

Default Theme Update - June 8, 2024

Post by "Cassius" of June 8, 2024 at 8:16 PM

This weekend (June 8th) we are updating the default theme that new users will see when they visit the site. If you are a regular participant with an account, you should not notice this unless you log out. However theme changes have a way of creeping into unexpected places, and we have also made some menu changes and updates to the Home page at the same time.

The new theme is a "light" style and goes by the name of "Inspire Blue" if you check out the Styles by clicking on the "Change Style" link at the bottom of each page of the forum. "Inspire" comes in several color varieties (red, green, purple, etc), and you might want to check them out because as you know we all like variety!

The theme has a somewhat different design that you may find a pleasing update to the original, so if you've been using the existing "Wolflab Default" style, you might want to check out the new "Inspire Blue" default selection.

Feel free to let us know if you find any of the updates cause you any problems.

Post by "Martin" of June 9, 2024 at 3:34 AM

It looks fine except that a background image is visible at the sides on the PC screen and the content is narrowed correspondingly. This gives the weird appearance as if the window was reduced in size and the background image was the wallpaper on my PC.

Post by "Cassius" of June 9, 2024 at 8:07 AM

Thanks Martin, I bet I know a setting for that. How wide a screen do you use? Super wide?

Post by "Martin" of June 9, 2024 at 8:55 AM

Post by “Julia” of June 9, 2024 at 9:08 AM

To be honest, I find the background images all a bit dark and gloomy...I can see how they all have a stark, rough beauty, but freezing temperatures, rocks and the raw forces of nature aren't the setting I calm down in and start to philosophise, if you see what I mean? To me, those pictures and colour themes convey more of an adventure/expedition setting than a garden setting.

I've changed the settings to the “Dark Theme” of the “Default Wotlab Style”, which is essentially a black blank page, and works for me. But in the interest of growing the community, if it were up to me, I'd change the default background image to something cozy, like a summer landscape, something warm, soft, gentle. (I'd also keep the default colour theme light; I think I am in the minority with my preference for dark themes - and I mostly prefer them for practical reasons, less for aesthetic ones (less glare in dark rooms, less impact on my sleep cycle).) There's a reason why feel-good advertisements (vacations, credit cards, various drinks, ...) look so much alike: they use colour palettes and scenes which are typically closely associated with pleasure 😊

If the major philosophies each were to be represented in a single photograph (and the corresponding colour palette), which choice would best say "Epicurean"?

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 9, 2024 at 10:23 AM

[Quote from Julia](#)

To be honest, I find the background images all a bit dark and gloomy...I can see how they all have a stark, rough beauty, but freezing temperatures, rocks and the raw forces of nature aren't the setting I calm down in and start to philosophise, if you see what I mean? To me, those pictures and colour themes convey more of an adventure/expedition setting than a garden setting.

Thank you for saying that, because I totally agree.

And I could chalk this up to various temperament differences (and as would be reflected in choices for website design) and then this would also reflect how Epicurean "pleasure" is understood and experienced (with an emphasis put on either intellectual for some and physical/bodily for others). I was attempting to explore this over at [this thread](#) (hadn't yet posted about temperament) and it seems that here on the forum individuals vary as to how they approach "pleasure" based on how they define it, grasp it, and to what they are attracted.

Ultimately for myself I'd choose that which reflects bliss, joy, fun, and "heaven on earth", and a society of friendship.

And yet, there is philosophy which is intellectual, so perhaps there is more to consider about how to proceed with the integration of the body and the mind. Also, there is that which is open, soft, and receiving, and that which is bold, tough, and aggressive...which can be part of temperament -- and also we must acknowledge the encultured ideas of "feminine" and "masculine".

[Quote from Julia](#)

If the major philosophies each were to be represented in a single photograph (and the corresponding colour palette), which choice would best say "Epicurean"?

These two images could be a good choice both for color palette and a background image, because it is somewhat neutral but represents the Epicurean philosophy:



(From Lucretius De Rerum Natura - wikipedia)

And this second one from the Wall of Diogenes of Oinoanda:



Post by “Kalosyni” of June 9, 2024 at 10:41 AM

[Quote from Julia](#)

