

CALADIUMS

These charms are like no other plant, this leaf plant is so beautiful and they come in a wide range of colors. They love the shade where we can always use a good splash of color and now they have them for the sun. They still do best for us in the shade because of our extreme heart. They grow great in pots are in the flowers beds. The best way to buy is the bulb but you can buy them already up in pots. They will come in late spring; the soil has to be above 60 degree for them, to poke up their heads. They can be used instead of the impatiens that requires so much water.

Some good fancy-leafed ones to look for are “Fanny Munson’ (pink), ‘Aaron’ (white), “Freida Hemple’ (red), these are for the shade. Some that will take the sun are; “White Queen’ (white), “Pink Beauty’ (pink), ‘Red Flash” (red).

The newer ones called strap-leafed will have larger leaves and do best in a large mass. I do know that the ‘Pink Gem’, and ‘Red Thrill’ do great for us. Check at the garden center for the ones they will have coming in.

Go ahead and buy in March and April but wait till May or June to plant. If you plant early and it stays cool at night they will rot before they have a chance to come up. The leaves do not like to go under 55 degrees, they will suffer and might not make a good come back for you.

Place the bulb with the knobby (is that a word?) side up just under the soil at bulb level. If you plant the wrong way, do not worry, they will come up anyway. Plant 8 inches apart and keep them well watered for at least 2 weeks. When you see the odd looking shape leaves that look like a flower bud appear, cut those off, they will make the leaves lose their nutrients. Late summer into fall when it is time for them to go to plant heaven, let them go. You can dig up and save for the winter but they can be a pain and cost more to try and save than they cost to get new ones next spring.

Good news they are DEER RESISTANT for the people that need to know that.

The bulbs are sold by size; the larger ones will be larger leaves. Make sure they are very firm not soft. Keep them dry until you plant them.

I am sure we will see new kinds this year so take your time and look around to choose the ones you want.

Happy Spring!!

Nancy

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