



Bouquets don't have to be fancy. Just a few stems will brighten up your day.



One of the things I love most about working outside in our nursery gardens is watching newcomers enter our front gates – their eyes start to sparkle and their faces break out in big smiles. Another is meeting folks who tell me they just like to visit because they love seeing so many flowers in bloom: “It just makes me feel happy!” they say.

Well, they make *me* happy too – and I’ve often wondered why? Well, it turns out there have been quite a few studies on this and the results are that **just being around flowers elevates your mood**, reduces stress, anxiety and depression. What’s more, flowers **foster compassion and increase sociability**. (So that’s why gardeners are so nice!). One interesting study at Rutgers University showed people who receive flowers exhibit – not an everyday social smile – but what’s called the “**Duchenne Smile**”, a true joyful smile where your eyes and cheeks crinkle up.

Are these good reasons to **grow our own** flowers? Yup! To spend a few moments cutting blooms for your kitchen or bedside table? Absolutely!

There are endless wonderful choices! Roses stimulate the beta endorphins that make us feel euphoric and in love, and annuals give so much over a long period. You *must* grow “Sweet Peas” – for several months of



Agrostemma githago ‘Milas’

My favorite cottage garden classic! The epitome of grace and charm, it sways in the slightest breeze and makes terrific cut flowers! EASY and self-sows, plant one now and get 10 or more next Spring. Satiny 2” blossoms have a white throat and radiating black dotted lines. **Produces 100 or more blooms** on slender, upright stems. 36” tall and 18” wide. Sun. Avg. water. Annual. All zones. **Cannot ship to AR, NJ, NY, OK, SC, TX.** #24 \$4.95 3+ \$4.50



EXCLUSIVE!

Dianthus ‘Cheshire Cat’ “Perpetual Carnation”

Like a blast from the past, **wild and wondrous** ‘Cheshire Cat’ was reincarnated by England’s John Barrington to resemble similar “Bizarre” varieties grown in the 1800’s. Large, richly clove-scented blooms (to 4” across) sport pink base petals flecked and streaked with deep, cherry crimson. To 30” x 30” with long, sturdy, arching stems – just imagine the cut flowers! Stick one in your chest pocket to draw the comments! Carnations, like all Dianthus, love drainage, so grow on the edge of a bed for extra vigor and best show. Side-dress with compost several times a year and cut back to 6” anytime to refresh. Sun. Avg. water. Perennial USDA zones 6-10a. #4152 \$12.95 3+ \$12.50

exquisite charm and scent, perfect for bedside **aromatherapy** and sweet dreams, and “Bachelor’s Buttons” (the tall ones please!). The wilder, single forms of Dahlias give us fantastic blooms May thru Fall and, of course, “Sunflowers” – in my opinion they’re the most smile-inducing guys in flower land.

Even if you have a mostly flowerless low maintenance garden, do find a little space for a cutting garden or you can grow them in containers. What do you need to know?

☞ **Learn about what each plant requires.** Give them the right amount of sun and water. Planting sun lovers in shade doesn’t work. Always provide the right size container. Planting a 3’ tall “Bachelor’s Buttons” in a 6” pot is just – no.

☞ **Most “cut flower” plants need pretty good soil.** Don’t try to stick them in hard clay; you’ll be disappointed.

☞ **Add compost if required** – you’ll love the results.

☞ **Deadhead spent flowers to keep more coming** and cut regularly for the vase, which encourages more blooms. Remember, they’re trying to reproduce by making seed – cutting spent blooms keeps them trying longer!

See lots more suggestions on our “Plants for Cutting” page, plus more important gardening tips on my “How to Have a Fabby Garden” page – on our website!

Annie



A great garden and cutting combo. *Dahlia coccinea* ‘True Wild Form’ and ‘Big Bear’ Sunflower will be featured in our Summer catalog and will be available in May.



EXCLUSIVE!

Silene asterias “Cherry Drumsticks”

I’m so impressed by this hardy, unusual Bulgarian “Catchfly’s” performance in our temperate climate. It’s my favorite kind of **faithful perennial** – increasing in width and bloom each year! Strong, upright “drumsticks” appear in late Spring, revealing fascinating, 2.5” spherical clusters made up of striking carmine blooms sporting bright blue anthers! Deciduous. **Deer resistant!** 18” x 15”. Sun. Avg./High water. Perennial USDA zones 5a-10. #2290 \$7.95 3+ \$7.50



Centaurea cyanus ‘Blue Diadem’ “Bachelor’s Buttons”

It’s so hard to find old-fashioned, TALL “Bachelor’s Buttons” these days! Bright, richest blue blooms on upright multi-branching 3’ stems are perfect mid-bed and give you **loads** of cut flowers. I love the intense color and charm they bring to my kitchen table bouquets. Rich soil, cut or dead-head to prolong bloom. Self-sows! Sun/Part sun. Avg. water. Annual. All zones. #2960 \$4.95 3+ \$4.50



NEW & LIMITED!

Astilbe chinensis var. taquetii

We love this Astilbe – reliably perennial up to USDA zone 10a and it doesn’t mind a little dryness! Stately, rosy-purple, fuzzy plumes appear in late Summer – a welcome sight that time of year, especially in the shade garden. To 40” x 25” with finely cut foliage, it thrives in compost-enhanced soil. If planted in full sun, give it a layer of mulch so it won’t dry out. Amazing cut flowers you won’t find at the florists! Butterflies! Deer and rabbit resistant. Sun (cool Summers)/Shade. Avg. water. Perennial USDA zones 4-10a. #1695 \$8.95 3+ \$8.50

All plants on these pages make fab cut flowers - Find 100s more online under Totally Useful Plant Lists!