Plant Recommendations



*Raised garden beds for coastal California*

Venice's climate supports a wide variety of plants. Here are recommendations based on local growing conditions:

## Drought-Tolerant Plants

1. **Ice Plants (Delosperma)**

- 2. Varieties: Blut Ice Plant, Fire Spinner Ice Plant
- 3. Characteristics: Groundcover, drought-tolerant
- 4. Price range: \$9.99 - \$44.97

5. **Perennial Plants**

- 6. Veronica varieties: Very Van Gogh, Tall Collection
- 7. Price range: \$14.95 - \$39.95

8. **California Native Plants**

- 9. Advantages: Adapted to local climate and conditions
- 10. Resources: "California Native Plants for the Garden" (\$39.95)

## Vegetables Well-Suited for Venice

1. **Year-Round Options:**

- 2. Herbs (rosemary, thyme, sage)
- 3. Leafy greens (kale, chard)
- 4. Root vegetables (radishes, carrots)

5. **Warm Season Vegetables:**

- 6. Tomatoes
- 7. Peppers
- 8. Eggplant
- 9. Zucchini

10. **Cool Season Vegetables:**

- 11. Broccoli
- 12. Cauliflower
- 13. Peas
- 14. Lettuce

## Local Plant Resources

Local nurseries offering plants suited to Venice's climate: 1. Venice Plants (620 Lincoln Blvd) 2. Pour Vida Art & Plant House (2124 Lincoln Blvd) 3. The Cook's Garden Venice (1033 Abbot Kinney Blvd)

## Seasonal Planting Calendar

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Venice's mild climate allows for an extended growing season with approximately 270 days

between first and last frost dates.

## Spring (March-May)

- **March:** Plant summer vegetables indoors for transplanting
- **April:** Begin planting warm-season crops outdoors
- **May:** Plant heat-loving vegetables like tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant

## Summer (June-August)

- **June:** Continue planting warm-season vegetables
- **July:** Maintain existing plants, focus on watering
- **August:** Begin planning fall garden, start cool-season seedlings

## Fall (September-November)

- **September:** Plant cool-season crops
- **October:** Plant garlic, onions, and shallots
- **November:** Continue planting cool-season vegetables

## Winter (December-February)

- **December:** Plant cover crops in empty beds
- **January:** Begin planning spring garden
- **February:** Start summer vegetable seeds indoors

## Year-Round Planting Options

- **Potatoes:** Can be planted until late November
- **Onions, Garlic, Shallots:** Plant sets or seed bulbs during similar timeframe
- **Herbs:** Many herbs can be planted year-round in Venice's climate

## Water Conservation Techniques

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Water conservation is essential in Southern California's drought-prone climate:

### Hydrozoning

- Group plants with similar water requirements together
- Separate your garden into zones based on water needs
- Allows for more efficient irrigation and water conservation

### Efficient Irrigation

### 1. **Drip Irrigation Systems**

2. Use drip irrigation for targeted watering
3. Implement the "cycle and soak" method for efficient watering
4. Use multiple drip emitters per plant
5. Stake down irrigation lines with sod or jute

### 6. **Smart Watering Practices**

7. Water early in the morning to reduce evaporation
8. Adjust watering schedules seasonally
9. Monitor soil moisture using finger testing
10. Consider smart irrigation controllers

## **Water-Saving Landscape Design**










- Create landscape contours that mimic natural watersheds
- Use techniques like swales, berms, and dry creeks to manage water flow
- Install rain barrels to harvest rainwater
- Use permeable hardscaping to allow water infiltration

## **Maintenance Practices**

- Apply mulch to retain moisture
- Allow grass to grow longer to reduce water needs
- Pull weeds regularly to reduce competition for water
- Tune up irrigation systems to prevent leaks and waste

