

FIRST UP

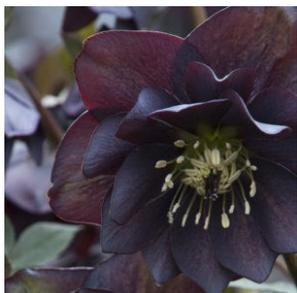


Hellebores: Winter's Happy Harbingers

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Kate Karam | January 9, 2018

No garden is complete without a few of spring's first bloomers, the hellebores. Just when you think the snow, rain, or gloom of winter will never end, up they come in late winter or early spring, depending on how cold your winters get. Hardy and easy to grow (Zones 4 to 9 and tough enough to survive in Zone 3 if there is reliable snow cover) these are the kinds of perennials that you'll never regret investing in. Plant them now and in a few years, you can expect your mature hellebore to produce 50 or more flowers each season. That's a lot of joy for a plant that takes so little space, blooms in shade, requires meager care, and did we mention deer don't typically munch on them?



There are many different kinds of hellebores (*Helleborus argutifolius*, *Helleborus foetidus*, *Helleborus lividus*, *Helleborus orientalis*, *Helleborus niger*, *Helleborus purpurascens*, *Helleborus viridis*, etc) but we're going to focus here on the hybrids types. **Hybrids are easiest to find in the market, and are easiest to grow, too.** Commonly known as Lenten or Christmas rose because they bloom around the time of Lent, these hybrids are produced by crossing two of the various species of hellebores.

Here are 8 we love, each with its own particular allure from color, to petal shape, to form. Look for hellebores right now at your garden center. It's easiest to decide which ones you must have when in bloom.

This one's [Winter Jewels® Double Slate Lenten Rose](#)



[Winter Jewels® Blue Diamond Lenten Rose](#)

From a hand-selected seed strain, the unique purple-blue flowers are simply breathtaking. Handles mild drought, once established. Lovely with silvery ferns. Zone: 5 - 9



[Winter Jewels® Apricot Blush Lenten Rose](#)

Varying shades of peachy-apricot nodding blooms with darker rose veining, speckling or picotee edges that emerging in early spring and lasting for weeks. Zone: 4 - 9



[Winter Jewels® Sparkling Diamond](#)



[Winter Jewels® Black Diamond Lenten Rose](#)



Lenten Rose

Beautifully formed clear, gleaming-white, double flowers to brighten a shady spot. As flower heads tend to nod downwards, try these on a slope. Zone: 5 – 9



Purple to near black single blossoms adorn vigorous clumps of foliage from late winter to spring. Plant massed or add a few clumps to a bed of white. Zone: 4 – 9



Winter Jewels® Onyx Odyssey Lenten Rose

Oh my! Stunning, frilly double flowers in shades of dark purple, slate, and black on upright stems above mounds of thick, dark green foliage. Zone: 4 – 9



Ivory Prince Christmas Rose

Facing up and outward from the plant, rich burgundy pink buds open in late winter to reveal green-tinted ivory petals that age to rose. This one's especially good as a cut flower. Zone: 4 – 9



Winter Jewels® Cherry Blossom Lenten Rose

This extremely vigorous strain with it's rich pick with cherry-red centers is the result of over 15 years of hand breeding and selection. Zone: 4 – 9



Florence Picotee Lenten Rose

Simple but super sophisticated. Soft white, double blooms with beautiful, purple-magenta picotee edging that gracefully bow their heads above contrasting green foliage. Zone: 3 – 9

Caring for Hellebores

- Hellebores grow best in moist but well-drained soil enriched with copious amounts of organic matter and prefer a soil pH close to neutral and even alkaline; add lime if your soil is extremely acid.
- While they can tolerate less than perfect soil, hellebores require good drainage. Site them where it's damp, but not wet.
- Prefer full to partial shade. One solution is to plant them under deciduous trees for a wintery show, followed by shade in summer.
- Waterwise once established (really tough, in fact) they'll need some TLC the first few seasons.
- Feed in fall with balanced fertilizer or with bone meal.
- Emerging foliage before flowers can look winter-tatty. Either prune this old foliage as hellebore starts to flower (which will leave with with bare hellebore stems—not a bad thing) or if you can deal with the tatty, prune out the old foliage when new leaves start to come out, about two months after bloom starts. Either way is fine; it's personal preference!

Image credit (Top): [britt willoughby dyer](#)

Love it? Buy it! (Plus a few more we love.)



Winter Jewels® Double Slate Lenten Rose

Helleborus 'Double Slate'
Item #41292



Winter Jewels® Cotton Candy Lenten Rose

Helleborus x hybridus 'Cotton Candy'



Winter Jewels® Apricot Blush Lenten Rose

Helleborus 'Apricot Blush'
Item #6724



Ruse Black Lenten Rose (Winter Dreams Series)

Helleborus x 'Ruse Black'
Item #7546



Winter Jewels® Black Diamond Lenten Rose

Helleborus 'Black Diamond'
Item #6728



Double Fantasy
Christmas Rose (Winter
Dreams Series)

Helleborus niger 'Double
Fantasy'
Item #7543
Beautiful Winter Flowers



Ivory Prince Christmas
Rose

Helleborus x hybridus
'Walhelivor' Plant Patent
#16,199
Item #3999
Early Spring Flowers



Winter Jewels®
Amethyst Gem Lenten
Rose

Helleborus x hybridus 'Amethyst
Gem'
Item #9613
Stunning Shade Loving Blooms



Florence Picotee Lenten
Rose

Helleborus x 'Florence Picotee'
Item #41324
Shade Loving



Winter Jewels® Painted
Lenten Rose

Helleborus 'Painted'
Item #6723
Shade Loving Perennial



Winter Jewels® Painted
Doubles Lenten Rose

Helleborus x hybridus 'Painted
Doubles'
Item #6806
Shade Loving Flowers



Cassis Red Lenten Rose
(Winter Dreams Series)

Helleborus x hybridus 'Cassis
Red'
Item #7545
Shade Loving



Ashwood Double
Bicolour Shades Lenten
Rose

Helleborus x hybridus 'Ashwood
Double Bicolour Shades'
Item #8593
Shade Loving



Windcliff Double Pink
Lenten Rose

Helleborus x 'Windcliff Double
Pink'
Item #8905
Showy Double Flowers



Winter Jewels® Cherry
Blossom Lenten Rose

Helleborus 'Cherry Blossom'
Item #6726
Shade Loving Flowers

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