



Mandevilla Care

The Brazos Valley is fortunate to have tropical weather during many months of the year. Most years, our winters are mild as well. These conditions make possible the use of many tropical blooming plants in our landscapes.

MANDEVILLA VARIETIES

Heat tolerant and water efficient, the mandevilla is the perfect summer visitor. And with electric pink, funnel-shaped blooms that span up to five inches and beautiful, dark green leaves, the mandevilla is a traffic stopper.

"Alice duPont" is the most recognized and widely planted mandevilla variety. Robustly vining, it will twine around anything for support. The bloom is very bright and has the truest pink color of all mandevilla. This variety does best when planted by a fence, trellis or arbor, or when wired to a solid wooden or brick fence for support. Very fast-growing in the heat of summer, it will need plenty of room to sprawl.

White and yellow mandevillas are just recently gaining recognition. Resembling the Alice duPont in growth habit and form, its main difference is flower color. The white form has a beautiful yellow throat, giving way to the purest white peals, while the yellow is almost neon yellow throughout.

"Red Riding Hood" mandevilla has been alternately called "Dipladenia" for many years. This plant resembles the Alice duPont but has many distinguishing features. It grows as a shrubby vine and does not trail readily. The leaves are quite small when compared to the larger mandevilla, as are the blossoms. They do possess the same bright pink color, but with a bright yellow throat. Red Riding Hood performs well in low pots, where they can be trained into bush forms, or

planted in hanging baskets where they can billow over the edges and provide color all summer.

Another interesting mandevilla is the "Orchid Swirl". Botanically known as *Pyrostegia Grandiflora*, Orchid Swirl is a sprawling shrub that resists training. Give it plenty of room and you will be rewarded with the most delicately swirled, orchid-lavender, funnel-shaped blooms held up on vigorous stems with glossy, dark green leaves.

PLANTING

Plant your Mandevilla in a sunny, raised area using plenty of planting mix or soil mix to raise the level of the bed. Dig a hole 1.5 to 2 times wider than the root size, but no deeper than the original pot. Rest the root system on the undisturbed soil in the bottom of the hole and fill around the roots with your prepared bed mixture. Water your new plant with a root stimulator, following directions on the label. If a trellis is necessary or desired, install it no more than 12 inches away from the plant so that it will be readily available for support.

WATERING

Most mandevillas have enlarged root systems that hold water. This reservoir enables the plants to withstand prolonged dry periods. Watering your new mandevilla should be done infrequently, but the entire root area should be saturated. A good practice is to water only when the otherwise glossy leaves begin to become dull.

FERTILIZING

A regular application of fertilizer aids in the formation of new flower buds. Since flowers spring from new growth, encouraging new growth will therefore encourage more blooms. Supplemental feedings with a water-soluble fertilizer can

be made throughout the growing season. Our Heirloom Gardens Hibiscus Fertilizer is formulated with many tropical blooming plants in mind, offering the correct balance of leaf-inducing nitrogen, bloom-promoting phosphorous, and vigor-imparting potassium.

INSECTS & DISEASE

Like many tropicals, mandevilla is susceptible to mealy bugs and spider mites. Insecticidal soaps are effective, as is Orthene spray (follow all directions on the manufacturer's label). If your planting is healthy and gets plenty of sunshine, your plants will be likely to fend off many pests of their own.

CONTAINERS & WINTER PROTECTION

By growing mandevilla in containers, you can more precisely control growing conditions. You can offer winter protection by moving the container into the warmth of a garage. You can install drip irrigation to individual pots and apply soluble fertilizers.

Plant containers using Heirloom Gardens Blooming Tropical Mix, which has no added fertilizers to increase soil salts and burn roots.