

ALSTROEMERIA

With their distinctive black-striped markings and vivid colours, the flowers of the alstroemerias have a glamour that's instantly recognisable. The longevity that makes them such a good cut flower also makes them excellent plants for hot borders or cool colour schemes. Often referred to as Peruvian Lilies, they now come in a rainbow of colours and a range of heights, from dwarf to decidedly tall. Here are the most popular varieties to choose from which have been proven to resist late frosts and periods of drought.



'ELVIRA'

One of the taller varieties which will require supports to avoid the stems flopping. The stems are thick with and covered in delicate, pink-flecked white flowers. They will get nipped by late frosts but will soon recover and will flower well through long dry spells.

**Flowering: Jun-Oct / Height x Spread:
100 x 100 cm**



'LITTLE MISS ROSALIND'

This variety is often recommended as pot plants as they produce very short and compact mounds of colour and have a tendency to spread themselves out. They will survive the winter in pots and will trail over the pots the following year. The bright pink flowers are as large as the taller varieties.

**Flowering: Jun – Sep / Height x Spread:
25 x 40 cm**



‘ORANGE SUPREME’

Another tall and vigorous variety, you will need to have a bit of space for ‘Orange Supreme’, or surround it with plants of equal vigour. It offers an amazing vibrant colour and the sturdy stems are less prone to flopping. One of the best varieties for those long hot summers.

**Flowering: Jun – Oct / Height x Spread:
115 x 100 cm**



‘INCA ICE’

The slightly faded look to the pink in these flowers, along with the glaucous colour of the leaves, gives ‘Inca Ice’ a more subdued glamour than some of the brighter varieties. However, pretty pink buds and petal-backs add a rosy glow. These are vigorous and bushy plants, producing a mass of sturdy stems that never need supporting. They also cope well with extreme periods of drought and heavy rain and are one of the least affected by late spring frosts.

**Flowering: Jun – Oct / Height x Spread:
80 x 100 cm**



'FRIENDSHIP'

Tall and elegant, this variety forms large clumps of delicate and delightful primrose-yellow coloured flowers with splashes of pale pink. An ideal space filler, the stems require support, however, they produce a long display as long as they are watered well as they do not take well to periods of drought.

**Flowering: May – Sep / Height x Spread:
120 x 80 cm**



'SPITFIRE'

With dark red buds, orange-red flowers and variegated foliage, this variety lives up to its name. One of the most resilient varieties through periods of dry weather, however, not good in wet conditions resulting in yellowing leaves. Tall but vigorous to stand alone and will expand into substantial clumps within a couple of years.

**Flowering: Jun – Oct / Height x Spread:
100 x 90 cm**



'PERFECT BLUE'

More of a lilac than blue but nevertheless a beautiful and slightly different specimen. A mid-height variety which requires staking and will spread very quickly to produce amazing clumps over two years. This variety does well in both very wet and very dry conditions so all-in-all, a excellent specimen.

**Flowering: Jul – Oct / Height x Spread:
90 x 75 cm**

HOW TO GET THE BEST FROM ALSTROEMERIAS

- If possible, always buy potted plants as the bare-rooted plants, although cheaper, may be prone to infection and fungal disease.
- Choose varieties that you have room for or be prepared to keep them in check and you will find that some varieties do travel quite a distance.
- Plant tubers 10-15 cm deep in spring for best establishment.
- Mulch with 5-7 cm layer of organic material in autumn to protect from the cold.
- Once all the flowers on the stem have finished, remove the whole stem, pulling it away from the base.
- Plant pots need protection from the cold in winter. So either cover them with fleece or bring them into your conservatory or greenhouse.