

Easter Lily

Lilium longiflorum



HISTORY

The Easter Lily is a native of the Ryukyu Islands in Japan. Seen as a symbol of purity, virtue, innocence, and life, Christian tradition associates the Easter Lily with Jesus Christ. A natural summer bloomer, this flower is commonly forced to bloom in spring so that it can be used in time for the Easter holiday.

CARE

When choosing a Lily, look for plants with both tight buds and/or partially opened flowers to ensure they will last throughout the holiday season. Foliage should be dense, rich green and should extend down to the soil line – all signs of a healthy plant and active root system.

As flowers develop, remove the yellow anthers from their centers to ensure longer life and to prevent the pollen from staining the white blooms.

Lilies prefer a cooler environment (around 60 and 65 degrees Fahrenheit), and should be protected from drafts and heat. Position your plants in bright but indirect sunlight. **DO NOT OVERWATER.** Water when soil is dry to the touch and keep it well drained and moist. Remove foil wrappings before watering and then water directly from your sink until water leaks out of the drain holes. Let the pot drain for a few minutes before replacing decorative pot covers.

Cut away flowers as they die to ensure longer beauty of the plant.

TRANSPLANTING OUTDOORS

Plant Easter Lilies outdoors in a slightly raised, well-drained spot that receives plenty of sun. You can mix equal parts soil, peat moss and perlite. Soil pH should be neutral – about 6.5 to 7.

Plant bulbs 12" – 18" apart in holes 3" deep, and create a mound of soil 3 inches above that. Work out any air pockets in the soil and then water immediately. Water your lily bed well for the first year.

Easter lilies naturally bloom in June or July. Mulch your garden bed throughout the winter to protect the bulbs. Remove mulch in spring when the weather warms. It may take a year or two to see blooms, but once they take off, they should last for years to come!

