

Vintage Roses celebrates the ageless style and grace of the world's favorite flower. This contemporary companion shows you how easy it is to grow these beautiful blooms and fill your home with spectacular cut flowers. From strikingly simple to deliciously overblown, you'll discover an enchanting selection of true Old Roses alongside the best modern varieties. Over 60 roses have been captured by leading floral photographer Georgianna Lane, and are brought to life with fresh commentary and no-fuss growing advice from award-winning author Jane Eastoe. Whether you have a lavish garden or a simple container, lose yourself in the enduring charm and classic beauty of vintage roses.



\$21.99 U.S.
ISBN-13: 978-1-4236-4671-6
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VINTAGE ROSES

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beautiful varieties for home and garden

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GIBBS SMITH

TO ENRICH AND INSPIRE HUMANKIND

Combining the old with the new

The craving for novelty in roses has continued unabated for some 200 years but it is thanks to two great modern rosarians, Peter Beales and David Austin, that the focus was diverted to breeding new roses that celebrate the best features of the old ones.

Peter Beales, who worked under Graham Stuart Thomas at Hillings, opened his own nursery in 1968, collecting, breeding and writing about Old roses, as well as introducing cultivars of his own. His nursery also happens to hold the National Collection of wild Species roses.

David Austin, an inspired and influential rose breeder, is dedicated to developing new varieties with the charm and fragrance of Old roses, but Austin's roses repeat-flower and have good disease resistance. He has dubbed them "English Roses," though this name has not been officially recognized as a class by the rose authorities. Nevertheless, the term has come into common public use, and consumers know that "English roses" celebrate all that is best about Old roses.

Austin's first rose was the glorious Constance Spry, introduced in 1961. Today he runs one of the largest rose breeding programs in the world and sells worldwide. He has also specially bred a range of florists' roses that combine the beauty and fragrance of Old garden roses with the cut life of commercial florists' varieties. Traditional florists' roses are my personal *bête noire*; almost without exception they look as though they are destined for sale on a garage forecourt, so I thank David Austin for this exciting new development.

Graham Stuart Thomas confidently predicted that Hybrid Tea roses would fall from favor once roses were developed that combined the charm and beauty of Old roses with the vigor and fragrance of Hybrid Teas. It is fair to say that his prediction has come true, but the good news is, we still treasure and celebrate the old varieties too.



Wild Blue Yonder

This vibrant Floribunda rose, faintly reminiscent of a camellia in form, has rich purplish blooms – though it can photograph as a pinkish red – and a heady rose-and-citrus perfume. It has fat, pointed purple buds that open to a ruffle of 25–30 petals, each tipped lavender at the base and with a heart of golden stamens. It blooms in generous clusters on long stems, and the flowers, which can reach 3 in (8 cm) in diameter, fade to lavender as they age. It is variable, being deeper and darker in tone in cooler temperatures. This is a hungry plant that benefits from regular feeding and a very sunny position.

Wild Blue Yonder was introduced by the award-winning Texas rose hybridizer Tom Carruth in 2006, and it took the All-America Rose Selections Award the same year – the first time a lavender-hued bloom had won in over 20 years. Tom Carruth is, at the time of writing, working as curator of the Rose Garden at The Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens in Southern California.

Flowering Repeat-flowers

Aspect Sunny

Soil Rich, moist and well drained

Habit Long-stemmed, upright shrub

Average height 59 in (1.5 m)

Average spread 48 in (1.2 m)

Pruning Cut out dead and diseased wood in early spring

Foliage Dark green and glossy

Thorns Yes

As a cut flower Exquisite color – even the dropping petals retain their color

Similar varieties Roseaie de l'Hay (similar in color though not in form)





Desdemona

Desdemona is a superb example of a classic rose – the color works with everything in the garden, and as a cut flower it is the picture of elegance, equally effective alone or as a neutral foil in all kinds of flower arrangements. Launched in 2015 by the indefatigable David Austin (see p. 25), Desdemona buds a pale pink with a darker tip. It opens into a charming chalice of petals, imbued with the palest hint of creamy pink and paling as the incurving petals unfurl to a creamy white, then fade again to white. It creates a wondrous ensemble of shades of white that are influenced by the light and surrounding colors. At the heart you can catch a glimpse of the sulfur stamens. The flowers, which reach 3½ in (9 cm) in diameter, have a strong fragrance with hints of myrrh. They bloom from early summer until the first frosts. Desdemona's flowers are apparently indifferent to rain, which is a huge bonus in a wet climate.

Austin named this rose after William Shakespeare's pure and innocent heroine from his tragedy *Othello*.

