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Hollyhock:

Happy memories surround the legacy of my hollyhocks. I can't remember a time when hollyhocks were not growing in my mother's or grandmother's gardens. My seeds are heirlooms from several generations of family gardeners with a history that goes back over a hundred years. Hollyhocks are the classic cottage garden staple that every gardener should include for spiky tall stalks of pink, white, magenta, and red blooms that will continue until winter. A member of the hibiscus family, this self-seeding China native grows best in full sun in rich, well-drained soil. Because they grow to 15 feet or more, plant toward the back of the garden or near a fence. By deadheading when the flowers fade, you will encourage continuous bloom production. Prune to the ground by winter and save the seedpods to share.

Hydrangea:

Another favorite plant for generations of gardeners, hydrangeas produce abundant blooms in partial sun. They are thirsty plants and need mulch around them to improve the soil texture and maintain moisture. Pruning hydrangeas is tricky because it is necessary to know what type you have as different hydrangeas require different pruning times and methods. The most common hydrangeas are Bigleaf, Oakleaf, Mountain, and Climbing which are pruned after summer blooming. They rebloom on "old wood" which are the stems from the previous season. Panicle and Smooth hydrangeas bloom on new wood (the stems from this season) and must be pruned before the buds form. I'm looking forward to trialing new Panicles from Proven Winners which will include Limelight Prime and a space-saving Fire Light Tidbit that will have cream-colored flowers covering the plant in summer, then turning to pink and lasting through frost.

Rose:

No introduction is necessary for the fabulousness of the rose. Roses are the most versatile, beautiful, and coveted plant in every garden. When gardeners proclaim roses to be the bedrock of their landscape, they are not exaggerating. Roses come in every color, shade, petal, and size to suit every desire. Roses are a diverse group of plants that include shrub roses, carpet roses, floribundas, hybrid teas, climbing, old roses, rambling roses and tree roses. Their shapes and structures differ. Some look like peonies, others have a single floral pattern. There are rosettes, cups, doubles, pompons, button-eyed, incurved, recurved and quartered. My favorites are David Austin roses with intoxicating fragrance, fine foliage, disease resistance, and stunning flowers. Over a hundred roses grace my landscape and I am constantly adding more. As Emma Goldman stated,



This pink single hollyhock is from 100-year-old heirloom seeds.



Hydrangeas prefer partial sun to thrive.



A close-up of a light-yellow daylily.

"I'd rather have roses on my table than diamonds on my neck."

When the sun rises, I go to work, spending as much time in nature as feasible. Consider planting some of my perennial favorites to enjoy elegance and exquisite allure throughout the summer months.

Stay cool, hydrated, and share creation.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing.