

March 2020

- What vines would you recommend for a large pot with an east-facing exposure?

This is such an interesting question because many vines do best in full sun, as demonstrated by their proclivity to climb to the tops of trees! An east-facing aspect means early light as the cool air temperature increases from an overnight low. In this setting we are looking for vining specimens that thrive out of the midday heat of full sun, in cooler air and partial shade.

Additionally, it is important to differentiate the growth habits of a plant confined to a pot, and one that is planted in the ground. Unless quite large, a pot is a limited environment better suited to annuals. The soil requires annual refreshment, as well as more frequent irrigation throughout the summer months. Overtime, large vines in pots might lack needed nutrients and moisture, become root bound, and experience stunted growth.

If your east-facing planting is truly limited to a pot, you may consider annuals (or semi-annuals) such as:

- sweet peas or shell peas
- passion flowers
- jasmine
- hops

If you are able to plant vines directly into the soil in an east-facing exposure, or in a really big pot, you could enjoy larger, perennial vines such as:

- climbing honeysuckles
- climbing hydrangea
- hardy kiwi
- star jasmine
- evergreen clematis

Whatever you end up planting, be sure to keep it well fed with regular (2x per year) mulching of rich compost, and adequate irrigation to see it through our summer drought.

Source: C. Bricknell. (2016). RHS A-Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants. New Haven, UK: Denton Island Books.