

alstroemeria



Photo: Royal Van Zanten

BOTANICAL NAME

Alstroemeria

(al-stro-MER-ee-uh, ahl-stro-MEE-ree-uh)

COMMON NAMES

Peruvian lily, Lily-of-the-Incas

DESCRIPTION

Alstroemerias' six-“petaled” trumpet-shaped blooms resemble miniature lilies and appear individually on lateral branchlets clustered atop smooth stems that bear scattered narrow twisted leaves.

COLORS

These flowers are available in virtually every color except blue, and many varieties are spotted, striped, dappled or tinged with yellow.

VASE LIFE

Stems of *Alstroemerias* typically provide consumers six to 14 days of enjoyment, depending on care, environmental conditions and variety (vase life varies greatly by cultivar). Individual blooms, however, have shorter vase lives.

AVAILABILITY

Alstroemerias are available year-round from both domestic and foreign growers; however, according to USDA figures, more than 90

percent of the *Alstroemerias* available for sale in the U.S. are grown in Colombia.

care and handling

PROMPT ATTENTION Unpack *Alstroemerias* immediately upon their arrival, and check flower quality.

PREPARATION FOR PROCESSING Remove all stem bindings, and strip foliage from the lower portions of the stems (only the portions that will be under water in storage containers—removing too much foliage can reduce vase life). Leave plastic sleeves on while the flowers initially hydrate, to reduce damage to blooms.

STEM CUTTING Recut stems on an angle with a clean, sharp blade, removing at least 1 inch of stem. Cut off any whitish (“blanched”) portion, if present, to enhance solution uptake.

HYDRATON Immediately after cutting, dip or place the stems into a hydration solution to help the flowers take up water more quickly.

NUTRITION Following the hydration solution treatment, place stems into sterilized storage containers partially filled with either properly prepared bulb-flower-food solution or low-dose (low sugar) flower food made with cold nonfluoridated water, if possible (some *Alstroemeria* varieties are sensitive to fluoride, which most tap water contains). (See “Leaf Yellowing.”)

REFRIGERATION Immediately after processing, place *Alstroemerias* into a floral cooler at 33 F to 35 F for at least two hours before arranging or selling them. Unless you need blooms to open quickly, keep these flowers refrigerated until they're arranged or sold.

CONSUMER ACTION Advise customers to cut off individual blooms as they die and to recut stem ends and change flower-food solution every two or three days.

ethylene sensitivity

The effects of ethylene gas vary greatly by cultivar. Symptoms of exposure include wilted flowers, petal or leaf drop, and transparent petals, so ensure all your purchases are treated with an ethylene inhibitor at the grower or during shipping. In addition, keep them away from sources of ethylene in your facilities such as fruit and other produce, decaying flowers and foliage, automobile exhaust, and tobacco smoke.

leaf yellowing

HORMONE IMBALANCES *Alstroemerias* experience hormone imbalances when they are cut from their bulbs, which can cause premature leaf yellowing. Hormone-replenishing pretreatments formulated specifically for *Alstroemerias* (generally administered at the grower or wholesaler) can reduce leaf yellowing, as can bulb-flower foods, which contain naturally occurring plant hormones.

TOO MUCH SUGAR Leaf yellowing also results from too much sugar in flower-food solution. Both bulb-flower foods and low-dose flower foods (holding solutions) have less sugar than standard flower foods, and the use of either is recommended for *Alstroemeria* storage.

buying tips

- Select bunches that have strong, straight stems, dark green leaves, one or two open flowers per stem, and mature buds that are showing color.
- Watch for bruised florets and crushed, yellow or moldy foliage.

skin irritation

Handling *Alstroemerias* can cause contact dermatitis—a sometimes-severe inflammation of the skin—in some people. Wearing latex or rubber gloves when working with *Alstroemerias* is advisable.



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'Symphony Besito'
Esmeralda Breeding & Biotechnology



'Merci'
Könst Alstroemeria



'Romance'
Könst Alstroemeria



'Natalya'
Royal van Zanten



'Garnet'
Royal van Zanten



'Alegria'
Könst Alstroemeria



'Denver'
Royal van Zanten



'Charmelia Bridesmaid' (spray Alstroemeria)
Royal Van Zanten



'Twister'
Könst Alstroemeria



'Intenz Pink'
Royal Van Zanten



'Pink Surprise'
HilverdaKooij



'Primadonna'
HilverdaKooij



'Marshmallow'
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'Jaffa'
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'Dancing Queen'
Royal van Zanten



'Tiger'
Könst Alstroemeria



'Bali'
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'Greenday'
Könst Alstroemeria



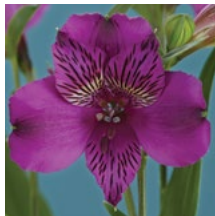
'Shakira'
Könst Alstroemeria



'Real'
Könst Alstroemeria



'Symphony Violetta'
Esmeralda Breeding & Biotechnology



'Amatista'
Royal van Zanten



'Midas'
Royal van Zanten



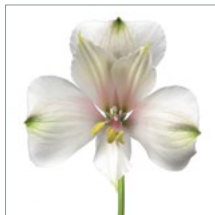
'Paradiso' (spray Alstroemeria / Alstresia type)
Könst Alstroemeria



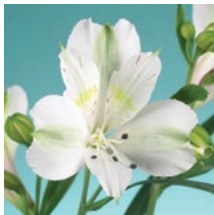
'Splendor'
Könst Alstroemeria



'Precious'
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'K2'
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