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About the AARS

Did you realize that there's an organization of rose enthusiasts who actually care that the roses you purchase live up to the highest standards of quality? Well there is and most people don't even know this organization exists. Most consumers probably take for granted a rose's beauty and heartiness because they think that's just the nature of the rose. After all, how else could this elegant beauty have survived through countless centuries?

Well it might surprise you to know that not all roses are worthy of the AARS' Seal of Approval. If a rose cannot measure up to the strict standards set forth by the AARS, the All-American Rose Selections, then it won't get this seal that since 1983 has become synonymous with quality in the world of roses.

This not-for-profit organization of introducers and growers of roses prides itself in evaluating roses not only on how well they look, but also how well they can deal with various changes in climate and even how well they can ward off the peskiest of pests and disease.

For two long years, several new rose specimens are grown in approved test gardens that are located all over the United States. These testing areas are located in California, Massachusetts, West Virginia, Illinois, Wisconsin, Washington and 13 other states of varying climate zones to see how well each specimen can tolerate the different weather patterns.

Those in charge of the test gardens have agreed to follow the growing guidelines developed by AARS, ensuring consistency throughout the evaluation phase. The guidelines are not overly complex.

They've been developed in a way that the average rose grower can understand which also helps to ensure that if a rose does ultimately receive the AARS Seal of Approval it can be successfully grown and maintained by anyone, regardless of their level of rose-growing expertise.

Besides the climate, the rose specimen under evaluation receives numerical scores in many other areas including its fragrance, its color when it opens and when it peaks, its foliage, its ability to flower, its buds, stems and flowers, its vigor and finally its overall value.

Each year several new specimens pass the test and are awarded the AARS Seal of Approval. The 4 winners for 2006 are: Julia Child, an old-fashioned grand dame, just like its namesake with a buttery gold color and excellent disease tolerance; Rainbow Sorbet, a floribunda with a medium sized flower in a bright mix of orange, yellow and red; Wild Blue Yonder, a grandiflora with shades of lavender and the scent of citrus and rose; and Tahitian Sunset, a grand hybrid tea that produces peach-apricot-pink flowers 5 inches in diameter with up to 30 petals each, finished off by the scent of licorice.

Remember, part of the testing criteria is that the AARS winners must be easy to grow by an average-skilled gardener. So make plans to visit your local nursery or garden or home center this spring to snatch up these best of breed roses. They're also available online and via mail order.

A Shady Past: Three Varieties of Roses that Take to the Shade

There are not a whole lot of roses that enjoy being in the shade. Miniature roses and some climbing and shrub roses are usually fairly shade tolerant, as roses grow. Most roses prefer five to six hours in the sun. However, it is possible to find some rose varieties that do okay in partial shade. You will not find a rose variety that thrives in full shade, however. This is because roses need the sun just as much as they need water. And that is quite a bit.

No matter what variety you choose, most roses will bloom less even in partial shade. However, it is possible to choose roses that do okay in the shade, and that do not noticeably lose any blooms. Rose plants that feature large and prolific blooms make up for the loss of blooms, and many roses of pale colors actually look better in the shade. The shading helps them fully show their colors, where they would be a bit washed out looking if they were in the sun all day.

Here are three varieties of rose that give beautiful performances, whether they are in the sun or in partial shade.

Ballerina

This rose flower variety is hybrid musk with five petals. It is a dainty flower and it grows in clusters. The flowers are pink and white, and the musk shrub holds them aloft quite beautifully. It is a hybrid that came into being in 1937 and has provided a delightful fragrance ever since. The Ballerina rose variety is noted for its disease resistance. Because it is naturally resistant to disease and tolerant of partial shade, this is a variety that is relatively easy to care for.

This flower can also bloom into the autumn, creating a long blooming season and providing an extra bit of time to enjoy their beauty. The Ballerina also features attractive hips. It can be trained to be a climber, albeit a small, reaching about six feet. Ballerina's versatility makes it an excellent choice especially for beginners who are looking for something to provide them with a measure of success in growing roses.

Knock-Out Rose "Radrazz"

It may have a long and kind of odd name, but the Knock-Out is, in fact, a real knock out. It is the rose variety that is the most shade tolerant of any rose variety. The color of the blooms is bright, cherry red. These blooms are in a perpetual state of growth and new blooming. They start in the early spring and continue the cycle through the summer, autumn, and even into winter's hard frosts.

Not only is the Knock-Out tolerant of partial shade, it is also very resistant to disease. It is easy to grow and won the "Member's Choice" award for the 2004 American Rose competition. Knock-

Out is a superior choice for beginners, at it practically guarantees success. This rose is also drought resistant and its resistance to blackspot makes it possible to help this rose variety to thrive even in places of high humidity. It is a very versatile rose that can grow in a variety of hardiness zones, ranging from zone four to zone nine.

Playboy

Playboy is a rose variety that is perhaps the most dramatic of the shade tolerant roses. The foliage is glossy, and it sets of the blooms rather well. The blooms themselves are the height of drama. They begin a shade of yellow and the progress to orange. Finally, they reach a deep red color as the blooms fade.

This transformation is one of the reasons that Playboy was the Gold Medal winner in 1989. The flowers are quite large and are semi-double blossoms. Not only does it have a very dramatic appearance and is beautiful at all stages, but Playboy is also disease resistant. It is fairly easy to grow, and it has an aspect that makes it especially suitable for a border or a hedge.

No matter which of these three rose varieties you choose, you are likely to have a positive rose growing experience. These roses are tolerant of partial shade and so it makes it possible for someone without full sun to enjoy the rewards that come with growing beautiful roses.

Party Hardy-The Best Rose Varieties for Those Wild Winter Months

Winter can be an extremely fun time. Ski trips and blankets of white splendor all around. Holidays swoop in to annihilate our diets. Old friends and family members from all around suddenly appear on our doorsteps. Ah, yes, winter can be a joyous time but not necessarily for your roses.

Hopefully, before you planted your roses you did your research and discovered beautiful roses that would thrive in your climate. But maybe, just maybe, you were so elated to be planting roses that you just went with the prettiest rose you could find. Well, that may work in your favor, if you were drawn to certain types of roses.

It is true that you can winterize most roses and they will be there in the spring. It is also true, however, that there are some roses that are more equipped to get through winter than others. If you have a bad experience with your roses this year, after you wipe away the tears, you can begin again by planting roses that have the greatest survival rate.

If you are stationed in one of the tougher hardiness zones, you may want to go with Albs or Rugosas. These are probably the best roses to grow in harsh climates. They are very popular in Alaska and the Canadian interior. Since these areas witness some of the most severe winters in on the continent, it Rugosas and Albs will most likely work for you.

These roses are viral fighters of the cold that produce wonderful bushes with full blossoms. Some are even totally free of diseases and others can live through a minor infestation or two.

They also are not picky about the ground they are planted in. Even if they are not set up in the most rose friendly soil, they tend to grow anyway.

Shrub roses are also hearty characters. They are thick skinned bushes that can withstand little discomfort. They have a good reputation for being disease resistant and reliable. They also have a tendency to make it through the winter with a bit of help. Perfume is a delicate fragrance that emits from these bright yellow blooms.

Specific roses that have impeccable reputations are the Hansa Rugosas, Prairie Dawn Parkland and the Martine Frobisher Canadian Explorer. The Hansa is a crimson Rugosas that bursts with a savory scent that can be smelled before you reach it. It can stand on its own two feet, not needing much attention at all. You need only to admire its beauty and perform minimal maintenance duties.

The Prairie Dawn shrub carries a gentle scent and grows about 4 to 6 feet in width. It too can be a hardy Rose that often steals the show and maybe a little turf, from other roses. You may want to give it a spot light of its own.