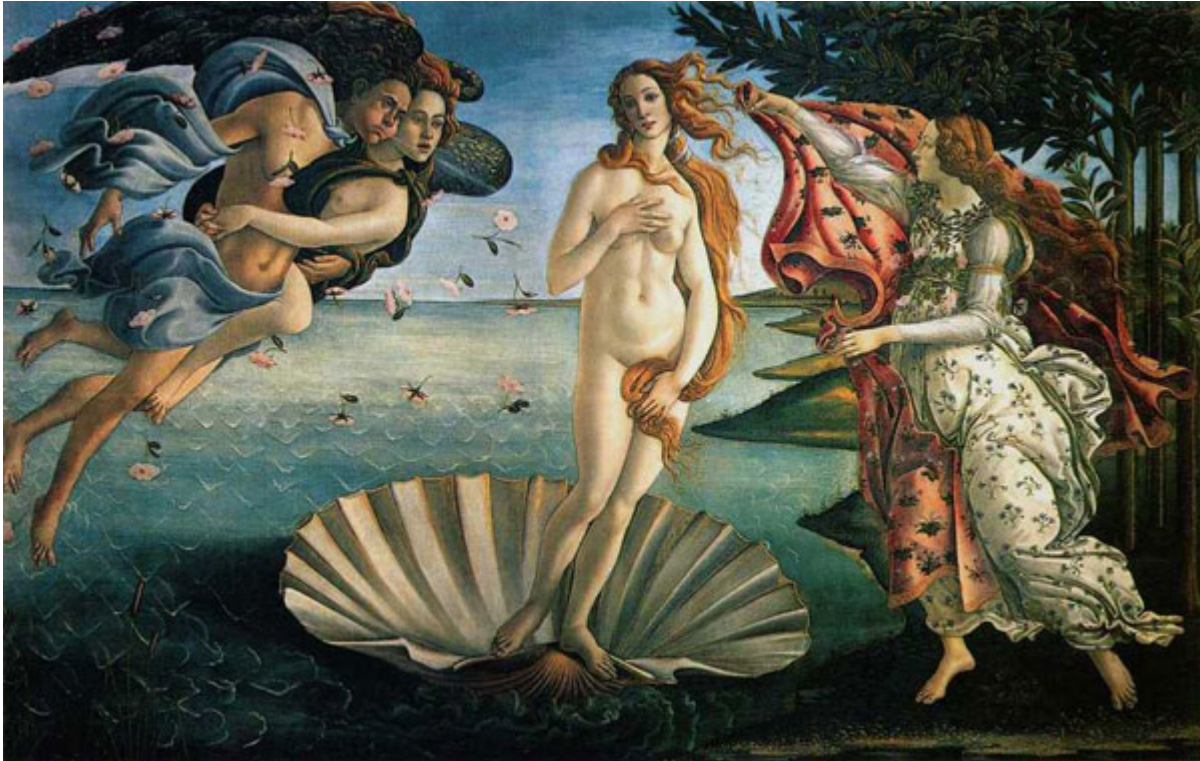
But in the interest of growing the community

Yes, and I want to put a vote in for deleting the the rocks/ocean themes, and instead going with more neutral colors in a default light theme.

Perhaps we could set up these options (have only four options):

1. Default light neutral theme

2. Dark neutral theme
 4. Greek lettering or De Rerum Natura theme
 3. Epicurean garden theme (olive trees, blue sky, and sunshine)
-



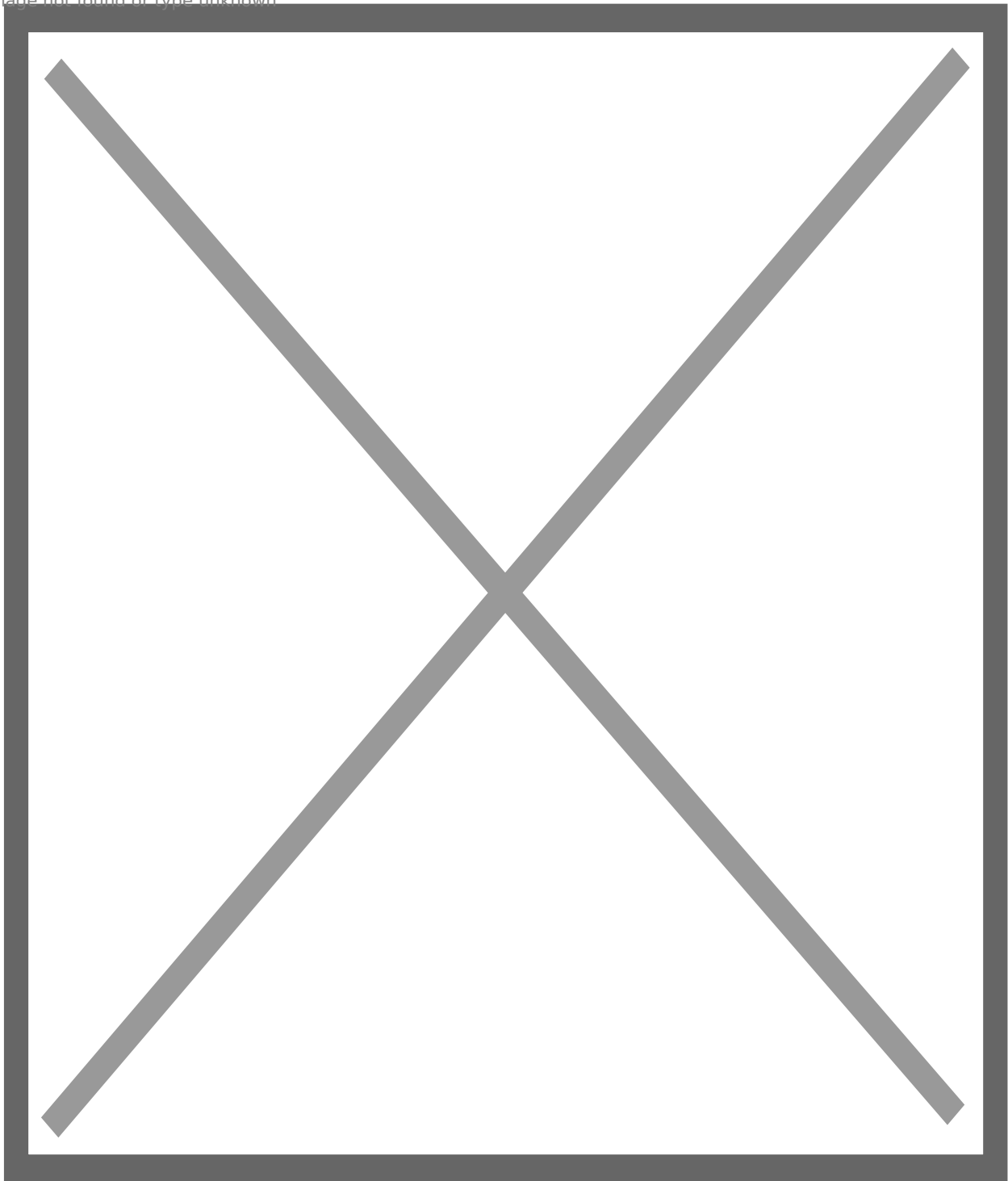
This image comes immediately to mind for Epicurean philosophy, although I haven't analyzed the imagery in detail.