Flowering Repeat-flowers

Aspect Sunny

Soil Rich, moist and well drained

Habit Open, upright shrub

Average height 48 in (1.2 m)

Average spread 35 in (90 cm)

Pruning Light pruning initially; remove about one-third thereafter

Foliage Dark green and glossy

Thorns Yes

As a cut flower Utterly charming and fragrant

Similar varieties Lichfield Angel; Tranquillity (see p. 152)

Graham Thomas

Graham Stuart Thomas (see p. 23) was a man who knew his roses, and when he chose this one to bear his name, from a selection proffered by his friend David Austin (see p. 25), he knew what he was doing. Irrepressibly cheerful in hue, it is a superb golden yellow rose with hints of apricot, paling as it ages but never with any harsh or sharp lemon tones. Obliging in disposition, it throws out blooms from late spring until the first frosts but will determinedly continue to try to produce the odd bloom as late as Christmas Day if conditions are favorable.

The buds appear streaked and flushed with red, unfurling to cupped double flowers. These grow in clusters of 3–9 blooms and reach a diameter of 4½ in (11 cm). The flowers have a strong tea fragrance with fruity and floral notes.

The shrub grows tall so you have to be quite ruthless if you want to contain it. In warmer climates it makes an attractive climber.

Graham Thomas was voted the World's Favorite Rose in 2009 by members of the 39 National Rose Societies worldwide, and it was also awarded the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit in 1993. It was named as a tribute to British horticulturalist and influential gardener Graham Stuart Thomas, a champion of Old roses and a leading light in their revival. Thomas designed the world-famous rose garden at Mottisfont Abbey in Hampshire, using much of his personal collection.

Graham Thomas in a bouquet with *Clematis* 'The President', Walker's Low catmint (*Nepeta* x *faassenii* 'Walker's Low'), columbine, hardy geranium, hellebore and allium



Tradescant

This sensuous wine-red Gothic beauty buds a deep, dark red, unfurling to shallow-cupped blooms with quilled and quartered petals that pale as they age and retract further still into a can-can dancer's seductive tutu. The blooms, which reach around 3 in (8 cm) in diameter, have a deliciously strong, rich perfume. These exquisite blooms, which come in clusters of 5–10, simply beg to be picked.

The downside – or upside depending on where you live – is that Tradescant performs best only in hot climates such as California and Australia, where it can be grown as a small climber, reaching around 95 in (2.4 m) in height. In temperate climates it is more likely to struggle. It does suffer somewhat from black spot and rust. Tradescant benefits from a good feeding regime. David Austin (see p. 25) introduced this rose in 1994.

Flowering Repeat-flowers

Aspect Sunny

Soil Rich, moist and well drained

Habit Arching shrub

Average height 48 in (1.2 m)

Average spread 48 in (1.2 m)

Pruning Light initially, then reduce by one-third

Foliage Midgreen

Thorns: Some

As a cut flower Intoxicating clusters; stupendous with blues, pinks and hot colors

Similar varieties William Shakespeare (fine in temperate climates); Munstead Wood





Anne Boleyn

Anne Boleyn has a breathtaking color palette. To describe it merely as a pink rose is to do it a grave injustice. The buds open a deep red pink, paling rapidly to a warm sugar pink and making a perfect rosette of petals, paler at the outer edges and warming in intensity to the heart. Here, some petals are a warm apricot with the odd dash of coral. These are the perfectly blended colors of a glorious pink sunset before the shades of violet creep in. Anne Boleyn flowers singly or in clusters of up to 10 blooms that can open to a diameter of 3½ in (9 cm). It has a light, sweet fragrance and when fully unfurled, reveals golden stamens at its heart.

This rose was introduced by David Austin (see p. 25) in 1999. It is named after Henry VIII's second wife, who took many illicit rose-garden walks with Henry before they were married – her badge was a white falcon alighting on roses. Anne was mother to Henry's second daughter, Princess Elizabeth, later Queen Elizabeth I. Henry's passion for Anne, once married, was short lived; he had her executed for adultery at the Tower of London on 2 May 1536. She was buried in an unmarked grave in the Chapel Royal of St. Peter ad Vincula. The grave was uncovered during restoration work in the nineteenth century and is now marked.

Flowering Repeat-flowers into autumn

Aspect Sunny

Soil Rich, moist and well drained

Habit Small, arching shrub

Average height 39 in (1 m)

Average spread 48 in (1.2 m)

Pruning Flowers on new wood, so prune in late winter to promote growth

Foliage Dark green

Thorns Yes

As a cut flower Prettily informal

Similar varieties Olivia Rose Austin (see p. 170); Gentle Hermione