The Martin Frobisher is another strong rose plant with a slight fragrance; its hearty limbs are filled with elegant pink blooms. You will be able to admire this one for years to come. This rose will see you in the spring.

There are many more roses that do just fine in less than perfect hardiness zones. You may not be able to grow those desired Tea Roses, but you can still have buckets of roses. Ones that perceive the winter and will be waiting on the other side for you next year. You just have to scout them out. There are tough roses out there waiting to be planted and loved.

If you still want to grow tender roses in zones that are not so tender, you can try. You can try growing them in pots that can be placed in warm places, like a basement. The pot will keep some of the cold out, but you will have to be very aware of when the plant needs to be rescued from outside.

Don't leave your roses to fend for themselves. Cover them up for the winter and perform the duties you need to for your hardiness zone. You can not expect the roses to do all of the work. It must be a team effort. If you are good to your roses there is a much better chance that they will be good to you.

Petal Power: Five Uses for Rose Petals

It might surprise you to find out that rose petals can be used for a variety of different purposes. Some uses have a common everyday application, such as beautifying our gardens and walkways, while other uses are more unusual, such as using them for therapy and cooking. Rose lovers it seems just crave to invent and reinvent new ways to use their favorite flower.

If you're in love with the rose and its sweet smell, then you'll love the neat uses that are listed below. By using your imagination you just might come up with some more unique ways to bring

the smell of the rose into your life. Be creative and have some fun because the rose has a way of making you feel happy just by its very presence.

So, how can you use the rose and its petals besides placing them into a vase?

There are many ways, but look at a few popular categories that people use the rose for in their lives.

- Celebrations
- Personal Therapy
- Cooking
- Medicinal
- Cosmetic

The list is endless on how to use rose petals for each of these categories. However, when considering the use of roses in celebrations one particular idea comes to mind: weddings. Nowhere has the rose been used to such an extent as in the wedding. Its application has now replaced many of the standard traditions of the US wedding.

For example, the rice that was once thrown at the end as the happy couple was leaving to go on the honeymoon, has now been replaced by rose petals. Rose petals are used by flower girls too, and imitation petals are a hot item. They can be wrapped in netting, and given at the reception as mementoes for the wedding guests.

Personal therapy is another area that is not just a hip '60s idea. It gained popularity as aromatherapy in the '80s, and has grown ever since. Relaxing therapy with rose smells are used in candles, lotions, bath oils and perfume too. Professionals in spas that do message therapy are requested quite often to bathe the customer down in the relaxing scent of the rose petal. For home use the rose is the top rated smell that is bought in air fresheners, candles, or for any other type of home freshener device.

More and more people are using the rose petal in cooking. The Native Americans used dried rose petals in their cooking for its unique flavor and aroma. It seems we're returning to their enlightened way of cooking too. From rose hips, or the dried seeds of roses, a highly flavored tea is a good way to end or begin a day. Some types of rose petals can be added to foods that will increase its flavor too.

There are a lot of different dishes that can be created with the rose petal scent. Delicious foods can be eaten, such as apple sauce, breads and cakes, jelly, or soup!

Medicinal uses for rose petals might shock you. The rose scent is used, and has been used in pill making for centuries. It seems medicine is much easier to swallow when the lovely rose petal is ground in it. Herbal teas for colds and other types of infections also have a curative affect too. Certain types of rose petals, especially those that grow with a berry attached with them have been used by the Native Americans too. Their curative properties are high in vitamin C.

Finally rose petals are used in the way we make ourselves beautiful. Rose petals can make your skin glow with health. It reinvigorates dry, patchy skin and leaves emollients on the skin that moisturizes and balances skin tone. Also, combined with other types of flower extractions it acts as a good balancing agent as an astringent for cleaning the skin.

As you can see the use of rose petals for the body, mind, and spirit is plentiful. The rose is not just a rose, but a flower with many varied uses, and it just happens to be beautiful and a very sweet smelling flower that you can enjoy by just gazing on its elegance, and smelling its sweet savor.

Rose Rules: What Each Color Means

Roses are among the most common flowers given. They are given to mark special occasions and holidays. They are also given for no reason at all. Roses are versatile, coming in many varieties and colors. It is possible to find roses to suit just about any taste or preference. And a rose is almost always a welcome gift.

However, just like different varieties of flowers, roses have meanings. The color of the rose given represents different things. While there are few people left in today's societies who actually care about the language of flowers and, more specifically, roses, it is still interesting to know what different colored roses mean. Besides, if you know what the colors mean, and the recipient knows, then you share something that has more meaning than any mere flower.

Red roses: These are the classics. Everyone knows that red roses are symbols of love. A single red rose with a long stem can communicate, "I love you" more eloquently than a grand bouquet of any other flower variety. They are the most popular variety because their message is unmistakable. They are a symbol of enduring romantic love. Because they are so popular, red roses are very expensive around Valentine's Day and Christmas, when people are thinking about special loved ones.

Pink roses: Pink roses come in three main colors. Each of these colors, pale, light, and deep, means something different. Pink roses mainly express feelings of a platonic nature. Pale pink roses symbolize gratitude, grace, and gentleness. Light pink roses indicate happiness and fun. They mean that the recipient is a joy to behold, someone who is fun to be around. Deep pink roses are expressions of gratitude. They are sent in thanks for some benefit the sender received from the recipient.

Lavender roses: Roses of this light purple, sometimes also called lilac are indicative of love at first sight. When someone sends these flowers, he or she is saying that the recipient has enchanted the sender, and that he or she felt an immediate attraction. These roses are especially appropriate to send just after meeting someone, or if you particularly enjoyed a date and felt that there was a strong mutual attraction.

White roses: Like all things white, these are symbols of innocence, purity, and truth. They also send the message that the sender is worthy of the recipient (has pure intentions, is pure in body and soul). White roses also send an "I miss you" message.

Coral roses: Flowers of this color are bright and seem to burn with passion. And for a color so bright, the only message that can be sent is desire.

Peach roses: Sending peach roses just like sending pink roses, is a more platonic gesture. These roses can have two different meanings. The first is of gratitude and appreciation, and the second can be an expression of sympathy.

Orange roses: Orange is a rather enthusiastic color, and this is exactly what orange roses are meant to convey. Orange roses are an indication of the enthusiasm that the sender feels for the recipient. It is a happy, loving sort of enthusiasm. These brightly colored roses also indicate desire.

Yellow roses: Yellow roses are appropriate for a variety of occasions, and are used often in congratulations. Weddings and graduations are very good reasons to send yellow roses. New mothers are also prime candidates for receiving yellow roses. And, because the yellow rose is the flower of Texas, no excuse is ever needed to send yellow roses to a Texan. A Texan is always happy to receive a yellow rose, no matter the occasion.

But there is one thing that yellow roses communicate loud and clear, Æ friendship. You should never send yellow roses to someone for whom you have romantic feelings. These flowers also indicate a desire for freedom, so if your significant other is sending you yellow roses, he or she might be giving you a subtle hint.

Finally, though few people would do this anymore, sending dead roses is always an option. Dead roses, no matter their color, can mean only one thing: "We're through." Sending a dead rose may be the ultimate way to avoid a messy face-to-face break up.

Rose Trees

Looking for a colorful way to make a grand statement? If you like to putter around in the garden, then do what the nobles of the past did and surround your home with rose trees. Doing so will definitely add an air of elegance to any landscape.

Rose trees, also known as Rose Standards, differ from rose plants or rose shrubs in that they are actually cultivated to resemble a tree. A rose tree consists of a long, slender cane, 32 - 36 inches (about 1 meter) in length, void of any foliage from which an abundance of rose flowers literally burst forth.

The 'tree' is created by making two grafts: one at the top of the central cane to support the hybrid tee, grandiflora or floribunda and one at the bottom, at the rootstock.

