



LILLIES

NAOMI SLADE
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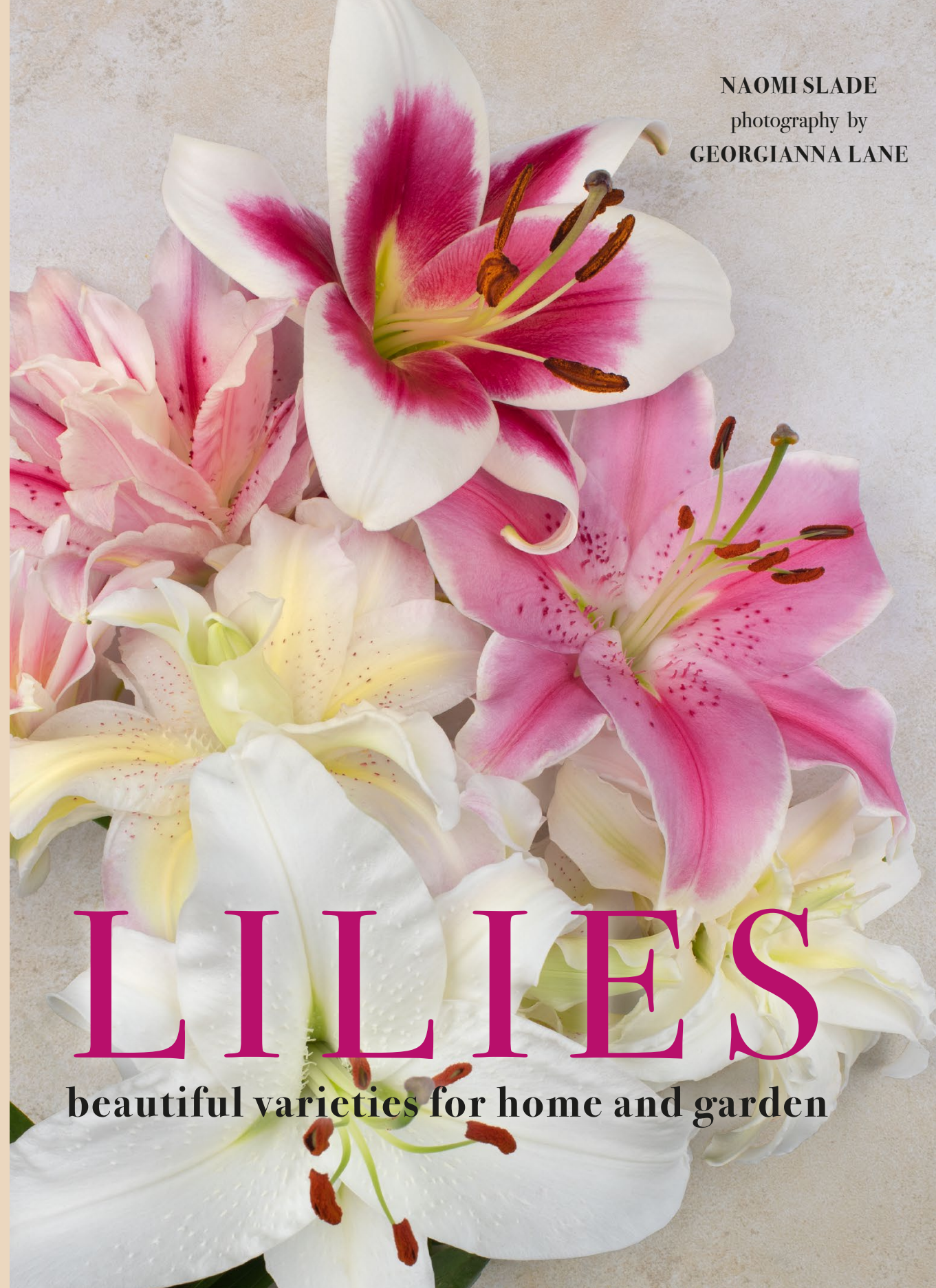


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NAOMI SLADE
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LILLIES

beautiful varieties for home and garden



Lilium candidum syn. Madonna Lily

When we consider the classic lily, often as not it is *Lilium candidum* that springs to mind. And in many ways this is understandable. It has been culturally significant for millennia (see page 14) and it has been transported extensively through human activities, potentially moving around Europe with the Romans or during the Crusades. It is now extensively naturalized in suitable habitats across southern and Eastern Europe, to the point where its true origin is uncertain, although it is thought to hail from the Caucasus or parts of the Middle East.