## **Common Garden Pests and Solutions**

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| TRUE BUGS<br>Order Hemiptera   |   | TRUE BUGS<br>Order Hemiptera   |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p><b>Spotted Assassin Bug</b> <b>B</b><br/><i>(Rhynocoris ventralis)</i><br/>up to 0.55 inch long; flattened, oval orange-and-black body; black wings; abdomen margin with black spots; elongated head with noticeable beak; feeds on other insects; throughout CA</p>  |    | <p><b>Wing-tapping Cicada</b> <b>V</b><br/><i>(Platypedia spp.)</i><br/>up to 1.1 inches long; typically black with transparent wings; body and legs often marked with yellow or red; resembles a large fly; produces a loud, high-frequency courtship song; immatures live underground and feed on woody plant roots; most often heard not seen</p>   |   |
| <p><b>California Bee Assassin</b> <b>B</b><br/><i>(Apiomerus californicus)</i><br/>up to 0.6 inch long; flattened, oval black body marked with red; black wings; abdomen margin pale; elongated head with noticeable beak; feeds on other insects, particularly at flowers; lower ⅓ of CA</p>  |    | <p><b>Blue-green Sharpshooter</b> <b>P</b><br/><i>(Graphocephala atropunctata)</i><br/>up to 0.3 inch long; torpedo-shaped body; variable in color from green to bright blue with black lines and yellow markings; vector of plant disease, often affecting grapes and other crops</p>   |   |
| <p><b>Western Tarnished Plant Bug</b> <b>P</b><br/><i>(Lygus hesperus)</i><br/>up to 0.25 inch; oval body marked with yellow, brown, and reddish-brown; long antennae; feeds by piercing plant tissues; attacks a wide range of vegetable, fruit, and berry plants; causes blemished or malformed fruit</p>  |    | <p><b>Oak Treehopper</b> <b>V P</b><br/><i>(Platycotis vittata)</i><br/>up to 0.45 inch long; triangular body; variable in color; often bluish-gray with numerous small pits and marked with orange-red stripes; often bears a prominent frontal horn; often found in aggregations on oak branches; typically only causes minor damage</p>   |   |
| <p><b>Common Water Strider</b> <b>V B</b><br/><i>(Aquarius remigis)</i><br/>up to 0.6 inches long; elongated brown body; long second and third pairs of legs; front legs for grasping prey; feeds on other insects; moves along the surface of water in ponds; throughout CA</p>   |    | <p><b>Oleander Aphid</b> <b>P D</b><br/><i>(Aphis nerii)</i><br/>up to 0.1 inch long; bulbous yellow body with black legs, antennae, and eyes; has two black pipe-like projections on the abdomen; adults may or may not have wings; nymphs look like small adults; feeds on plant sap and is a pest of Oleander (<i>Nerium oleander</i>) and milkweeds (<i>Asclepias</i> spp.); honeydew also causes sooty mold on plants</p> |  |
| <p><b>American Giant Water Bug</b> <b>V</b><br/><i>(Lethocerus americanus)</i><br/>up to 2.25 inches long; oval, brown flattened body; membranous wings folded over the back form an "X" shape; large eyes; powerful front legs designed for grasping prey; aquatic but often comes to artificial lights at night; can deliver a painful bite if handled</p> |  |  |  |

Common garden pests in Southern California

Venice gardens face several pest challenges:

## Insect Pests

1. **Earwigs**
2. Two common species: European Earwig and Striped Earwig
3. Nocturnal pests that thrive in damp, dark environments
4. Control: Remove hiding places, use traps, maintain dry garden areas
5. **Other Common Insects**
6. Fleas
7. Silverfish
8. Boxelder bugs

9. Crickets
10. Millipedes
11. Centipedes
12. Ladybugs (beneficial)

## Wildlife Pests

1. **Larger Garden Visitors**
2. Raccoons
3. Opossums
4. Moles and Voles
5. Control: Fencing, repellents, removing attractants

## Integrated Pest Management

- Customize pest control treatments to match specific property needs
- Use beneficial insects to control harmful pests
- Practice crop rotation to disrupt pest cycles
- Consider professional pest control services for severe infestations

## Conclusion

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Creating a garden in Venice, California offers unique opportunities and challenges. By understanding the local climate, preparing your soil properly, selecting appropriate plants, and implementing water-wise practices, you can create a beautiful and sustainable garden that thrives in this coastal environment.

# Complete Guide to Gardening in Venice,

California

Remember that gardening is both an art and a science—don't be afraid to experiment and adapt these recommendations to your specific garden conditions. Happy gardening!

## A Comprehensive Resource for Local Gardeners

April 2025