Miniature rose trees are created in a similar manner, the difference being that the central cane measures only approximately 24 inches. Whether regular-sized or miniature, the end result is a unique rose that has the shape of a lollipop.

To endure the weight of the grafted rose on top, the central cane usually must be staked. Staking is especially important in areas prone to wind. Another problem with rose trees, besides the usual pests and diseases that plague all roses, is the sun. The cane part of the tree rose is especially susceptible to sun scald.

During the winter months it's difficult to protect rose trees from the cold. With regular roses, all that's required to prepare for winter is a layer of mulch around the base. But with the rose tree, to be protected from the cold, mulch must be placed all the way up the cane. The only way to accomplish this is either by relocating the rose tree during the winter, or by engineering a container made from wire mesh to surround the cane that can be filled with mulch.

Besides the seasonal care, growers have to diligently prune rose trees to achieve the right look. The central cane should never be pruned, only the flowering top part. How you prune will depend on the type of rose that sits atop the cane so know the right way before beginning. Improperly pruned roses, regardless of type, are more prone to diseases. And with the rose tree, it can cause an uneven distribution of weight that could break the stems.

You'll find several different species of rose trees. The newest to hit the market is the 'double decker' rose tree that produces two layers of flowers. One is on top, as you would normally expect to see, and the other layer begins closer to the ground although this layer is not considered ground covering.

Yellow Ribbons Double Decker is a beauty. Another popular rose tree is the 'weeping' tree where arched rose stems overflowing with roses cascade towards the ground. The Roseberry Blanket Weeping Tree Rose produces large-sized fuchsia blooms.

Even though Rose Standards require more attention, the attention they'll get when they're established and in full bloom is well worth the effort. They'll add height to your garden and bursts of vibrant color throughout your landscape.

Tea Time: Ten Tips for Choosing Your Tea Roses

Tea roses epitomize our notion of rose beauty: they produce large, often fragrant single blooms dazzle us with their velvety texture, vivid color, and simple elegance. If you'd like to add this classic rose to your garden, be prepared to be dazzled by the sheer variety. There are literally hundreds of different tea rose varieties. They come in all sizes, shapes, and colors. Here are ten tips that will make the process of choosing a tea rose a bit easier.

1) Read the label carefully. Nearly all commercial tea roses come with a label or catalog description. If you experience love at first sight, resist the urge to buy without considering carefully the label information. The last thing you want to do is choose a tea rose that you love, but which will likely not thrive in your garden.

2) Choose a tea rose that will thrive in your climate. If you live in a mild climate, for instance, choose a tea rose is heat tolerant. If you live in a humid climate, choose a tea rose that is resistant to mildew and other fungal diseases. Perhaps most importantly, evaluate the

plant's cold hardiness. Most roses do not fare well in freezing temperatures, so make sure your tea rose can survive a cold winter before you put it in the ground.

3) Be aware of growth habits. Is the tea rose a climber? Is it a rambler? Does it spread sideways rapidly? Will it make a good groundcover? Visualize where the tea rose will be planted in your garden, and what direction it might grow. Also, make note of its average height and width. You don't want to mistakenly plant a tea rose that grows too high for its location.

4) A perfume so sweet. Do you want a tea rose whose fragrance lingers in the summer air? Or does the mere thought make you want to sneeze? Some tea roses don't have much of a fragrance at all, and some are incredibly fragrant. What type of tea rose you choose depends on your specific likes and needs.

5) Consider whether you plan on using your tea rose to produce cut flowers. Some tea roses are better suited for cutting and putting on display, while others have petals that are fragile or dry quickly after cutting. If having cut roses is important to you, make sure to research your top choices.

6) Consider whether the tea rose varieties you are interested in are disease resistant. Tea roses are all prone to disease, but some varieties are more resistant than others. If the mere idea of a mildew infection or Japanese Beetles infestation makes you cringe, consider choosing a tea rose that is widely regarded as disease resistant.

7) Think about the amount of care you can provide. Certain tea roses demand more attention and care to thrive than others. If you think you may not be able to give a tea rose variety the attention it needs, try to find a variety that can thrive with a minimal amount of attention.

8) Consider color. Even though all tea roses are beautiful, you may want to consider how different color types of tea roses will look in your garden. Visualize the tea rose in full bloom. A yellow climbing rose against a blue wall, for instance, can create a stunning display each year.

9) Buy only healthy-looking plants. If you are selecting a tea rose from your local nursery or garden center, choose a plant with at least three strong canes. Avoid buying tea roses with brown roots, shriveled foliage, or damaged branches. Choose tea roses with bright white roots and bright buds at the side of each stem.

10) Purchase your tea roses only from reputable, well-known dealers. Don't attempt to save money by purchasing your tea roses from the back of a truck. You don't want to take the risk of introducing a sick plant to your garden. Disease among roses can spread quickly with ease. Instead, visit your local nursery and pick only the most healthy-looking plants. If you order your tea roses by mail order, deal only with reputable dealers. The extra bit of money will be well worth it when you experience your season of blooms.

Rosy Outlook: Five Hearty Hybrid Roses

Are you drawn to the simple elegance and fragrant beauty of roses? Do you wish you had time to cultivate an extensive rose garden? If you're interested in roses, but don't have the time to tend a large rose garden, don't fret. Consider planting one or more of these hearty hybrid roses that even the casual or novice gardener can cultivate successfully.

1) The Knockout Rose is perhaps the most highly praised of all hearty hybrid roses. The Knockout Rose delivers a high performance with a minimal amount of care. It is one of the most disease resistant roses available, with almost no reported instances of insect infestation, or cases of mildew, black spot, or other fungal diseases.

The Knockout Rose is also very cold hardy, requiring fewer daily hours of sun than most roses. Its flowers range from light pinks to deep magentas, and they provide frequent flowerings with minimal care during the growing season.

2) The Betty Prior Rose is rumored to be the Queen of England's favorite rose. And why shouldn't it be? The Betty Prior is an all-around sensible choice - with its long blooming season, and compact size (usually reaching a height and spread of roughly 3 feet), it's an excellent choice for the rose-lover in search of a beautiful and hardy rose bush.

The Betty Prior blooms in a profusion of pink clusters that slowly fade to white over the course of the growing season. The Betty Prior is known for providing well-spaced flowers that are ideal for cutting and putting on display all year.

3) Another excellent choice is the beautiful Belle Poitevine Rugosa hybrid rose. The Belle Poitevine, originally from Russia, is a vigorous rose bush that tolerates poor soil and long periods of shade. It has large and leathery dark green foliage that complements its beautiful, richly pink, almost magenta, blooms.

The flower of the Belle Poitevine is admired for its crinkled petals, long pointed buds, and its large and loose nearly double blossoms. The rose bush gives repeat flowerings, and makes an excellent hedge. The Belle Poitevine is also an excellent choice for gardeners who long for a fragrant rose garden, as this hybrid rose has a very strong, perfumed fragrance.

4) Another Rugosa-family hybrid that is praised for its ability to thrive in less than optimal conditions is the Rugosa Magnifica hybrid rose. The Rugosa Magnifica is a hybrid of a rose that dates back to 1905. It is drought tolerant, cold hardy, and because of its prickly thorns, works well in areas where wildlife may interfere with your garden.

Unlike most roses, the Rugosa Magnifica is very salt-tolerant, doing well along saltwater bays, oceans, and coasts. In warmer southern climates, heat hardy version of the Rugosa Magnifica may also be found.

With its upright posture, the Rugosa Magnifica makes an excellent decorative shrub, although it can grow up to 5 or 6 feet tall. Its green foliage is very dense from spring through summer, and then turns a lovely golden color during autumn.

During the blooming season, the Rugosa Magnifica produces a gorgeous, nearly doubled bloom. Its flowers are large (from 3 to five inches) and a deep, silky crimson red color. Rugosa Magnesia's are very disease resistant, and provide more than one flowering during the season.