The specific epithet '*candidum*', as applied by Linnaeus, means "shining white," yet this lily is known by a plethora of other names, including Annunciation lily, Ascension lily, Bourbon lily, French lily, Juno's rose, St Joseph's lily, or simply the white lily. And although the flower spikes can positively bristle with buds – up to twenty of them on an established plant – only a few of the fragrant blooms will be open at any one time, the flowers drooping from near-vertical to horizontal as they do so.

In the garden, *L. candidum* is a little bit of an anomaly. Lilies tend to prefer a little shade and some moisture, but Madonna lilies like to be baked in bright, hot sun, and they do well on sharply draining alkaline soil, where they should be planted shallowly, about 1 inch deep. Uniquely, in late summer the bulbs produce rosettes of leaves, which will overwinter, and flower the following summer.

Lilium candidum

Flower type Open trumpet

Zones 6–8

Average height 4–6 ft

Flower size Medium

Colour Freshest white

Flowering time High summer

Scent Light and sophisticated

Soil type Light, chalky and free-draining

In the garden Back of the border with lush-flowering companions to disguise the leaves that become tatty as the season progresses

As a cut flower Magnificent



Viva la Vida

It is too easy to let the glossy, fragrant fantasy of lilies lead you down a soft-focus path of pastels and prettiness, but should you succumb, then Viva la Vida will smash that reverie with style and energy, for it is a force.

Bold butterscotch in color, the shape of each petal is echoed in a spreading splash of deep, freckled crimson, as if the flower were in the possession of a partying, slightly demonic alter-ego, bursting through to take over not only the bloom but potentially, the garden.

Yet, as an AOA lily it is an adaptable plant, and not entirely monstrous in origin. It was created by crossing an Asiatic hybrid lily with an Oriental, which was then crossed again with an Asiatic, hence the acronym. The resulting flowers are larger than an Asiatic, with elegantly reflexed petals and a subtle scent that is softer than an Oriental, while the color combinations are unique.

In the garden, team this sultry beauty with plants that will emphasize its striking good looks. Plummy foliage shrubs such as *Physocarpus opulifolius* 'Diabolo' and *Pittosporum* 'Tom Thumb' will highlight the damson undertones at its heart. Meanwhile, its jammy apricot-marmalade qualities can be emphasized by pairing it with other orange flowers such as *Kniphofia* and *Crocsmia*, and a cooler look can be attained by combining with deep greens, purples and cobalt blues.

Smaller, darker alternatives include Asiatic lilies Forever Susan and Easy Samba.

Lilium 'Viva la Vida'

Flower type Upward- and outward-facing bowl

Zones 3_8

Average height 3–4 ft

Flower size Very large

Color Butterscotch-yellow and burnt raspberry

Flowering time Early to midsummer

Scent Slight perfume

Soil type Unfussy, likes good, well-drained garden soil

In the garden An eye-catching plant for the middle of the border and compact enough to grow in pots on the patio

As a cut flower Bold and striking





Lilium henryi

This species lily was named after Professor Augustine Henry, an Irish plant hunter who was traveling along the Yangtze River near Yichang, in 1888, when he spotted it growing on the limestone cliffs of the Wu Gorge.

An extremely popular garden plant, the long stems are topped with between four and twenty dancing orange flowers. The strongly reflexed petals are covered with fleshy papillae and at the center of the bloom, the long and prominent stamens are tipped with small, rusty anthers. The color of the flowers is variable – sometimes more apricot and sometimes more caramel – but whatever the hue, maroon freckles add depth and bass notes, and this prevents the orange from being too light and carrot-y.

Originating in a calcareous landscape, *Lilium henryi* is tolerant of lime soils, although it will also thrive in neutral ground. It is stem-rooting, so it needs to be planted at least 8 inches deep. Keep an eye on it in later winter and spring as it can start into growth early in the season, and young shoots will need to be protected if there is a late frost.

Choose a location in part shade where the roots will be cool and the soil does not dry out. While growth may be weak for the first couple of years, once the flower gets into its stride, the stems can reach over 5 feet tall, so staking may be necessary. Alternatively, plant it among shrubs that will afford a certain amount of support.

Lilium henryi

Flower type Turk's cap

Zone 4–8S/W

Average height 4–8 ft

Flower size Medium

Color Warm orange, speckled with maroon

Flowering time Late summer

Scent Unscented

Soil type Free-draining, alkaline to neutral

In the garden Excels in light woodland or in the border alongside blue Echinops or rich pink Echinacea, but it does not perform well in pots

As a cut flower A spare and striking accent plant



