

Star of 2018: Agapanthus
Patio Plant of the Year

Flowers on the patio all summer long

Elegant stems, long green leaves and elegant blue or white flowers made up of a host of small calyxes: Agapanthus, also known as the African lily, is a real spectacle on the patio. You can create attractive lines on the patio with this plant, which features plenty of greenery at the base, the smooth stems in middle and flowers that resemble blooming fireworks as the crown. Agapanthus is easy to care for and attractive to look at, with rich flowering from the beginning of summer until the start of autumn. One thing that's good to know: Agapanthus produces more flowers every year.

Range

The most common Agapanthus is derived from *A. africanus*, with blue and white flowers. Both types offer various cultivars which differ in terms of plant shape, stem length, leaf and flower shape and flowering time. There are evergreen and deciduous varieties of Agapanthus. Breeding has produced cultivars which stay nice and compact, and are therefore very suitable for use on the patio.

Agapanthus trivia

- Agapanthus symbolises love. The name is derived from the Greek word 'agape' (love) and 'anthos' (flower)
- The plant is very ancient: women in primitive African tribes wear dried roots as an amulet to ensure healthy babies.
- In the home and garden Agapanthus symbolises a happy home.

Origin

Agapanthus originates from southern Africa and is native to countries such as South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique. The plant's seeds have spread and been sown naturally around the globe, so they now also occur in the wild in Australia, Mexico and Europe.

What to look for when buying

- The larger the pot size, the older and more richly flowering the Agapanthus plant is.
- The compactness can vary considerably between plants. A healthy Agapanthus has long stems, foliage at the base and buds at the top.
- The Agapanthus must be free of pests and diseases. Particular look for yellow leaves, which is a sign of soil which is too wet.

Care tips for consumers

- Agapanthus likes a sunny and sheltered spot in a mixture of potting soil and sand.
- Place Agapanthus in a spacious pot with a drainage hole.
- Always ensure slightly damp soil, particularly during the growing season.
- A bit of plant food every month helps promote growth and flowering
- Agapanthus is not fully hardy, and is best placed in a cool shed or cellar if the temperature drops lower than a couple of degrees below freezing.

Sales and display tips for Agapanthus

Don't display the plants too close together; show the full leaves and slender stems off to their best advantage. Create a mood table different sizes and some green plants in order to show the flowers

even more spectacularly. The colours look their best in a setting with white and pale grey: consider zinc, whitewash or plastic with a white or silvery tone.

Patio Plant of the Year

Agapanthus is the Patio Plant for 2018. The 'Patio Plant of the Year' is an initiative from the Flower Council of Holland. Every year a media jury made up of editors of lifestyle, interiors and garden magazines, vloggers and bloggers examines 10 candidates at the Flower Council's request to pick the patio plant which most appeals. For 2018 it's the Agapanthus, a blooming statement plant that is not yet well-known and can enhance any patio.

More information:

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Photo caption

Pation Plant for 2018: Agapanthus