5) One of the loveliest and heartiest hybrid roses is the Nearly Wild hybrid rose. As its name implies, the Nearly Wild is a tough and lovely rose that is a favorite with Rosarians who love it for its wildness. The Nearly Wild is technically a Floribunda that grows into a thick and bushy shrub, usually growing only to about 2 to 3 feet and spread. It blooms with large (usually over 3 inches, and larger in cooler climates) showy pink flowers.

The Nearly Wild is an all-time favorite with gardeners because it blooms in late spring and continues until the winter frost, thus creating a stunning display nearly all year. It gives off a light, apple-like scent and is very disease resistant. The Nearly Wild works great as a low hedge plant because of its relative low growth and spreading nature. And, with its large pink blooms, the Nearly Wild makes an excellent specimen plant.

Hybrid Happenings: What is a Hybrid Tea Rose

Hybrids, Teas, Floribundas, Grandifloras--the world of roses are so vast and confused that even the most experienced gardener may find himself or herself confused. So what exactly are hybrid tea roses? Hybrid tea roses are the result of crossing the Hybrid Perpetual (a European rose) with the Tea rose from China.

Simply stated, hybrid tea roses are the roses you see in the florist's window in the days following up to Valentine's Day. Hybrid tea roses are the classic image of rose beauty. They have large blooms (typically 6 inches in diameter), and usually only produce one bloom per stem. The bloom unfolds elegantly, with large velvet petals that spiral out from the center in mesmerizing layers.

Hybrid tea roses are a favorite of gardener's who love to cut long-stemmed flowers to put on display. They are also a favorite of photographers who love to capture the explosion of petals and colors that hybrid tea roses offer. Because they are known to flower continuously, hybrid tea roses are often referred to as ever blooming or monthly roses.

Hybrid tea roses became wildly popular in the middle of the nineteenth century, when they became "the" rose to have in the garden. The Victorian Era saw a flurry of experimentation with cross pollinization among plant breeders, eventually resulting in the culmination of hybridized tea roses.

Victorian Era plant breeders sought to balance elegance and beauty with perpetual flowering, and they seemed to achieve this in the propagation of hybrid tea roses. The Tea rose, admired for its repeated blooms, was the perfect complement for the Hybrid Perpetual.

The "La France" is generally considered to be the first official hybrid tea rose, although breeders did not keep accurate records in those days. A Frenchman popularly referred to as Guillot, in 1867, discovered it.

It is said that his discovery of the La France was an accident. He was attempting to produce a large bright yellow rose, but instead produced a rose with silvery-pink blooms that turned bright pink at the tip of the petals. The flower was fragrant and very large (nearly 5 inches in diameter) for its time. The large bloom and dramatic colors of the La France made it the star of its day.

Hybrid Tea roses continued to grow in popularity. Their long “lollipop” stems allowed for clear visibility of the bloom and easy cutting. With their vivid color designs and the elegance of their unfurling buds, they were perceived as much more dramatic than previous roses. Perhaps most importantly, hybrid tea roses produced larger and more frequent blooms.

Today, hybrid tea roses are much more commonly grown for cut flowers. They are no longer as prominent in landscape settings as they were during the Victorian Era. However, if you’d like to add the classic beauty of the hybrid tea rose to your garden, here are a few tips on choosing the right hybrid tea rose for you.

Do you want big blooms on long stems that you can arrange and put on display? Hybrid tea roses are probably for you. If you’re looking for roses to landscape your home, consider Grandifloras or climbing roses, instead.

Do you want a rose that emits a strong fragrance? If this is the case, hybrid tea roses may not be for you. Hybrid tea roses usually only give off a faint scent.

Do you want a relatively low-maintenance rose, or are you willing to water every day in during the hot summer months? In general, hybrid tea roses require a lot of water, especially during hot weather. If you’re not prepared to do a lot of watering, hybrid tea roses may not be your best choice. Also, hybrid tea roses do not enjoy the company of weeds, so be prepared to provide proper maintenance.

Can you deal with thorns? Hybrid tea roses are notorious for their thorns. If you don’t think you’ll have the patience to deal with this thorny issue, you might want to reconsider hybrid tea roses. However, breeders have been able to produce several thornless varieties of hybrid tea roses. These thornless roses might be a little more expensive and difficult to find, but the trouble is most definitely offset by their beauty.

Climate Zones and Rose Gardening

If you want to be the proud owner of a bountiful garden this year, the first thing you need to find out is which climate zone you live in. It’s helpful to know that your town gets a lot of sunshine throughout the year, but that’s not enough. It’s actually the cold temperatures that make a difference in what you can and cannot grow in your area.

Know Your Zone

Anyone who knows anything about gardening will tell you that the most reliable source of this type of climate information is the USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map. Consisting of 11 different climate zones covering all 50 states, Canada and Mexico, this map will help you determine what you can plant in your garden.

When you purchase plants, they'll come with a set of growing instructions that'll describe the growing conditions the plants need to thrive. It doesn't matter whether you plan to plant vegetables, flowers or plants to use as landscaping. Don't purchase anything until you've checked the USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map and confirmed your climate zone.

The map is quite large and very colorful. Its creation was a joint collaboration of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Arnold Arboretum (of Harvard University). The map is a compilation of years of weather data that tracked the average low (coldest) temperatures in various regions throughout the United States. Each of the different colors represents a different climate zone with Zone 1 being the region with the lowest (coldest) temperature.

There, temperatures climb as low as -50 F (-45 C). At the opposite end of the zone chart is Zone 11, where the lowest temperature any time of year is always above 40 F (4 C).

The boundaries between the different climate zones for the most part lie as you would expect, with the colder zones covering the northernmost parts of North America and gradually warming the further south you go. Slight variations can be seen at points of higher elevation, again, as would be expected.

It's easy to figure out your area's climate zone. If you're online, locate a website with the USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map and then click where you live (get as close as you can). The map will zoom in on your region and inform you of the corresponding zone. Then you'll know!

Why the Map is Important to Rose Gardening

Roses really aren't as difficult to grow as most people think. They do require regular care and maintenance, but the number one thing roses need is an appropriate climate in which to grow. There are many varieties of roses and some are hardier than others, making them better able to handle colder climate zones provided they've been given the proper seasonal preparations.

If you live in a colder hardiness zone (a lower-numbered zone) you'd want to look for roses that are bred for that zone, otherwise, you might find that those same roses that looked so perfect in the nursery don't look so healthy in your garden!

Climate Control: The Best Roses to Grow in Your Climate

What type of roses should you grow? Should you go with the popular Hybrid Teas or the hearty, far reaching Climbing Roses? Well, before you go with any type of rose, do your research.

When planting roses, save yourself some sorrow and pick roses that will grow well where you live. If you run out and get roses without researching which ones will grow in your climate, you may end up being very sad the next spring. Planting roses that agree with the weather in the area that you live in will increase your success rate.

While some of us live in a sunny climate, this is not true of all of us. There are places where the wind howls and snow falls almost continuously through the late and early months of the year. These may sound like areas that roses are not welcomed, but this is not so. There are roses that will agree with your climate

They grow award winning roses in Montreal where the temperatures can dip down near Artic levels. Roses even spring up after the rough Siberian winters. You may have to take extra precautions to keep them going, but none the less, you can have your roses. So don't bury your hopes about starting that beautiful rose garden.

First you need to find out which climate zone you live in. Hardiness zones range from 1 to 11. It is designated for areas that can reach -50 F. 11 represent places where temperatures never fall below 40 F. Check out a zone map to determine the average minimum temperature for your area. You can view a zone map online or at a gardening store.

