

## Cascades & Charms

### Cascade chrysanthemums

Cascade chrysanthemums can provide a wonderful display of colour, but they are probably the least grown of all chrysanthemums, one of the few places that they can be seen is in the greenhouses at the RHS gardens in Wisley. A few nurseries do offer a limited selection in their catalogues.

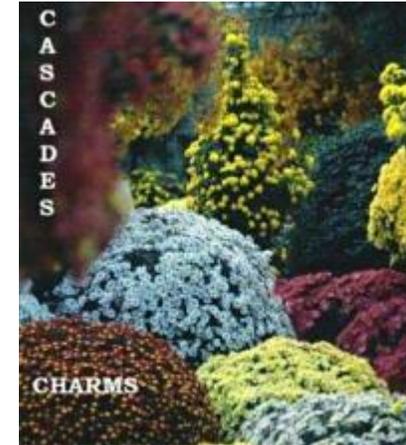
They are best grown from cuttings taken in mid-February, and when rooted and potted on into 9cm pots using a loam based compost to a John Innes No. 1 Mix.



The plants should be kept growing at a temperature of about 14°C, and when the pots are full of root they can be moved on into 13cm pots, this time using a John Innes type 2 mix. I use plastic pots, as these are generally the easiest. The plants can either be grown on in a cool greenhouse, or moved into cold frames about the beginning of April.

Mid May should see the plants ready for a move into their final pots, around 23cm ones will do, using a John Innes No 3 compost. Potting them into these pots is however where the first real difference occurs from growing other forms of chrysanthus.

## Pictures of Cascades and Charms





These plants will be trained to trail or cascade downwards, but as any other plants they will if left to their own devices still try to grow up towards the light. The plants need to be kept as subtle as possible, but it is difficult to bend the plants to any great amount without snapping them, so we need to give them a good start towards trailing down by planting them in the pot on their side, with the main stem almost horizontal. The aim will then be to train the plant to trail down further giving a true cascade. Some will plant straight from the 13cm pots into the final pots when the plants are much younger and easier to manipulate.

One way of training the cascade is to regularly tie the growing tip to a cane inclined down at an angle from the pot, generally about 45° to the horizontal. This means you will need to place the pot on an elevated position, the simplest way to support this cane is to insert a small cane upright in the pot and tie the top of the inclined cane to it. The lower part of the cane will need to be secured to a support wire to provide stability. Instead of using canes, it is possible to also train the plant to heavy gauge wires, here different shapes can also be used. As the growing tip is tied to the cane, the plants break naturally, but the side shoots can be pinched to help build up the shape of the plant. In Japan growers have got this practice to a real art, producing spectacular cascades. All pinching should stop in early September, allowing the flower buds to develop.



Sato White

Feeding is straight forward, they are quite hungry plants so liquid feeding is best, use the nitrogen feed Chempak No 2, (25:15:15) twice weekly, this helps to keep the growth soft and vegetative. Just before bud initiation change to a high potash feed of Chempak No 4, (15:15:30). Cascades will need regular watering and with the pots in an elevated position there is the tendency for them to dry out more frequently.

About mid September the plants need to be moved into the greenhouse for flowering, and by this time the plants will be large and difficult to handle, so help is needed to prevent the main stem breaking.

When in the greenhouse watering should be little and often, the size of the plants often makes them quite thirsty. Flowering should be from early November, and they will give you a mass of cascading winter colour.

**Popular Cascade cultivars are:**

Hatzuhi - Pink  
Seizan - Yellow Pom  
Toulousette - White double  
White Cascade - Spider  
Sato White - White



Seizan

April Showers - Red Anemone  
Maiko - ink Single  
Hono - Red Anemone  
The Bride - White  
Kaga Yami - Yellow Anemone



Ring Dove

### Late Charms

Late Charms are very similar to grow flowering from the end of October into December. We have seen an explosion in growing the early garden charms or cushion mums, but late charms are less popular. Only a few nurseries now sell cuttings, but you can get the more popular cultivars, and they are easy to grow, for exhibition however they require more dedication to get that true globular form all round the plant.



As with the cascades, root in February, move on through the pot sizes, using John Innes composts, finishing in 10 inch pots by May with JI No 4, firming the compost in the final pots for stability. These plants again break naturally so little stopping is required, although the odd rogue shoot that races away should be pinched to create the regular and even dome shaped plant. Stand outside during the summer months, preferably in a sheltered location as they are difficult to support. Liquid feed using the same program as for the cascades.

To get a more even dome shape to the plants they will need to be turned on a regular basis, a ¼ turn per day by the enthusiast. It is a good idea to insert a circle of split canes around the pot, building up a framework with the use of fine string as the plants get quite large near maturity. Move into the greenhouse during September some grow large so it may prove difficult to negotiate the greenhouse door. Also due to their size, transport to a show can be interesting; often a stretcher like frame is used with a hole in the centre to hold the pot.



The Bride

More Charms and Cascades



Most charms have single flowers, Golden Chalice, a pale yellow single, is the one most frequently seen on the show bench, naturally producing good quality plants of excellent shape. Morning Star is another yellow, similar to Chalice and occasionally the bright red single Red Breast is also seen on the show bench. Others are Ring Dove, long lasting with unique candy pink flower and a pink eye, and the light bronze single, Tang, provides a contrasting colour. There are two main whites Tinkerbell, and the earliest to bloom Hilfred whose flowers are pink when young, going white at maturity.



**Popular Charm cultivars are:**

- Redbreast - Red Single
- Hilfred - White, Early to flower
- Gladys - Pink

- Golden Chalice - Yellow
- Bullfinch - Red
- Yellow Hammer - Yellow
- Ogmore Vale - Yellow



Charm - Redbreast



Charm - Hilfred



Golden Chalice

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