Personally I use a dark theme as I find it easier on the eyes.

Post by “Don” of June 9, 2024 at 12:27 PM

FYI

Image not found or type unknown



[The Birth of Venus - Wikipedia](#)

en.wikipedia.org



I didn't even look at the context before I posted this link. Maybe as an Epicurean image, but not as a background.

Post by “Godfrey” of June 9, 2024 at 8:11 PM

Birth of Venus could serve as a model for a less neutral color palette, although [Kalosyni](#) 's images and palettes above in #6 are quite nice.

Post by “Julia” of June 9, 2024 at 8:53 PM

Friends, I am baffled. I mean. *Speechless!* You're *all* wrong!

The background image *has* to be piles upon piles of rare delicacies and choice wines!

Post by “Cassius” of June 9, 2024 at 8:56 PM

Don't worry - we are working on new options! 😊

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 10, 2024 at 10:04 AM

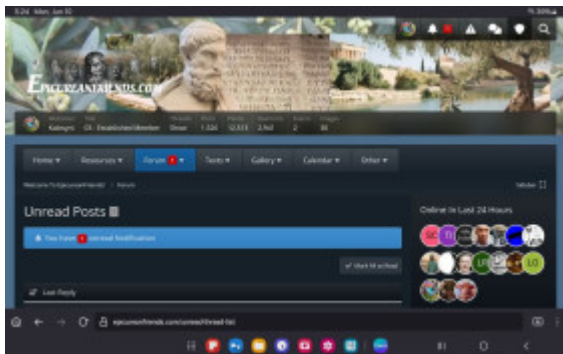
[Cassius](#) thank you for all your time in creating and maintaining this site! Since you installed the new website upgrade (which was at the end of 2023?) and I would guess that the theme background images somehow slipped "into the background" compared to all the other more pressing issues (there is so much going on here with text content and moderation, and the podcast, etc).

Now I am super excited by the realization of the ability to customize the themes, looking forward to further helping out with process. I am sure that we all want the forum to look inviting for visitors and members alike.

I've started working on a possible theme option, and it should be available for signed in members, although the new background will only show up for laptop and tablet views (not cell phones). It is a work in progress still with some tweeking still needed...to try the new theme

click on "Kalosyni Ambiance Blue" under the change style option.

Post by "Kalosyni" of June 10, 2024 at 5:27 PM



Here is a screenshot of a new website theme (I mentioned in previous post), and the logo needs a blue box behind it so that it will show up better (plus other image adjustments).

Post by "Julia" of June 11, 2024 at 5:56 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

to try the new theme click on "Kalosyni Ambiance Blue" under the change style option.

Doesn't seem to show up for me? I can see the plain "Ambiance Blue" (which looks different) but no theme that mentions your name, Kalosyni? Having customs themes like that sounds like a great way to discuss which way to go 😊 thank you

Post by "Cassius" of June 11, 2024 at 7:55 AM

Sounds like that theme may be on a second page of a list (perhaps due to a screen size difference) or we need to change the permissions to make it more widely available. We'll figure that out and report back. Is anyone else able to see Kalosyni's style by using the "Change Style"

button at the bottom of a page? I see it, but that might be due to a privilege setting.