Once you have discovered your hardiness zone you can select a rose that will survive well there. You should use your head for this judgment, instead of your heart. You may want to be able to pluck your own red Tea Roses from the garden for Valentine's Day, but if you are living in Alaska, that's not going to happen in an outdoor garden. But you can find ways around your climate dilemma. You could grow impressive Old Garden roses.

If you are a rose lover on the great divide of the hardiness zones, there is hope for you! Rosarians living in all types of climates and they still enjoy their favorite plant. Tender roses may not be your best bet. But if you are brave and forge ahead you will find the right rose. Plant your Tea Roses and put in the work. Tea Roses will require extreme loyalty and determination. But if they are your passion and you can spare the dedication, plant on.

Rugosa Roses produce well-formed purplish red petals. They bloom in large clusters and offer repeat flowering throughout the season. Rugosa's are disease resistant and with good winter protection, will be bursting with life in the spring.

Floribunda Roses have smaller blooms than hybrid teas but they grow in huge clusters that bloom simultaneously. These roses are great for grand displays because they bring forth hefty, expressive bundles of flowers.

Floribundas are excellent roses to plant if you want roses that stay in constant bloom. They also don't need as much tender loving care as other classes of roses and do well in zones 4-9 with proper winter protection.

Miniature Roses are dainty novelties that are often used to line beds and driveways. Most grow to about 15 to 30 inches and favor tiny hybrid teas and floribundas. They are frequently grown in containers and make classy edges to gardens. They survive well in zones 5-9.

Shrub Roses are represented by their rambling growth pattern. They reach heights between 5 and 15 feet in all directions if the environment is suitable. Shrub Roses resemble Old Garden roses in shape and form and grow in plentiful clusters.

Hybrid teas have large well formed blooms of 30 to 50 petals. They grow on long stems with single or cluster blooms. Hybrid teas bloom every six or seven weeks and flourish well in zones 5-9.

If you live in zones 1-3 you may want to grow roses that are annuals or roses kept in containers. A pot will hold in the heat of the soil, bringing forth abundant roses in the spring.

Sunny Disposition: How Roses Benefit From the Sun

It is known that most roses require six hours of direct sunlight in order for them to grow healthy and continue to bloom. Without this amount of sun, almost every single kind of rose will not produce the flowers that you would like to see. They may also be more prone to getting diseases without the direct sunlight. There are several ways in which roses will benefit from having the direct sunlight for the required amount of time each day.

One of the most important ways in which roses benefit from the sunlight is through the morning sun. Most roses do best when receiving sunlight during this part of the day. This will dry the leaves from mildew, and will prevent disease. The quicker the dew is able to dry from the night air, the better and healthier the roses will be.

Often times, black spots are what begins the diseases on the leaves of the roses. This is caused from water splash or dew. It then spreads to other leaves on the rose. Once you have black spots on the leaves, they will not disappear. The only way to get rid of them after they are a disease on your roses is to cut off the leaves.

An easy way to prevent this from spreading is to make sure that the roses are in the right sunlight, allowing the leaves to naturally dry, and not allowing the black spots or mildew to move to other parts of the rose bush.

Roses also often do better with morning sun because it is not as hot as the afternoon sunlight. Roses are usually sensitive to the heat that is caused by the sun in the afternoon. When planting your roses, make sure that they receive the full six hours of light in the morning and later afternoon sun so that they don't become overheated in the afternoon sun. This may cause the roses to not bloom as fully as they would be able to otherwise.

If you decide to plant a rose away from the sun, it may cause many problems. The first problem that will occur is that they will bloom less. They may also become leggy, instead of being full and thick with their stems. They will also be more prone to diseases. This is because the sun offers several nutrients in order for them to bloom properly. The sun also takes away the cause of the diseases, which is often a result from the dampness of night air.

If you are unable to find a place around your garden that will get the required six hours of sunlight, there are certain types of roses that will benefit while having more shade than is generally required. These will still need some sunlight, but require less than the other roses. If you want to find a rose that has bigger blooms, it will most likely not need as much sunlight as the other types of roses.

There are also types of roses that are more disease resistant from mildew and black spots. Roses that are climbers are particularly good for not needing as much sunlight as other types of roses.

If you have already planted roses in a spot that doesn't receive six hours of sunlight a day, there are some things that you can do to prevent disease from spreading. First, find if there is a place where you can plant the roses that receive at least some direct sunlight during the day. The more sunlight they can get, the better it will be.

The next thing to do is to always water in the morning. This will allow the water that gets on the roses to dry off quickly, which will allow for natural disease prevention throughout the day without having to use the sun's warmth in order to dry out the water.

Remember that roses will thrive better when they are given six hours of sunlight. It prevents disease and allows them to grow more to their potential. Not allowing roses the proper amount of sun, may cause problems for the roses. The sun provides the nutrients and the right warmth to allow roses to bloom and flourish in your garden.

Right as Rain: Determining How Much Rain Your Roses Need

Roses are one of the more popular types of plants that are grown in gardens. They are the type of plant that demands having nutrients from the right type of soil, sun and water. Without having these different elements in place, it will be hard to survive. Beyond recognizing the different things they need to survive, is determining which types of roses need how much of each type of nutrient.

There are several different types of roses, as well as several reasons for growing them. There are also several ways to determine how much water your roses need. One thing that must be determined is how much water your roses will need in order to be able to bloom to their fullest.

The best time to water your roses is in the early morning. If they are watered at night, it could cause water to stick onto the leaves, which will eventually cause black spots and mildew to form, both which can spread to other leaves on your roses and cause problems with diseases.

Most roses require a lot of water in order to be able to do well in your garden. It is known that most roses survive best when they are watered thoroughly at an average of two times a week. However, there are several other factors to help you determine how often you should water your roses.

The first thing to look at is what kind of soil your roses are planted in. Each type of soil that is available has a certain holding capacity for the water that you give to your roses. One way to determine how much water your soil will hold is to fill a jar with soil that is two-thirds full. You can then fill the rest with water. From this, you will be able to see how quickly and how efficiently the water soaks into the soil.

If it doesn't soak in fast, or at all, it is better to water your roses more often. You can also determine how much water is being retained by seeing how moist the soil is that your roses are in. If it seems dry at the top, then they need to be watered again. It is best to remember that sandy type soil will not hold water as well, as soil that is more clay based.

The next thing to consider when determining how much you should water your roses, is how deep the roots are planted into the ground. The deeper the roots are of your roses, the more water you should give to them.

This is also used in relation to what type of soil it is. If the soil is more clay based, it will be easier for the water to soak through and get the bottoms of the roots. If it is sandier, it will be harder for the bottoms of the roots to get as much water, as it will not soak through, but will stay on the surface of the soil.

The next thing to consider when determining how much water your roses need is the type of environment and climate that they are in. If it is a hotter season, it will be harder for the soil and the roses to retain the water that you are giving them. If it is windy, the water may also not be able to soak into the ground as well.

One more thing to look at when deciding how much water your roses should get, is what type of roses you have. The first way to see how much water each rose will use is by looking at the size of the leaves.

Leaves are the first place where the water goes. If they are larger in size, then the roses will need more water. You can also look at the health of the overall plant. If your roses are beginning to wilt, it means that they need more water than what you are giving them. Another way to see if the plant is not healthy is to look for pre-wilting signs. These can be seen by dull leaf colors from what they normally are.

There are several ways to determine how much water your roses need in order to stay healthy and growing. Checking the soil, knowing how deep the roots go, and by paying attention to the size and color of the leaves on your roses all will help you to determine how often you should water your roses, as well as how often they will need more moisture.

Rules of Irrigation: How to Water Your Roses

Roses love water. They are constantly thirsty. One of the keys to growing roses successfully is to provide them with plenty of water. This becomes very important during times of drought or of higher heat. Chances are that you will need to water your roses at least once a week. During

hotter times, and just after they are planted, it may be necessary to water your roses more often in order to keep up with the water demands these plants have.

