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expertpicks | three favorite plants

BY MARIA ZAMPINI

This page marks the debut of a new *Horticulture* column, “Expert Picks.” In each issue I’ll ask a nurseryman, plant breeder, horticulturist or other savvy plantsperson for three personal favorites worthy of recommending to fellow gardeners. To kick off the column and let you know a little bit about me, in this issue I’m the one making the recommendations.

I was raised in the green industry, working at the family nursery and garden center since childhood. I now own my own company, UpShoot LLC (upshoothort.com), which performs research and development and marketing and licensing of new plant introductions in the United States, Canada and abroad. I also cover gardening for several consumer magazines and trade journals and lecture widely on topics such as new plant introductions, plant patents and trademarks and plant branding. Here are three of my favorite trees and shrubs:

1. Lollipop dwarf crabapple (*Malus* ‘Lollizam’)

This slow-growing dwarf crabapple fits perfectly in a patio container; its top-grafted form allows for planting annuals, perennials and grasses around its base. Lollipop naturally forms a round head—no need for trimming. It has fragrant, prolific white blooms in spring and tiny red fruit in the fall. USDA Zone 4.

2. Mr. Bowling Ball arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis* ‘Bobazam’)

Mr. Bowling Ball needs no trimming to maintain its two-and-a-half-foot round shape. It works great alone, planted in multiples or sheared as a low hedge. The color and fine texture of its foliage make it unique among arborvitae. It doesn’t break open under heavy snow, as other globular arborvitae can. Zone 3.

3. Samaritan Chinese dogwood (*Cornus kousa chinensis* ‘Samzam’)

An offspring of ‘Milky Way’ Chinese dogwood, Samaritan is an extremely hardy cultivar with variegated leaves, bright white late-spring flowers and strawberry-like fruit that the birds just love. It is resistant to anthracnose and other diseases. Zone 5. 🍓

MARIA ZAMPINI works to bring exciting new plants to market through her company, UpShoot LLC.