Post by “Godfrey” of June 11, 2024 at 2:04 PM

Not visible to me.

Post by “Joshua” of June 11, 2024 at 2:06 PM

I do see it--between 'Aspire Red' and 'Modern Flat UI'.

Post by “Godfrey” of June 11, 2024 at 2:40 PM

I think it's Inspire Red; in my list there's nothing between that and Modern Flat UI.

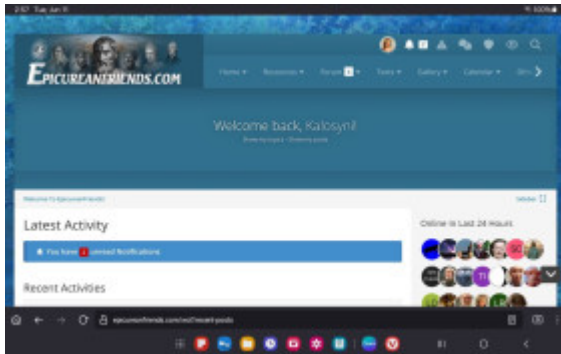
Post by “Cassius” of June 11, 2024 at 2:48 PM

Thanks guys - that may mean there is a permission problem we need to investigate

Post by “Cassius” of June 11, 2024 at 2:57 PM

Sorry guys, and I will tag [Julia](#) so she sees this too. We failed to "enable" the new options, so we have changed that and now you will find the ones we referenced. There is a "Stars" and a Kalosni Inspire version at present - both works in progress.

Post by "Kalosyni" of June 11, 2024 at 3:03 PM



Snapshot of the "Stars" theme (which doesn't have stars, lol). This is the same as the default theme but has a blue background and has the water motif removed. The blue may vary depending on your own screen.

Post by "Joshua" of June 11, 2024 at 3:09 PM

Thank you [Godfrey](#), it is Inspire, not Aspire

Post by "Julia" of June 12, 2024 at 6:42 PM

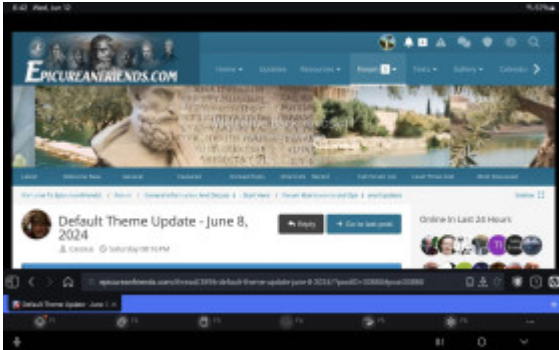
The Inspire version called "Garden" is nice 😊

Regarding animations: Please don't use an animated theme (such as the "Foxhole" theme, which is animated at the bottom/footer). They eat up battery while on the go, they can be laggy (or else cause high system load) in some browsers -- and they can be distracting and make it pointlessly harder to focus on what one is actually trying to do. I think the theme should have a be calm quality about it, and thus be without constant movement. (I'd prefer it if the title banner of "Garden" were be fixed, but because I can usually scroll down a bit to hide it, I wouldn't mint too much, either. The constant movement of Foxhole would drive me up the walls sooner or later.)

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 12, 2024 at 6:44 PM

After an attempt to put a starry night sky in the background of the 'Stars' theme, I decided to scrap that idea (theme has been deleted), because I can't seem to get the right resolution or the right colors (looked too blurry).

Instead there is now a 'Garden' theme, which has olive trees, a bust of Epicurus and a segment of the Wall of Diogenes of Oinoanda.



Post by “Kalosyni” of June 12, 2024 at 6:49 PM

[Quote from Julia](#)

The Inspire version called "Garden" is nice 😊

Thanks! 😊😊😊

Somehow we cross-posted (in that I didn't see your post till after posting).

There is a "slideshow" programmed into that theme for the image across the top (it makes the image move from top to bottom), and not sure how to turn that off (hopefully it isn't a problem).

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 12, 2024 at 7:20 PM

Foxhole theme is now turned off.

The two new themes have been renamed:

- Ambiance Dark Garden
- Inspire Light Garden

(I'm not sure how to make the tiny preview image show in the drop-down list).

Post by “Cassius” of June 12, 2024 at 7:48 PM

Another new theme on request of [Martin](#) - it is labeled A-Default-Widescreen.

It's the same as the current default theme (Inspire) but it will go to 100% page width no matter how wide your screen might be - so there should be little if any background image visible to the right or left side of the screen.

The theme author tells me he is working on a "dark" version of the same inspire theme, and as soon as that is out we'll set it up and find an easy way to toggle between light and dark versions of the same main theme.