Just as you need to meet the needs of the other plants in the landscape, it is necessary to water your roses to keep them in good shape. When you water your rose's plants well, they will treat you to beautiful blooms and sensual scents.

Because water can be expensive, especially in the drier and hotter areas of the country, it can be a daunting task to take care of roses and to ensure that they have adequate water to thrive. The good news is that there are some simple things that can be done to ensure that you are watering your roses with maximum efficiency, ensuring that you are watering them in a way that is cost effective.

Mulch

Mulching is a great way to help your roses avoid water stress. Water stress occurs when your roses feel dried out. The leaves begin to sag a little and become limp. This is a sign that your roses are feeling the effects of water stress. Mulch is a way to help the soil retain its moisture. Good mulch will help prevent evaporation and provide moisture to the roots of your rose plants. As a bonus, mulch made from organic materials will break down and add further nutrients to the soil.

Good drainage

It may seem odd that roses dislike standing water. However, it is true. While roses need at least one to two inches of water each week to properly thrive, they do not like standing water. Water standing around the roots is an invitation for molds and mildews to infect the plant. Make sure that the rose bed or garden has good drainage so that the soil is moist, but also free of standing water.

Water in the morning

Water your roses as early as possible in the day. Make sure you water early enough to avoid evaporation of most of the water during the heat of the day so that the plant receives adequate moisture. Additionally, it is important to water roses early in the day so that the top of the plant, the leaves and such, have time to dry before nightfall. Wet leaves at night encourage a dank atmosphere inside the confines of the rose bush, making it prone to fungus diseases.

Water deeply

Deep watering is a must with roses. This deep watering must be done so that the water gets all the way down to the roots. The planting hole for roses puts the root location at 15 to 18 inches down.

Make sure that you check the depth that the water reaches. Rose plant roots are generally rather extensive, and you want to make sure that the root system is well cared for. If you do not water deeply, you may encourage the roots to grow close to the soil's surface. This can

result in plants that are less hardy and more prone to be damaged by harsh winter weather or further cultivation of other plants.

Some ways to get good, deep water include bubblers and soaker hoses. Individual bubblers for each plant can be very useful, as they promote individualized watering. Soaker hoses are among the most cost effective ways to get a deep watering. These hoses are designed to inexpensively deliver a great deal of water to the roots of plants. The key is to make sure that you run the soaker hose long enough to make sure that the water makes it down to the root zone.

Even though roses do like a great deal of water, it is possible for them to get too much. Follow the above guidelines and then watch your plant. If there is too much water, the rose plant will not receive needed oxygen. When this happens the leaves turn yellow and fall off. So, water your plant regularly, but make sure to watch for signs to prevent over watering.

Water Ways: Picking the Best Time to Water Your Roses

Think a quick spray with the hose is enough to keep your roses lovely and blooming? Think again. How, and when, you decide to water your roses is one of the most important and often overlooked aspects of basic rose care. Here are a few tips and guidelines for keeping your roses supple, healthy, and beautiful year-round.

Early Morning is best

The general rule when setting up your watering schedule is that early morning watering is best. If you water in the middle of the day or in the afternoon, much of the water will become evaporated before it can even reach the roots. Many gardeners also prefer early morning watering because it allows the plant to become hydrated, and the rising sun helps dry the leaves relatively quickly.

If you water in the evening, the water will not become evaporated, but your plant is at greater risk of developing mildew because the leaves may remain wet for several hours. Of course, not everyone's schedule allows for a regular early morning watering routine. If this is the case, and you must water in the evening, try to avoid getting the leaves wet.

Standing water on leaves makes the plant susceptible not only to mildew, but insects, pests, and variety of fungal diseases. If you can avoid leaving wetting the leaves, then evening watering can work quite well because the cool of the night allows your rose bush to absorb the moisture.

Feed Summer Thirst

Like it or not, roses are one of those flowering plants that require a lot of water. They are thirsty plants, requiring approximately 1 to 2 inches of water each week. So it comes as no surprise that summer is one of the times you'll find yourself watering the most. When summer

comes, expect to water more than once a week, depending on climate, type of rose plant, the location of the plant, and its soil structure.

Use a rain gauge to see how much water is reaching the soil, and plan your watering schedule accordingly. Hopefully, you mulched your roses thoroughly in the spring. Mulch helps your rose plants conserve moisture during those long hot summer days. The easiest and best way to gauge whether your plant is receiving enough water involves simple observation.

Are the leaves limp or sagging? If so, your roses probably need more water. Are the leaves yellowed, and starting to drop off? This could be a sign that you're over watering, and the plant is starved for oxygen.

Even though roses love water, know that they do not tolerate standing in puddles of water. Roses require drainage, so it is crucial that you don't leave your plants in standing water. Find a balance wherein your roses are kept consistently moist (think mulch), but aren't kept overly saturated. When winter comes, plan on reducing the frequency of watering.

Water at the Base of the Plant

When you water your roses, make sure you water at the base of the plant. Roses have extensive, complex root systems. Rather than dowsing the foliage and blooms, you should be aiming to move water to the plant's roots. Drip irrigation has made watering roses correctly easier than ever. Drip irrigation allows your rose bush to absorb water slowly and thoroughly, without wetting the foliage.

A drip or soaker hose will usually supply your rose plants with roughly 1 to 2 gallons of water per foot each hour, depending on your water pressure. You can connect your drip irrigation system to a water timer that allows you establish an automatic watering schedule. Even if you're not able to water in the morning, an automatic drip irrigation system can allow you to adjust your timer so that your roses receive early morning water feedings at regular intervals.

Spray Away the Pests

Although you should definitely avoid soaking the leaves on your rose bush in order to prevent against mildew, a quick and thorough spray every 2 to 3 days to wash away pests is not a bad idea. Adjust the setting on your hose spray to a fine mist and spray the leaves thoroughly. Make sure to reach the inner foliage of the plant, pests and insects gather. This should be done early in the day so that the leaves can dry quickly.

Pile it On: Five Guidelines for Creating Your Own Compost Pile

Compost is the product of decomposed organic matter (things like kitchen scraps, leaves, grass and other garden waste). Organic material like this will decompose with or without any assistance from you, but why not help it along and reap the benefits of your own compost pile?

Compost is not considered a fertilizer because it does not really contain a high level of essential nutrients. It is viewed as a soil conditioner and does serve many other important functions. Compost can attract insects such as earthworms and it can also improve the composition or structure of your soil.

You can try cold composting, which basically means just letting the organic material sit in the bin. This takes a lot longer than hot composting where you turn your pile every few days to supply oxygen to the organisms in your pile.

Location

The first thing you will need to decide is where to start your compost pile. Check with your city to ensure that there are no by-laws or ordinances that might prevent you from having a compost pile or placing it where you want it. You need to remember that a compost pile can get messy so be sure to place your pile within easy reach of the hose to deal with any dirt and muck.

Bugs will delight in your new compost pile and make it their new home, so be sure to keep that in mind when deciding on a location. A little corner of your garden that is far enough away from your home and any neighboring properties is probably the ideal spot for your new compost pile.

Containers

There are many, many composite products on the market now. There are even gadgets that shake, rattle and roll your compost for you, but really the only investment you need to make is a compost container. You can simply fence off your compost pile or you can use some kind of bin or container to hold your organic material.

This can be homemade or recycled from a large plastic bin you have around the house or you can purchase one at your local garden center. The bins designed specifically for composting come in all sorts of shapes and sizes but the important thing is to keep it simple. You really don't need to spend a lot of money on gadgets you don't need.

Layer It

A good compost pile starts with layers of waste and soil. You can start off layering leaves, grass clippings and leaves over the soil and then start adding your kitchen waste. You can add things like eggshells, fruit and vegetable scraps, and coffee grounds to your compost pile. You should never ever add meat or pet waste to your compost pile. Once you have your initial layers of garden and kitchen waste, add a layer of soil and manure.

