

2017 Cut Flowers of the Year



Fresh Flower

Dahlia 'Café au Lait'

This elegant flower is one of the most popular dahlias on the market. Its large blooms range from a soft pink or peach to a creamy beige with a hint of mocha, sometimes on the same plant. 'Café au Lait' is especially popular with event and wedding designers for its lushness and easy-to-blend colors. For some growers the unique and variable colors are a plus, others not so much. As with any large dahlias, the plants can produce very thick stems that can be hard to use. These stems can be avoided by pinching plants when young to encourage branching low on the plant. Plants can be started from tubers or cuttings. In warm southern climates performance is best in the cool spring and fall, and they may overwinter outdoors. Many growers in all

climates produce them in hoopouses for a longer season, but will need artificial long days (with night interruption lighting) during the winter. As with most dahlias, the vase life of 'Café au Lait' is fairly short, only 5 to 7 days at best. Use commercial flower foods with carbohydrates for longest vase life. Ignore reports about searing stems.

Woody Stem

Physocarpus 'Diabolo'

A North American native shrub, this ninebark has become a mainstay foliage source for summer and fall arrangements. 'Diabolo' has purplish bronzy leaves, which can be greenish in late summer in warm climates. The clusters of small white flowers are attractive on the plant, but difficult to use as cuts as the petals readily shatter. Some growers harvest stems with buds before they open, or use the attractive bronzy seed pots. For best production, cut plants back to the ground in the winter to encourage long, easy-to-harvest shoots the next year. Remove shoots that revert to green at any time. In Zones 3 to 7 this plant is easy to grow as it is tolerant of a broad range of soils and environmental conditions, as long as it is in a sunny or mostly sunny location. It can be grown further south, but may struggle a bit and will need to be kept on the moist side. Vase life is a wonderful two to three weeks. Use flower foods.





Bulb Flower

Tulip 'La Belle Epoque'

'Belle Epoque' is possibly the most sought-after tulip on the market today. This double-flowered, late tulip boasts a unique color which makes it appealing to florists and designers. The original muted rose-plum transforms to a lighter, almost peach-yellow shade with hints of white edging along the petals. Its stem length is only about 14-18 inches, but what it lacks in height it more than makes up for with its beautiful flowers. Harvest by pulling them stem when flowers have started to color up, but before they begin to open.