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 13, 2024 at 9:12 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

new theme on request of Martin - it is labeled A-Default-Widescreen.

It's the same as the current default theme (Inspire) but it will go to 100% page width no matter how wide your screen might be - so there should be little if any background image visible to the right or left side of the screen.

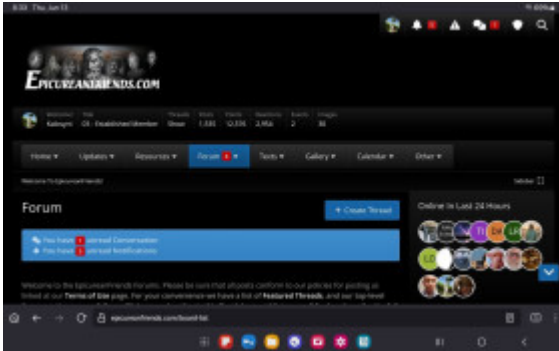
It shows a narrow border of gray on my tablet, but it is wider format than the default theme.

(*edit)

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 13, 2024 at 8:37 PM

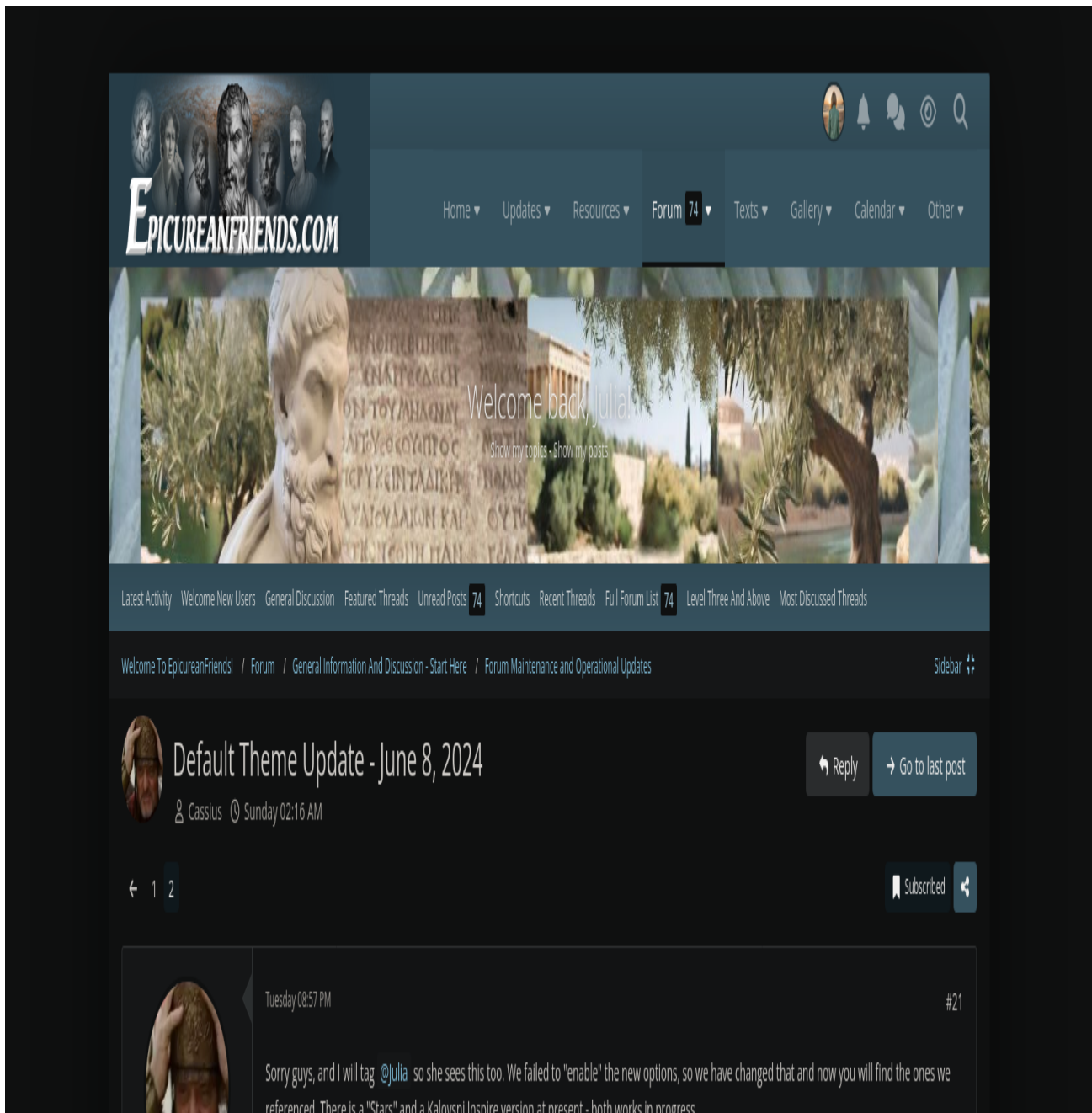
New theme:

"Ambiance Blue Plain Black"



Let me know if I should make the black background slightly less black (a ting of gray).