Moisture

Your compost pile needs to be kept moist, though it should never be wet. You can add some water whenever your pile seems to be getting dry. You could consider adding some beer to your composite pile. Beer contains yeast, which will help keep the bacteria in your compost pile

and keep those little critters happy. Whether you add a mix of beer and water or just H₂O, the important thing is to keep that pile moist.

Maintenance

Your compost pile does not require a lot of maintenance. You want to be sure that you continue adding garden and kitchen waste to your pile and that you also mix in enough soil and manure to encourage faster decomposing. You need to keep the pile moist and you should also turn your compost pile about once a week to improve circulation and the decomposing process.

Compost is ready when it looks like dark soil and has an earthy smell. You can now start incorporating your compost into your garden! You can also use compost in your home plants-- but be warned that it must be sterilized first. To do this, you must bake your compost in a 200F oven for approximately thirty minutes.

There really is no best way to compost. Organic matter will decompose regardless of what you do. What's important is finding a method or style that works for you and your gardening needs.

Soil Yourself? Important Soil Components for Your Rose Garden

The success of your roses depends on many factors, but having the proper soil is really crucial. If you are new to planting roses, you probably have little idea of what soil to use and when and how often that soil needs to be maintained. Even if you've had roses before, it can be hard to find just the right soil mix for your roses with all the options out there now.

There are four elements you must have for good rose soil. First are inorganic materials, which include the sand, silt and clay. This should make up approximately 45% of the loam. Then there are the organic materials or humus, which is naturally decomposed materials. You also need water and air and in a good mix about 50% of the loam are pore space with half of that being water and then other half air.

To thrive, roses need lots of nutrients. Be sure that you use fairly substantial amounts of compost and manure with your own garden soil. You can substitute store bought manure and peat moss if need be. Soil with a pH between 6.5 and 6.8 is best for roses. The soil should feel light and if you squeeze it, it should crumble. If it is too sticky or sandy then you need to adjust the levels of your materials. Tilling the soil is also a good way to prepare for your planting.

It is very difficult to find a mix as well balanced as this. Most of the time you must create it yourself. An inexperienced mixer can run into quite a few problems though. You need to really be careful when adding organic material, because if you add too much then the soil will become too acidic. You also need to be sure that you add some nitrogen to the soil if you have mixed in organic matter that is not yet decomposed.

Organic materials must be exposed to nitrogen before they can start decomposing. After mixing together your loam, be sure to check the drainage. You want to make sure that there is

good drainage in your soil. You can increase the drainage of your soil by adding peat moss but don't add too much because it decomposes very slowly and can affect the pH level of the soil.

You can test this by digging a hole approximately one foot deep and filling it with water. The time you're aiming for is 15 minutes. If the water takes longer than 15 minutes to drain then you need to work on improving the drainage and if it takes less then you will need to add more organic matter to increase the retentiveness.

When planting your roses be sure to dig a hole that is at least 12-15 inches deep. You want to be able to set your rose in the hole without damaging the roots. Before placing the plant in the hole, loosen the dirt right at the bottom and add some manure. When you put the rose plant in the hole, you will need to keep the dirt around it loose. After adding about 3/4 of the dirt, water the plant and then add the rest of the soil. Be sure to mound the dirt around the rose plant to prevent it drying out.

Though the nutrients you add when making your soil mix will give your roses a good start, you still need to be sure to fertilize your roses throughout the spring, summer and early fall.

Spring is the best time to plant a new rose garden or rejuvenate your existing soil. Fall is the time to begin preparing your roses to survive the winter months. When you are maintaining your garden in the summer or when you are preparing for the winter, be sure not to disturb the soil around your roses.

Moving around the dirt or mulch excessively could expose and damage the roots. After a few freezes, you should try to put a mound of compost around the plant to protect the roots during the hard winter months. When spring arrives again, you can rejuvenate your old soil. You should also remember to use protective mulch each spring around your roses. The mulch will help keep the moisture in.

To Form a More Perfect Union: Summary of Rose Grafting

Many people choose to graft their roses to help them grow better and to bloom better. Grafting is not necessarily difficult, but it does require some skill and some forethought before making the attempt. There are many reasons to graft roses, and you can find that it is possible to create a more successful and uniform garden when you practice rose grafting.

Rose grafting is much like any other type of grafting. It is basically taking one part of a plant (usually a piece of the stem) and attaching it surgically to the root or stem with roots of another plant. The top portion of the graft, the stem, is known as the scion.

It is called either a bud wood or a bud stick. The bottom part of the grafted rose plant is called the stock, although some people refer to it as the under stock or the root stock. The union is the place on the plant where the scion and the stock are healed together. On roses, this is usually someplace below the soil line.

A rose graft works best when a superior scion is chosen to be attached to a root system that is adapted to growing in particular conditions. If you wish to grow a rose that is of a less hardy variety as compared to your area's hardiness zone, then grafting can help you. You graft the less hardy scion rose to the roots of a rose plant better suited for the zone. The scion then receives its hardiness and nutrition from the roots that are adapted to the growing conditions, borrowing from its strength.

Here are some other advantages associated with grafted plants. First of all, they are usually more uniform than plants grown from seeds. Flower color and season, as well as bloom size and shape, are usually much more in line with the other flowers when multiple scions from one plant are then grafted onto a variety of different stocks. Additionally, because the scions are already in a stage where they bloom, grafted roses tend to flower much sooner than their seed-planted counterparts.

The scion is mature and "is aware" that it should be flowering. It does so, long before a rose from a seed or juvenile plant would flower. Roses are often grafted because it makes it easier to propagate a wider variety of blooms if desired.

Roses are among the easiest plants to graft because they are nearly all compatible with other rose plants. Even most rose hybrids are compatible with other roses for grafting. It is possible to determine a rose root system that works well in the growing conditions of your garden and then plant only those.

Then, choose the roses you would like to have and graft them onto the well-adapted roots. This will give you the chance to grow just about any rose type you would like, without having to worry about whether it is a good choice for your particular growing situation.

There are a few things you should do to experience a more successful rose graft. First of all, make sure that the knife you use is sharp. A clean cut is essential for successful rose grafting. It is possible to buy knives made especially for grafting at most garden centers. These knives are sharpened only on one side, so you need to make sure you get the knife made for your dominant hand (grafting knives come in left-handed and right-handed models).

Next, you should make sure that your scions are taken from firm, young stems of the plant you want to graft. It is a good idea to choose stems that have some wood (roses are considered a woody plant). The best time for grafting roses is when the blooms are fading and their petals are dropping, but before the buds swell up in preparation for the next flowering.

When grafting, it is essential to do it quickly. The cut surfaces can dry out in seconds, so try to perform the surgery as quickly as possible. Make sure you are well prepared before the cut is made. It is a good idea to practice making cuts beforehand to get the hang of making a smooth cut quickly. Another way to prevent drying is to put the end of the scion, cut side down, against your tongue while you work on the stock. Do not do this if you have recently sprayed your plants, as it can make you very sick.

Ways of Winter: Five Ways to Take Care of Your Roses in Winter Months

If you are a Rosarian, no matter where you live, you will want to winterize your roses. There is a school of thought that says winterizing is not necessary for some roses in some colder climates. But, while some climates permit minimal winter preparation and some rose varieties require little work for the winter, all roses need some type of treatment for any type of winter.

Roses are delicate plants that not only benefit from, but need, special attention. Of course, the return that roses give growers is ample to the efforts put into their care. Worldwide they are one of the most beloved plants and have come to be recognized as a sign of beauty and love.

So why risk losing your precious roses because you did not winterize them correctly? A little time and effort can greatly improve the survival rate of your roses. Preserve your roses. Five easy steps can help your roses through the toughest of winters.

