

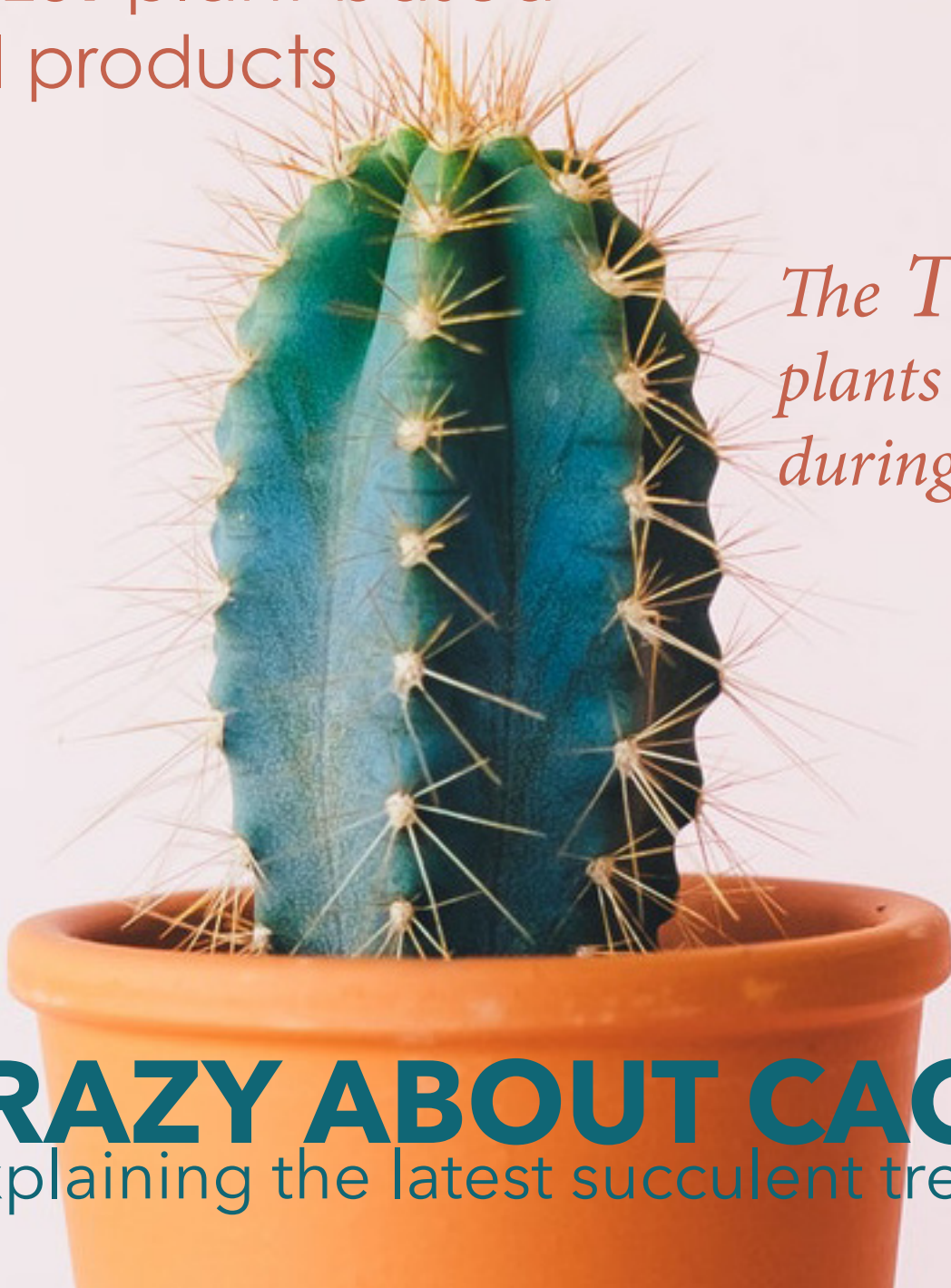
ROOTS

December 2017

everything you need to know about plants.