Post by “Julia” of June 14, 2024 at 5:23 AM



[Kalosyni](#) The screenshot shows how the "Garden" looks like at my end, which is "dark enough" I think. Still has a little colour but muted, desaturated, thus no glare. I get this result by using "Garden", and using Dark Reader (a browser plugin) with my usual settings: +50% grayscale (range 0 to 100; this mutes the colors) and +10% contrast (range -50 to +50; this helps maintain good readability after the first step). (The other plugin settings are at their default values).

I suggest focussing on the normal, light theme variant to figure out a good default. Once that is done, one of us (like myself) can test it with Dark Reader (which is quite commonly used by

people who want a no-glare web experience). Chances are good that it will just work well and look good out of the box. Then, we can use a screenshot of whatever Dark Reader generates to make a dark theme variant (such that those who, for whatever reason, do not use Dark Reader can get the same experience using the forums on-board tools).

PS: I like the theme as seen in the screenshot (as it is for me right now *with* using Dark Reader, which I use everywhere at all times anyway). I realise the muted colours (is that how one says it? I admit to having spent art class with maths homework...) might seem strange at first. When we switched to this (for the whole web, mind you) everything looked kind of boring, but by now, the normal web looks way too flashy and over the top -- meaning to say: It's just habituation. So...recap: normal light theme first, Dark Reader to generate no-glare screenshot, make dark theme variant to match; this keeps our limited time focussed on the typical visitor (light web, no plugins), ensures it works well for the typical no-glare web user (no theme changes, but Dark Reader plugin) *and* has something in store for the dark-theme preferring user who for some reason uses no plugins.

PPS: Might these photo AI tools come in handy somehow? Again, not a graphic designer 😊 just a thought that came up

Post by “Cassius” of June 14, 2024 at 6:20 AM

[Quote from Julia](#)

using Dark Reader (a browser plugin)

I use that too and it's a great idea. I'm working toward getting the designer's version of a dark theme as well, plus I want to see a toggle button (dark to light and back) always available. It's currently possible for a user to go back and forth by going into their "Control Panel" and selecting "Settings and Privacy," but that's probably more work than it should be. On sites that have a toggle button I switch back and forth fairly regularly depending on time of day.

Update - I had not been using Dark Reader recently with the new default theme but I just tried it and it does work very well, as Julia says!

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 14, 2024 at 10:01 AM

[Quote from Julia](#)

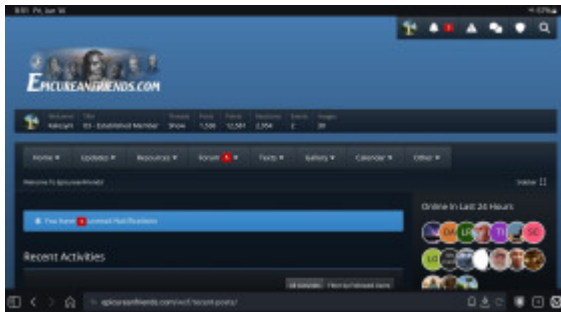
using Dark Reader (a browser plugin)

Thanks for posting about how to use that to adjust to dark mode.

I am on a tablet that is running android, so I would need to see if there is an app for that.

I changed the black background to a blue-gray background (it has a mix of blue, gray, and black) and the theme name is:

"Ambiance Simple Blue-Gray Dark":



Post by “Julia” of June 14, 2024 at 10:32 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

I am on a tablet that is running android, so I would need to see if there is an app for that.

The Dark Reader plugin is available for Firefox on Android.

Post by “Cassius” of June 18, 2024 at 7:25 AM

For [Julia](#) in particular (but I think others will like this as well) we now have the option to turn off the "Welcome Box" at the top of each page. The Welcome Box serves an important purpose for default new users who drop by the forum for the first time, but if you get to the point where you

want to turn off the Welcome section but keep the other aspects of the Inspire theme (mainly the header bar) you can now change your style to "A-Default Theme Without Welcome Bar At Top."

If someone is using one of the other Inspire Colors and wants a "No Welcome Box" variation of that style, let me know and I'll fix up one of those too.

Post by “Julia” of June 18, 2024 at 9:08 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

you can now change your style to "A-Default Theme Without Welcome Bar At Top."

I, ahm – I cannot find such a style...? It's in the list with all styles, right? Not a special button somewhere? 🤔

PS: I keep thinking we should have some original artwork somehow...not that I'd be able to do it – I specialise in prehistoric cave paintings, and by that, I mean stick figures 😊 – but...well...I don't know. With all this generative AI being hyped...can't we have a suitable background generated? I just think it should be somehow specific, instead of generic (stock photos, by their very nature, are all somehow generic).

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 18, 2024 at 9:32 AM

[Julia](#) the new theme that Cassius made is the third in the drop-down list (unless there is some kind of restricted setting)...let us know if you still don't see it.

[Quote from Julia](#)

PS: I keep thinking we should have some original artwork somehow...not that I'd be able to do it... somehow specific, instead of generic (stock photos, by their very nature, are all somehow generic)

I totally agree, and as far as I currently understand, [Cassius](#) has mentioned that he prefers a clean and simple "default" page for everyone who is not signed into the forum, and he mentioned that once someone becomes a member then they can choose a different theme. I've been working on some fun Epicurean themes, and I know they are not quite up to the best quality yet (low resolution images and in need of better design layout)...but will be working to improve them within the next two weeks, plus maybe will add a few new options). 😊

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 18, 2024 at 9:44 AM

[Quote from Julia](#)

I just think it should be somehow specific, ...

[Julia](#) Let me know if there is something you'd like to see in a theme (describe some specific images), and I could create it. 😊

Post by “Cassius” of June 18, 2024 at 9:44 AM

Yes Julia, Kalosyni is correct that it should be in the list -- maybe the name is being truncated on the screen you are using? If so I can shorten the name or give it a different starting letter. Let me know if you don't see it and we'll try that.

As for customized artwork that is a great idea and we'd welcome any suggestions you want to make. Like everything else here the styling is a "work in progress" so we're not wedded to any single decision.

Post by “Julia” of June 18, 2024 at 10:28 AM

Maybe I should clarify: What is the "Welcome Box"?

Is it the large chunk of text with the embedded Youtube introduction video, that is displayed when going to <http://www.epicureanfriends.com/wcf/> ? I would concur that registered users should have a way to hide it. However, it never bothered me, because I enter the forums through a bookmark directly to <http://www.epicureanfriends.com/wcf/notification-list/> so that I can see what I've missed and take things from there.

What I mentioned at one point was that I'm not a fan of animated websites, but the header/banner of "Inspire Light Garden" is so slow (and static in between) that I don't actually mind it much. That said, I still can only see one choice named/starting with "A - Default Theme" and I don't notice anything special about it?

(I'm back with "Inspire Light Garden" with Dark Reader, because the pictures in the banner make me happy 😊)

Post by “Cassius” of June 18, 2024 at 10:30 AM

Oh Darn I bet I made the same mistake as before - I did not "Enable" it. Be right back.

Post by “Cassius” of June 18, 2024 at 10:32 AM

That was the problem. You'll see it now. Yes it was the box that had the "Remember..... quote and said 'Welcome Back (username).'" That has been turned off for that customized theme so you only see the logo / navigation bar at top.

Post by “Cassius” of June 18, 2024 at 10:47 AM

[Quote from Julia](#)

However, it never bothered me, because I enter the forums through a bookmark directly to <http://www.epicureanfriends.com/wcf/notification-list/> so that I can see what I've missed and take things from there.

Yes, I think we want to encourage people to bookmark either the [notification list](#) (lists the updates in short form) or the "[Recent Activities](#)" page (gives a brief summary of the update) or the [Dashboard](#) (pretty much the same as "Recent Activities, but gives a selection of latest graphics etc from other areas of the forum.

The "Home" Page will not change much over time, and so it doesn't make sense for regular users to start on that one. However it's the place that new people googling will find first, so it makes sense to have the [Welcome video](#) and other sample material there.

I am sure at some point we'll also move the bulk of the long essay on Pleasure to a separate page, but it's a recent addition, and it's targeted to address the number one issue that distinguishes "some Epicureans" from "other Epicureans." I think it's important for people to realize that up front, so for the time being we'll try it out and see what happens.

I really expect the [welcome video](#) (and associated Welcome page) added this past weekend will constitute what most people will check out first. [Underneath the video it says [Click here for Self-Paced Slides](#) of the above presentation, or [here for the Welcome Page with the text of the narration](#).]

No doubt we'll continue to tweak that front page a lot, but regular users definitely should bookmark one of the other pages as the best way to check in on the forum.

Post by “Julia” of June 18, 2024 at 10:49 AM

That works well! I think it is a good idea.

Downside: It has no "dark theme" option (the toggle for light/dark in the menu doesn't do anything), *and* it isn't handled well by the Dark Reader add-on (the black-to-white gradient in the background stays as-is). If a "dark" color scheme were added to solve that (which could simply use the same dark background as the "Inspire Light Garden" theme), then I'd be persuaded 😊 until then I'll stick to "Inspire Light Garden" with Dark Reader.

Both screenshots taken with Dark Reader enabled. Upper: Default theme without welcome box. Lower: "Inspire Light Garden".