Don't let the winter month's sweep in and steal them away from you. Roses are resilient little troopers if you give them a jumpstart. If you set your roses up properly for the long, dark, snowy months ahead, they will be waiting for you in the spring. In climates that produce temperatures that remain below 20-degrees F (7-degrees C) for long stretches without snow cover apply cover to your roses.

If winters in your climate bring temperatures below 10 degrees F (12 degrees C) protective covering is necessary. In climates where winter is cool but low temperatures are rare, leave roses out in the open.

Just before September hits stop feeding and pruning your roses. This will stop the growth of delicate new blossoms that can not survive the winter from forming. After the first frost give your roses a good watering session. This will give the roses a good start as they head into a long stretch of independent care.

Take the time to give your rose bed a thorough cleaning. Get rid of any diseases and insects. Remove fallen petals and leaves in the rose bed. Don't attempt to reuse the rose bed debris in compost. Those unwanted pests may be lying in wait. Get rid of any old leaves so no insects hitch a ride on your roses into winter.

The time to begin preparing your roses for winter depends largely on your climate. In some climates you will want to begin protection after the first frost. In others you don't need to bundle your roses up until after the second frost. Apply protection as late as possible without compromising your roses and remove it as early as you can. Late November is a good time to get the protection on, but if your climate affords it, wait until Christmas.

Hybrid teas are the most popular roses grown in America. They are partially derived from plants that grow in moderate regions where winters are extremely mild. That means they are especially sensitive to the cold weather. Pile a six to eight inch pile of dirt along the base of the bush before the ground completely freezes.

While there are a few Rosarians that support protecting more than the bud union, most believe that covering the buds will suffice, unless you are growing climbing roses. Then you want to cover as much as you can. Wrap a heat conducting material around the bud union of the rose.

If you are dealing with climbing roses, these same basic steps will help you to winterize. Gently remove the canes from the arbors and bind them to one another. Remove the foliage and bend the canes to the ground before placing a wood and wire frame above the plant. Then the bush, without any major pruning, is encased entirely in a thermal blanket.

It is good to get your roses back into the open as soon as possible. Late April is a great time to set your roses free. New growth will have been stifled long enough to prevent damage from late season frosts. What destroys roses in the winter is debatable. Some believe it is the dehydrated soil. Other think it's the first strong frost, winterizing itself is also up for debate. This is a case of better safe than sorry.

Trellis Training - What You Need to Know About Climbing Roses

Climbing Roses are a wonder of the rose world. Planting one can really spice up your rose garden or enhance the quaintness of your surroundings. You will be amazed at the vigorous, hungry growth of these powerful plants. They can be trained to climb on top of an archway or over your doorway.

These extraordinary plants are boisterous roses filled with sweet fragrances and powerful blooms. They are popular, brave roses that boldly go where other roses can't. Planting Climbing Roses will give you a great return on your gardening efforts. But there are a few things you need to know before you get these special roses in the ground.

Perhaps the most important thing to consider is size. Climbing Roses can be very greedy. Are you in the market for 30 foot tendrils that will crawl over the width of your domicile? Or would you like a well-contained rose for your fence that will only grow to be about eight feet in height? Climbing Roses need, and will take all, the room they can possibly stretch themselves across. They have been known to grow almost endlessly in width and height.

If you choose to plant Climbing Roses, be aware of the space they will encompass upon full maturity. These roses can become vigorous rambling plants that climb onto walls and arches you wish they wouldn't. That means that you need to have the appropriate space for them to grow into. If you don't, they will simply take it.

Climbing Roses are mutations of bush varieties. They usually present a large spring bloom as well as a spattering of blooms over the rest of the season. Blooms on Climbing Roses are shown to be of a higher quality than those on the bush types. If you buy a rose that grows larger than what you would like, pruning it to keep it under control will destroy the plant.

Climbing Roses are vivacious growers that can bring immense beauty to your garden. They have the ability to be stunning landscape additions. Their growth patterns and height make

them ideal decoration for architectural designs. Climbing Roses will extend along fences or windows and door frames if trained.

Be aware that Climbing Roses use a ton of energy to spread themselves around the way they do. That means that blossoms may be a bit spaced. The smaller your Climbing Rose is, the more blossoms it will be subject to have. Gauge how full of a rose you want to have before you plant.

You will want to grow your rose covered trellis in a site facing the east. Hot western afternoon sunlight is harsh for Climbing Roses. An area where there is some protection from the wind is also desirable. However, even if you don't meet all of these requirements Climbing Roses are a sturdy variety and flourish in most conditions. If you have had problems growing roses in the past, try Climbing Roses. They are very kind to novice growers.

Spraying Climbing Roses is not always an option. You will want to begin with a disease resistant rose if you are looking for a big grower. Roses on fences and around arches will be easier to protect from disease. Some varieties gain disease resistance as they get older.

It is a good idea to provide some protection for Climbing Roses during the winter. This can be challenging for the larger varieties but the smaller ones are as easy to winterize as most other roses are. How often you want the rose to bloom is something else to consider. The Climbing Roses that grows to mammoth proportion often only bloom once in spring while others keep blooming through spring and fall.

If the rose is meant to add character to your floral arrangement you probably want one that blooms frequently. Proper watering and fertilizer will help you get the most mileage out of your roses.

There are many common colors and variations of those colors to choose from. Are you looking for fragrant flowers that will spruce up your landscape? Or are you searching for a reserved subtle flower to quietly build mood? Take your time and peruse the numerous types until you get to one that captures your heart. Choose a climbing Rose you will love for years to come.

What You Need to Know About Drying Roses

Roses are beautiful flowers that have graced homes for literally thousands of years. Roses are flawless, colorful, large, small and simply perfect in every way, except for one: a rose, being a living thing, eventually will die.

But there are ways to let their splendor live on! Drying roses is a great way to preserve their beauty. With very little effort and very little expense, dried roses can look just as exquisite when put together in an arrangement as fresh.

Rose Drying Techniques

Air drying and sand drying are two common rose drying techniques. Air drying is easiest and requires only a good pair of shears, some wire, a coat hanger and a dark dry location. Begin by cutting the stem from the rose, as close to the head of the rose as you can get. Then insert a piece of wire about 6 or 8 inches long into the rose head.

When drying roses they need to be upside down, so take the end of one wire and wrap it around the bottom part of the hanger. Continue wrapping the wires of each rose until the hanger is full. Leave some space in between each rose head so air can circulate. Then place the hanger into a dark, dry area (an unused closet works great). It'll take roses anywhere from 1 to 3 weeks to dry thoroughly.

Roses can also be hung in bunches upside down from a nail. Just leave stems intact, remove bottom leaves, gather a few stems together and hold with an elastic band. Place in a dark, dry area until dry.

The sand rose drying technique takes a bit more effort, but works great! You cut a rose while it's still at its peak, and cut the stem so that about one inch remains. Make sure the leaves and stem are dry (no dew or other water). Place florist's wire into the stem and up into the head of the flower. Next find a deep open box and begin filling it with white-colored sand until the roses can stand upright in the sand.

Next carefully begin adding sand around the base, and under and over each of the petals. The goal is to use the sand as a way to maintain the shape of the rose. Continue filling the box with sand until each rose is covered. Move sand-and-rose filled box to a drying area and leave it there for 1 - 3 weeks.

Take extreme care when removing dried roses. Slowly tip the box to begin emptying sand. Grab onto each rose as it becomes free of the sand and continue until all roses are sand-free.

Roses can also be dried using wax, glycerin or a desiccant but these techniques are a bit more involved. Another popular drying method is to place a rose between the pages of a book.

Dried roses have many uses. They're perfect in floral arrangements, decorative wreaths, wedding bouquets and favors, and framed artwork. Dried rose petals make great potpourri and confetti, too!

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