

YEAR-ROUND GARDENING

Roses in the Landscape

Eileen Tully, Colorado Master Gardener

Formal rose gardens are awe inspiring. Displayed in semi-circular beds and planted by class and color, these gardens are world famous and some think they are the epitome of horticultural achievement, nice to visit, and inspiring. The first time I saw my beloved William Baffin climbing rose (Hybrid Korrdesii) was in Portland's Rose Garden. It was blooming profusely along a brick wall with canes so laden with flowers they arched forward as if to reach out to me. I took a dozen pictures and came home with one purpose. I had to have it.

However, I don't have the space or the inclination to plant a formal rose garden and after researching other types of gardens suitable for roses I've planted two types of rose beds: Semi-formal and Cottage.

Photo courtesy of Eileen Tully

Semi-formal rose gardens are usually symmetrical. My garden is nine-foot deep and runs along a fence. I began with a bird bath in the center. A pair of Wm. Baffin roses are planted on either side flanked by a pair of dwarf Alberta spruce. Sticking with the pair theme are two Candytuft low-growing evergreen



shrubs. But then I broke away from matching pairs with a David Austin rose, an Oregold Hybrid tea and a Sunflare Hybrid tea. And, off to one side are three delphinium. Creeping Jenny groundcover seems to hold it all together. If you think of the semi-formal rose garden as a stage setting, the roses are the Diva and other plants are the supporting cast. It works well for me. The plants complement one another.

A Cottage garden is quite different in the fact that the roses may not always be prominent except when in bloom. My Cottage garden runs along a sidewalk on one side then flares in a squiggle pattern into the lawn. After digging out the shape I knew

this garden could be fun. Planted with abundance in mind, lupine start the show early in spring, followed by iris, creeping phlox (*subulata*), dianthus, shasta daisy and bugle weed. In recent years I've added wisteria and clematis vines. There's a mix of rose types: a cherry red double knockout rose, a shrub rose 'Double Take, two mini roses, Mandarin Sunblaze. And, Queen Elizabeth, hybrid tea, grows in a large container at one edge of the garden. With the exception of the hybrid tea, all the other roses are grown on their own root stock which makes them hardier in our climate. In a Cottage garden with a profusion of blooms all plants should have similar light and water requirements.

Lastly, roses growing in Colorado have vivid colors and fewer diseases thanks to our semi-arid climate and cool evenings.

When you have questions, Colorado State University Extension has research based answers. Get answers to your horticulture questions by ask.extension.org. any time day or night. Monday to Thursday from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. you can phone 520-7684 or emailing CSUmg2@elpasoco.com.

For current garden tips visit www.facebook.com/ColoradoMasterGardeners.EPC

For current classes visit: elpaso.extension.colostate.edu.

If you tend to think roses are too much trouble, here are 7 basics:

1. Roses need at least 6 hours of sun daily
2. Well drained soil
3. Good air circulation
4. Regular watering; at least one inch per week. Don't let the plants dry out.
5. Fertilize every 4 to 6 weeks up to mid-August. Use an all-purpose fertilizer such as an 8-10-8
6. Regular pruning depending on the type of rose.
7. All roses benefit from winter protection. A mounded application of mulch and leaves around Thanksgiving will do. If you want to get fancy you can purchase rose collars at local nurseries.

Other tips:

- Shrub roses are the hardiest and easiest to grow roses in our climate
- Canadian climbing roses from the Explorer series are prolific bloomers, disease resistant and low maintenance.
- Miniature roses grow on their own root stock and often do well.
- The 'new' flower carpet and knock out roses have been bred to withstand all kinds of weather so you might want to give them a chance.