- Home ▾
- Updates ▾
- Resources ▾
- Forum 73 ▾
- Texts ▾
- Gallery ▾
- Calendar ▾
- Other ▾

EpicureanFriends - Home of Classical Epicurean Philosophy / Account Management

Sidebar ↕

Manage Your Account

Account Management

Security

Avatar

Signature

Settings and Privacy

General

Privacy

Settings and Privacy: General

Styles

Style

A - Default Inspire Without Welcome Box At Top ▾

Forces a specific style instead of the default one.

Preferred Color Scheme

Dark Theme ▾

The automatic detection applies the color scheme based on your device's preferences. Some styles might not offer a custom color scheme.

The screenshot shows the website header with the logo "EPICUREANFRIENDS.COM" and a navigation menu including Home, Updates, Resources, Forum (72), Texts, Gallery, Calendar, and Other. A featured banner displays a quote: "Remember that you are mortal, and you have a limited time to live, and in devoting yourself to discussion of the nature of time and eternity you have seen things that have been, are now, and are to come." Welcome Back, Julia! Below the quote is a link "Show my public - Showing 1 posts".

The main content area shows the breadcrumb "EpicureanFriends - Home of Classical Epicurean Philosophy / Account Management" and a "Sidebar" icon. A settings menu is open, showing "Manage Your Account" and "Settings and Privacy: General". Under "Settings and Privacy", the "General" option is selected. The "Styles" section has a dropdown menu set to "Inspire Light Garden" with a note: "Forces a specific style instead of the default one." The "Preferred Color Scheme" section has a dropdown menu set to "Dark Theme" with a note: "The automatic detection applies the color scheme based on your device's preferences. Some styles might not offer a custom color scheme." A close button (v) is visible in the bottom right corner of the settings menu.

Post by "Cassius" of June 18, 2024 at 10:55 AM

Thank you! The theme developer tells me he is working on an update to the Inspire theme that will have a native dark mode, so as soon as that's released we'll get it installed and update all the Inspire variations to allow them in either dark or light.

Ah - also you pointed out to me that "the light-dark toggle doesn't do anything." very good point I had not noticed that aspect. That "Eye" icon is not really a light-dark toggle, but rather a toggle that, when used with the full Inspire theme with Welcome Box, toggles the Welcome box from a "Welcome" message over to a User Control Panel that shows a series of data points about the Users posts. When the Welcome box is turned off, that toggle then doesn't do anything.

I am going to go over right now and cajole the developer to see if he will turn that Eyeball into a light-dark toggle in the next theme update. I'll have to practice how to say "Danke" or "Danke shein(?)" cause he's German too.

Post by “Julia” of June 18, 2024 at 11:00 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

or the Dashboard (pretty much the same as "Recent Activities, but gives a selection of latest graphics etc from other areas of the forum.

For articles, files, and gallery, I use the RSS feed, but I realise that fewer people nowadays use those, so the Dashboard does seem handy.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I really expect the [welcome video](#) (and associated Welcome page) added this past weekend will constitute what most people will check out first. [Underneath the video it says Click here for Self-Paced Slides of the above presentation, or here for the Welcome Page with the text of the narration.]

Yes. When I think back, if the only option I'd have had to make first contact with Epicurean Philosophy were a wall of text, I'd have said "Oi, no!" instead of saying "Oinoanda!" 😊 If the forums are the hook, it's front page must be the bait, and our monkey brains love going to sponge-mode, being told how things are (rather than having to think for themselves; evolution made geared us towards energy efficiency), plus getting that dopamine trickle from a few pleasingly moving pixels (as in the video). The video is very important to lower the threshold.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

regular users definitely should bookmark one of the other pages as the best way to check in on the forum.

I agree.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

That "Eye" icon is not really a light-dark toggle

I meant the "Preferred Color Scheme" (which is probably what you called "native dark mode"). I don't think I ever used that eye toggle up there, but what it switches to (statistics about myself) seems kind of...odd. Not sure what the value in that could be.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I am going to go over right now and cajole the developer to see if he will turn that Eyeball into a light-dark toggle in the next theme update.

Now *that* would be most excellent!

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I'll have to practice how to say "Danke"

"Dangke schee!" in Pennsylvania Dutch, "Merssi viumau!" in Alemannic, "Villmools Merci!" in Luxembourgish, and – drum roll! – "Danke schön!" in German. An *approximate* way to pronounce that would be to say "done-KE Shane", with "done" as in completed, "KE" as in baker, and "Shane" as in as in the George Stevens western. I'm sure the Internet can explain that better than I just did

Settings and Privacy: General

Styles

Style

A - Default Inspire Without Welcome Box At Top ▾

Forces a specific style instead of the default one.

Preferred Color Scheme

Dark Theme ▾

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Post by “Cassius” of June 18, 2024 at 11:12 AM

OK I just expanded my knowledge of CSS, and the Eyeball icon on the "Default Style Without Welcome Box" is now gone, so no more confusion about that.