

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian **A passion for pink with Barbie blooms**

Photos Cynthia Brian



For borders and mass plantings, begonias rule.



Deep pink hydrangeas are gorgeous growing or dried.



The tubular trumpets of gladiolus shine in the garden.

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Because hydrangeas boast huge heads of dramatic blossoms that can also be dried, Barbie would find hydrangeas especially appealing. In acidic soil, pink blooms change to blue, reflecting Barbie's preferred colors. Hydrangeas are hardy and disease-resistant, and most can be grown in full sun or shade.

Since Barbie enjoys traveling and summer fun, the vibrant and tropical flowers of hibiscus would also be on her list of must-have plants. Many varieties have huge dinner-plate-size flowers that are attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies. We know that Barbie cares about the planet (why else would she have had over 200 careers?) so bringing birds, bees, and other beneficial insects to her garden would be imperative. Barbie is ecologically friendly. Plus having pollinators in the garden increases the health and integrity of the landscape, making it more enchanting.

The simplicity and classicism of geraniums and pelargoniums would interest Barbie. She could easily propagate them by snipping off a stem, allowing the stem to harden off, then planting it elsewhere to grow additional geraniums. In beds and borders, geraniums shine and continue blooming from spring to early winter. They are also lovely in window boxes, which would be a fun project for Barbie to create.

My favorite pink summer blooms are the Naked Ladies, Amaryllis Belladonnas and I know that Barbie would find these sassy stunners to be as unique and fascinating as she is. Naked Ladies have trumpet-shaped flowers and shoot skyward on 20- to 24-inch bare stalks, erupting from the ground in the height of the heat when no one is watching. These "magic lilies" or "resurrection lilies" as they are often called, are graceful and classy, yet they do not belong to the genus *Lilium*. Their long legs with their fascinating faces are reminiscent of Barbie's stature!

Barbie would love lilies of all kinds and want to plant as many bulbs as possible. Lilies are captivating with their large, fragrant blooms and diverse array of colors, shapes, and sizes. They are easy maintenance and enjoy cultural significance linking them to gods and goddesses. Barbie would be a Goddess Gardener and have multiple dazzling bouquets cut from her garden to complement her elegant events. Sword lilies, also known as gladiolus, are available in an array of pigments, except true blue, and the pink varieties are especially fascinating. Propagated by corms, gladiolus is an economical way to bring a riot of color to the August landscape.

As delicate border choices or planted in masses in shady areas, I would advise Barbie to plant rows of pink begonias. Begonias are also marvelous in hanging baskets with their intricate foliage adding drama to any patio or porch.

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