

Old Garden Roses

Old Garden Roses are the classic old-fashioned roses developed in England, Europe, and the Middle East prior to the introduction of roses in China and the Far East in 1867.

They typically are very fragrant, bloom heavily in spring (though some repeat bloom) and are most often found in shades ranging from white and pale pink to burgundy. Also known as "Heirloom" or "Antique Roses," the following classes of roses are within this grouping:

Alba Roses

The Albas and their hybrids are known as the "White Roses" of Shakespeare, though their blossoms range in color from pure white to shades of pink. They are vigorous, hardy and very disease resistant. Their sprays of blooms are fragrant and occur only once in a massive spring display. Many carry large red hips through the winter. Bluish foliage and upright growth habit make them a fine backdrop for other roses. They are to take some shade in the garden.

Centifolias

The Centifolias were made famous by the Dutch painters of the 17th century. Referred to as the "hundred-petaled" roses, or Cabbage Roses, they are one-time bloomers noted for the fullness and size of their flowers. Normally tall shrubs with arching growth, several are compact with smaller blossoms. All are very hardy.

Damasks

Hybrids of *Rosa damascene*, these are among the most ancient of garden roses. Cultivated by the Romans, they might have died out in medieval times had it not been for the European monasteries that grew roses for medical purposes. They are known for their Old Rose fragrance and the June flowering which produces an abundance of blooms sufficient for making large quantities of potpourri. Damask tend to grow in an upright and airy form, until the weight of the blooms causes the canes to arch into mounds of fragrance.

Gallicas

Like the Damasks, the Gallicas were known from ancient Rome, and survived the fall of that Empire by becoming naturalized wherever they had been planted. Extremely hardy, they tolerate poor soil and neglect. They have full, dark green foliage which turns a beautiful dark red in the fall; once-blooming, compact bushes averaging 4 feet in height. They are also known as Mad Gallicas.

Moss Roses

The Moss Roses are sports of the Damasks and Centifolias, bred mostly in the mid-eighteen hundreds, though the type was recognized as early as 1696 in France. Named for the mossy appearance of the buds and sepals, they are very hardy roses with a stiff, upright habit and a fragrant piney scent.

Bourbons

The Bourbon Roses first appeared in the early 1800's on the Isle of Bourbon (now R union) in the Indian Ocean. They were the probable offspring of the China and Damask Roses used to edge farmers' fields. They bear large, full fragrant blooms that generally repeat throughout the season. Most are hardy in Zone 5, though some can survive in colder climates with winter protection.

Hybrids Perpetual and Portlands

Favorites of the Victorian era, the roses in this class are mostly repeat bloomers with large, full flowers and exceptional fragrance. They are hardy plants that grow into sturdy, upright bushes.

China, Tea and Noisette Roses

These were introduced from the Far East by sea traders in the 1700's. Though somewhat tender (not hardy in cold winter areas), they brought repeat bloom qualities, the pointed bud form and a wider range of colors to rose breeders. The first Hybrid Tea Rose, 'La France', was introduced in 1867 and marks the dividing line between Old Garden Roses and Modern Roses. We carry a few for historical purposes and for rose growers who live in warm climates.

From [High Country Roses](#)

Rose Resources:

- [Denver Rose Society](#)
- [Denver Rose Society Consulting Rosarians](#)
- [Growing Roses in Colorado](#) book
- [American Rose Society](#) P.O Box 30,000, Shreveport, LA 71330-0030, 318 938-5402
- To research roses- [HelpMeFind](#)
- [Combined Rose List](#) (issued annually) Beverly R. Dobson and Peter Schneider
- [Colorado State University Extension, ask a Master Gardener](#)
- [Colorado State University Soil Testing](#)
- *Compendium of Rose Diseases and Pests, second edition*, Dr. Kenneth Horst,
- [High Country Roses](#)