

Camellia

The Camellia is a widely grown evergreen plant that has over 3,000 named varieties in all shapes and sizes. Camellia Japonica is one of the most typical Camellias found in home gardens. They are large shrubs or small trees that bear the most beautiful flowers. Some older plants can reach up to 20 foot in ideal conditions. Descanso Gardens in Southern California is home to the largest Camellia collection in North America. In the 1930's – 1940's newspaper publisher E. Manchester Boddy planted thousands of Camellias amongst his oaks. Now open to the public, the Camellias can be seen fall through spring. However, you can easily grow Camellias and enjoy them in your home garden too.



Size: 6' -12' high and wide, but some much smaller

Exposure: Partial shade to deep shade

How to Plant: Plant in large pots or in garden beds amended with rich organic matter. Cover with a 2" layer of mulch, but keep it away from the base of the plant.

Pruning: Prune after flowering or in summer to keep plant in shape.

Water needs: Camellias like regular watering but only in well drained soil. Older established Camellias' can survive on much less water.

Fertilizer: Fertilize with a commercial acid plant food, normally after the bloom season. Follow package directions and do not over fertilize.

Soil: Camellias are an acid loving plant so amend soil with peat and rich compost. For potted plants use 50% more organic material. Good drainage is a must.

Snapshot: Camellias' can bloom at different times of the year, early, mid, or late season. Early is Oct.-Jan, Midseason is Jan- Mar. and late is Jan.-Feb. Camellia Japonica is a common variety for the garden. It grows in zones 4-9 in our area and will grow beautifully in a large pot or half barrel. Some kinds are more tolerant of sun than other and older, larger varieties that shade their own roots can tolerate more. Typically take care to shelter Camellias' from strong sun and drying winds. Plant them in partial shade or on the north side of the house. Camellias' also come in a wide range of flower forms from single, double, semi-double, peony and anemone form to name a few. The picture is of Debutante, which is peony form. It is an early to midseason bloomer with vigorous upright growth. It is listed as a profuse bloomer. The key to success is to look up a variety to suit your selected area before you purchase.

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Feb. 2, 2013