Our **BEST** plant-based facial products

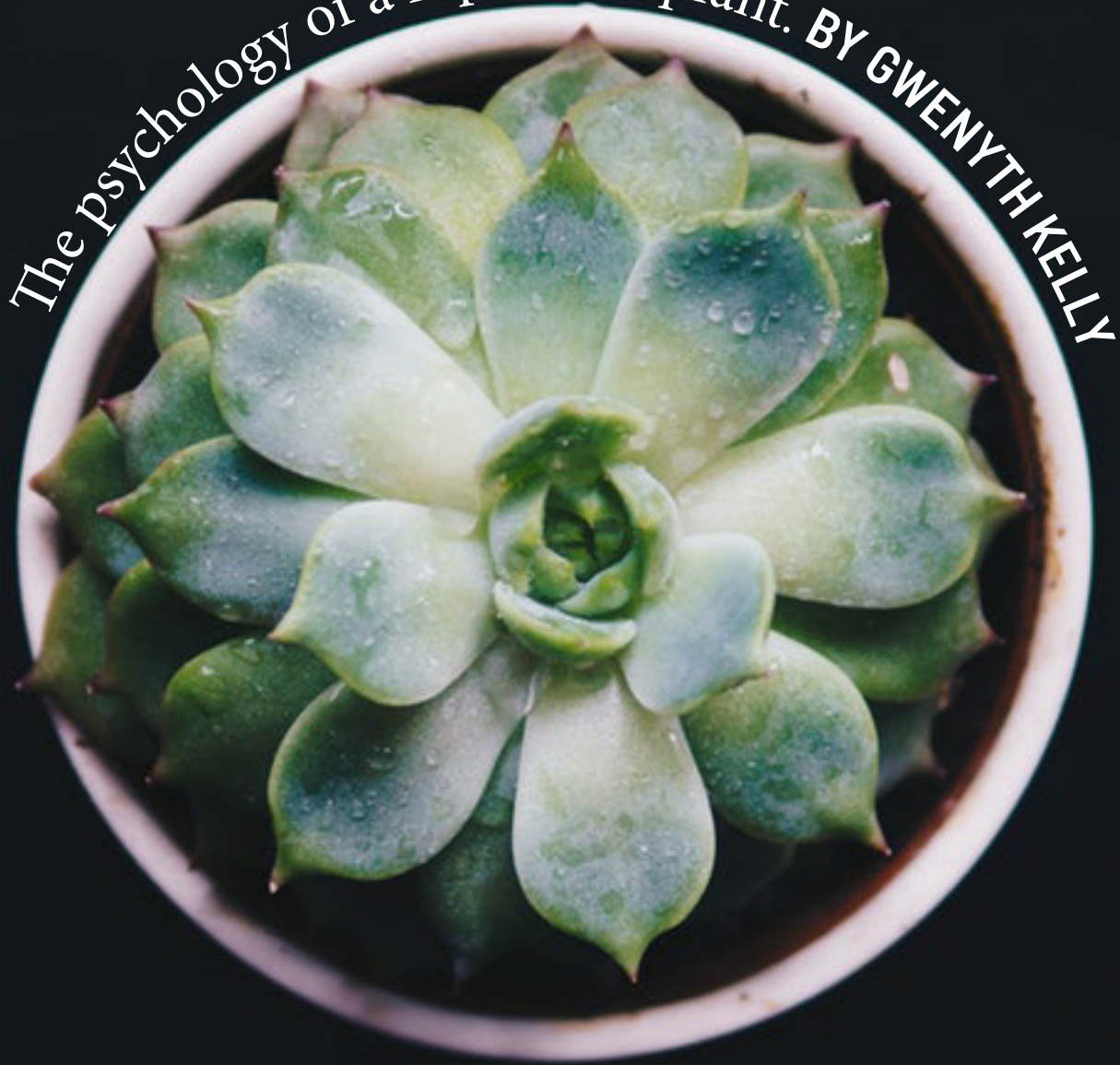
The TOP 10 plants to grow during winter



CRAZY ABOUT CACTI
explaining the latest succulent trend

PLANTASTIC

The psychology of a hip house plant. BY GWENYTH KELLY



Famous Succulent Gardens in the U.S.



The Ruth Bancroft Garden: Walnut Creek, CA



East Austin Succulents: Austin, TX



Succulent Gardens, Castroville, CA



Mesa Garden, Belen, NM

I am not trendy. In fact, I actively disdain something as soon as I sense it's a trend, not because I want to be cooler than everyone else but because many of my tastes solidified years ago. I still dress like I did in first grade and the most-played music on my phone is from 2007. But that couldn't stop me from falling prey to one of the latest trends: succulents.

I noticed other people's obsession with succulents before I became obsessed myself. For months I had seen them in shop windows and garnishing coffee tables on design blogs. First one friend, then another, shared photos of their new apartment, cropped to include the succulents on the windowsill. I did not entirely understand the appeal. Why would you opt for a strange cabbagey plant when you could have flowers?

But somewhere along the way, my stance on succulents started changing. I found myself thinking that maybe if I had a succulent, my apartment—my life in general—would look like the chic spaces on Apartment Therapy and A Beautiful Mess. My succulents would say, I have taste. I am cool and slightly quirky. My external space is a reflection of my interior poise. I have my act together enough to take care of an actual living plant.

First, I acquired a light green echeveria that grew a single yellow flower. Then I got another darker echeveria. And a hen-and-chicks. And a big spiky aloe. And a fairy castle cactus. There was absolutely no option of turning back.

I went to thrift stores and kept my eyes peeled for planters or, even better, random household objects that I might be able to turn into planters.

Did I even have a plant to put in a new planter? A perfect excuse to buy one! Was I likely to stab myself with the nail file while I attempted this? I probably wouldn't bleed out, right?

More recently I learned that you can easily breed your own succulents by removing the leaves and waiting for new rosettes to form. That's it! Not only do succulents make you feel instantly competent because they refuse to die from neglect, they miraculously transform you into a skilled botanist.

Now my kitchen window is home to a burgeoning crop of baby plants. Every morning I lean in close to examine the microscopic progress of the new roots, thinking about how I will pot them once they are fully-grown, waiting greedily for the day when I will have even more succulents.

But it's not just my own succu-mania: Succulents are having a moment. (For the record, any plant that stores water in fleshy leaves, stems, or roots is a succulent. All cacti, for example, are succulents, but not all succulents are cacti.) Google searches for "succulents" grew by over 5000 percent between 2010 and today. On Etsy you can order 100 succulents at a time. The "succulove" Instagram account has 65,000 followers. Scroll through the over 1,500 posts and you will find succulents of all colors and textures in wreaths, vintage tins, cow skulls, and more. Brides magazine has published extensive lists of how to incorporate succulents into your wedding: not just in your bouquet, but as your table runner, a floral crown, or on your cake. Shops like Urban Outfitters sell hanging planters, Scandi-chic ceramic pots, and terrariums with burnished brass edges so you can display your collection in style. Why is everyone so obsessed with succulents?

“But it's not just my own succu-mania: Succulents are having a moment”

