



Planting and Growing Caladium Bulbs in Central Florida

- **Why plant caladiums?** They provide colorful foliage for nine months! Plant them in the ground or in containers, they are a no-maintenance plant and the leaves reappear each spring for a summer show. Help us support local beautification with color!
- **Caladiums like well-drained soil.** If the area puddles after a good rain, look elsewhere to plant the bulbs. Mound an area for better drainage but keep the newly planted bulbs moist - not soggy.
- **Shade is good!** Where most plants don't tolerate shade very well - all caladiums love shady areas! While your favorite flowering plants may bloom for only a week or two, caladiums will provide wonderful leaf color and texture all summer. Varieties with white in their leaves visually "pop" in shady areas.
- **Sun tolerant caladium tips.** Some caladiums tolerate full sun (6-8 hours of sun) - see the requirement for each variety. Caladiums planted in full sun generally require more water. The length of exposure to sunlight is the determining factor. Overexposure results in foliage with brown-edged holes between the main leaf veins. As a rule, caladiums grown in the sun are more vibrant than in the shade. Watering caladiums early in the morning or late in the afternoon helps eliminate sun burn.
- **When should I plant my bulbs?** Bulbs should be planted in the ground in the spring after the last chance of frost. Generally, plant the bulbs when the soil temperatures warm to 65°-70°F. Here in Central Florida you can start planting from March through June.
- **Bulb Planting.** Plant caladium bulbs right side up. The bulbs have a rather smooth root-side bottom. The knobby top-side is the growing point or "eyes". Though they will grow no matter which way you orient them, planting with the top-side up will provide the shortest sprouting time and the happiest plant. Bulbs should be planted deep enough to cover them with 1 ½" to 2" of soil. A bit of bone meal spread on the soil surface will make caladiums happy. Two to three inches of mulch helps preserve soil moisture and provides weed control. Water after planting.
- **Bulb Spacing.** In the garden, evenly space two #1 bulbs (large) or one Jumbo bulb (largest) per square foot for a full caladium show. Bulbs can also be planted within a bed of mondo grass or liriopse. The caladium foliage will rise above the groundcover for a warm season show then disappear when they go dormant. Caladiums also make great container plants and the strap leaf cultivars do extremely well in hanging baskets.
- **Watering, Fertilizing.** Caladiums like a little bone meal or 6-6-6 fertilizer once a month or so with more for caladiums in full sun. Watering in the early morning or late afternoon is best. No need to soak the ground. Again, caladiums grown in sun will need more water.
- **End of season.** When nighttime temperatures drop below 60° F, the leaves will wither and die back. Your caladium bulbs will go dormant until warmer nighttime temperatures return, usually in April. Apply mulch to a 3" depth to protect the bulbs from the cold during the winter. Snip and remove the dried up leaves if you wish.
- **Height and Color.** Fancy leaf caladiums usually grow 18-24" in height while strap leaf caladiums are typically 12-18" high. Caladiums in shade tend to have larger leaves since they stretch to catch the light as opposed to caladiums in direct sunlight that don't have to work so hard. Colors can vary according to sunlight and feeding.

Special Thanks to the following companies for their donations of caladium bulbs:

Bates Sons & Daughters Caladiums

www.caladiumsonline.com

Classic Caladiums

www.classicaladiums.com

New for 2019! Enter our first Annual Caladium Photography Contest. Find details and a submittal form at:

<http://cityofwinterpark.org/caladiumphotocontest>

Winter Park Blooms, a committee of the Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable Advisory Board, is once again selling a wide assortment of caladium bulbs at the Winter Park Farmers' Market Saturdays from 8:00 to noon from March 23 through April 20.

The funds are used for Winter Park beautification projects and to host the America in Bloom judges that evaluate Winter Park in late April. In its six years of competition, Winter Park has won six awards including Coolest Downtown. To become part of the synergy that Winter Park Blooms creates, please call Stephen Pategas at 407.622.4886.

For information about KWPB&S visit www.cityofwinterpark.org/kwpb, for America in Bloom visit <http://www.americainbloom.org/>

Color in the Garden

Having a continuous display of color in the garden is a cinch with smart plant selection and proper planting. Once the plants are matched to the conditions in your garden, determine their bloom color and season of color. When selecting colors, keep these principles in mind:

- Yellows, reds, and oranges may be combined to create a "warm" mixture that creates excitement. Known as advancing colors, they attract the eye, make objects seem closer, and visually shrink a space.
- A "cool" mixture of blues, purples, and greens creates a setting for relaxation. Known as receding colors, they make objects seem farther away and visually expand a space.
- Extreme contrast is obtained from complementary colors (opposite each other on the color wheel) such as orange and blue (Go Gators!); yellow and purple; and red and green.
- Medium contrast is found among the colors from the triad color interval (any three colors equidistant-distance apart on the color wheel). For example: yellow and blue; red and yellow; red and blue; orange and green; or purple and green.
- Analogous colors are neighboring hues that all share one color and provide low contrast. Some combinations include yellow, yellow-green, and green; orange, orange-red, and red; or green, blue-green, and blue.
- The use of white or silver/gray neutralizes strong contrasts. They help visually blend colors together.
- Brighter colors such as yellow, white, and the pastels shine in shady areas

To achieve non-stop color at a variety of levels look for a combination of trees, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, perennials/bulbs and annuals. Consider designing with pergolas, trellises, arbors, arches, obelisks, tuteurs, and containers including hanging baskets to stretch the color from the ground to the sky.

Here's a selection of blooming plants to consider for your garden:

TREES

Flatwoods plum-*Prunus umbellata* - white
Golden trumpet tree-*Tabebuia chrysostricha* - yellow
Pink trumpet tree-*Tabebuia impetiginosa* - pink
Chaste tree-*Vitex agnus-castus* 'Shoal Creek' - purple

SHRUBS

Bush allamanda-*Allamanda schottii* - yellow
Camellia-*Camellia japonica*, *C. sasanqua* - colors vary
Orange plume-*Justicia spicigera* - orange
Yellow elder-*Tecoma stans* 'Yellow Bells' - yellow
Walter's viburnum-*Viburnum obovatum* dwarf spp. - white

GROUNDCOVERS

Lily of the Nile-*Agapanthus africanus* - blue
Lantana-*Lantana* species - colors vary
Regina walking iris-*Neomarica caerulea* 'Regina' - blue

VINES

Cross vine-*Bignonia capreolata* - orange
Pink jasmine-*Jasminum polyanthum* - pink, white
Coral honeysuckle-*Lonicera sempervirens* - coral, red
Confederate jasmine-*Trachelospermum jasminoides* - white

ANNUALS (Hardiness Zone 9b)

Wax-leafed begonia-*Begonia semperflorens* - colors vary
Periwinkle (vinca)-*Catharanthus roseus* - colors vary
Indian blanket-*Gaillardia pulchella* - yellow, orange, red
New Guinea impatiens-*Impatiens x hybrid* - colors vary

PERENNIALS/BULBS

Bulbine-*Bulbine frutescens* - orange or yellow
Blackeye Susan-*Rudbeckia hirta* - yellow
Pentas-*Pentas lanceolata* - colors vary
Salvia-*Salvia* spp. - colors vary
Rain lily-*Zephyranthes atamasca* - white/pink

For more blooming plants visit: <https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/plants>

Thank you to our America in Bloom judges and Winter Park Blooms volunteers, participants, and supporters!

The City of Winter Park, The Alford Inn, Winter Park Garden Club, The Coop,
Arthur's Catering, Holler Hyundai, Hortus Oasis Landscape Design, Javier Aguilu, Cynthia Pesch