

Roses for South Florida

Roses, especially the “modern roses” (hybrid teas, floribundas, multiflora, etc.), have a host of problems in South Florida and just shouldn’t be planted here unless one is prepared for a lot of work. Disneyland in Orlando has thousands of healthy roses so it is possible to raise healthy roses in south Florida. So we will give out some advice on the assumption that you like roses so much you're willing to undertake the work necessary to grow roses successfully in South Florida.

Black Spot and other Fungal Diseases

As the modern roses were bred for color, form, multi-blooming, long stems and other desirable characteristics their resistance to disease plummeted. Even the new disease resistant hybrids such as the “Knock-out” series need constant applications of fungicide. “Knock-out” roses for instance have very good resistance to black spot fungus but very poor resistance to other fungal diseases, such as Cercospora leafspot. Certain heat resistant varieties of David Austin old English Roses resist fungus better than any other varieties of roses. Some old rose varieties resist fungi in south Florida but there is no way to know for sure a given old rose variety will do well without constant spraying.

Nematodes

Big box stores all stock roses grafted onto standard rootstocks such as multiflora. A standard hybrid rose grafted on a standard rootstock will do well for its first few years in LaBelle. Then the number of nematodes will become too great and the plant will go into decline at two to five years. In order to avoid nematodes a special Fortuniana rootstock has to be used. Only a few wholesale and retail nurseries graft on Fortuniana rootstock. So the best option for landscaping roses becomes selected heat resistant David Austin old English shrub roses, so called “landscape roses” and some types of polyantha roses, grafted onto Fortuniana rootstock.

David Austin Old English Shrub Roses for the Extreme South

The David Austin Roses lack the form that many growers of roses desire, namely the hybrid tea long stemmed cutting rose. But David Austin roses have a much better resistance to fungus than hybrid tea and the bush is much more attractive in the landscape. One web site breaks out the best David Austin Roses for the heat of zones 9 and 10 and the roses selected by that web site are on the next page.

We did an internet search and found suppliers of David Austin Roses which are both on the list for the South and available on Fortuniana rootstock. K&M Roses in Mississippi have five of the Southern recommended David Austin English Roses on Fortuniana rootstock: Abraham Darby, Mary Rose, Jude the Obscure, The Dark Lady and Molineux. "Cool Roses" is located in West Palm Beach, Florida and has David Austin's

roses on Fortuniana Rootstock. They have seven roses from the list of heat tolerant David Austin Roses. These are: Abraham Darby, Mary Rose, Jude the Obscure, the Dark Lady, Molineux, Sophie's Rose, and Tamora. This is probably the best nursery for plants and is within driving distance of LaBelle. The David Austin Roses specifically selected for South Florida include these varieties:



Abraham Darby
 Numerous large blooms with a fruity fragrance. Summer pruning recommended.



Mary Rose
 An excellent shrub with a delicious old rose fragrance. One of the best.



Darcey Bussell
 Rich crimson rosettes on a short, bushy shrub. Pleasant fruity fragrance.



Jude the Obscure
 A very strong and extremely delicious fragrance. Summer pruning recommended.



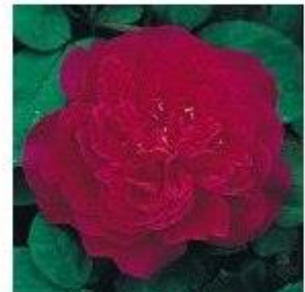
The Dark Lady
 Large, scented blooms - a sumptuous mix of shades from crimson to dark purple.



Lady Emma Hamilton
 Lovely tangerine-yellow blooms with a glorious fruity fragrance.



Molineux
 Flowers with exceptional freedom and continuity. Even upright growth.



Sophy's Rose
 Attractive light red to deep pink blooms. Excellent, short compact growth.



Huntington Rose
 Tall, arching growth. Large, nodding blooms with an old rose fragrance.



William Shakespeare 2000
 Traditional quartered blooms with a delicious old rose scent.



Tamora
 A remarkable distinctive fragrance with hints of lilac and mimosa. Forms a short bush.



Snow Goose
 This repeat-flowering rambling rose is excellent in the heat. To 10ft or more.

"Knock Out" Landscaping Roses

Weaks Roses in California has some very good "Knock-out" disease resistant roses on Fortuniana rootstock. Unfortunately Weaks is a whole-sale only so you will have to have Ace Hardware or a nursery order the plants. "Knock out" roses are landscape roses, not cutting roses.



The Knock Out® Rose



The Double Knock Out® Rose



The Pink Knock Out® Rose



The Double Pink Knock Out® Rose



The Blushing Knock Out® Rose



The Sunny Knock Out® Rose

If you want cutting roses, not landscape roses, K&M Roses in Mississippi also have some promising disease free hybrid tea and Floribunda in their Kordes rose selection, all grafted on Fortuniana rootstock.

We are proud to be the first to offer Fortuniana grafted bushes of the exciting disease resistant introductions from Kordes Roses

Beverly™ HT

Pink hybrid tea rose with strong fragrance and large blooms with a high centered bud form. Winner of the "Best Hybrid Tea" and "Most Fragrant Rose" awards at the 2013 Biltmore International Rose Trials.



Grand Amore™ HT

Red hybrid tea rose named "Best Hybrid Tea" by Portland's Best Rose 2013.

(Novalis) F

flowers lavender , very full , cupped, borne in clusters; recurrent; foliage disease-resistant; growth vigorous, upright

Poseidon



Summer Sun™ F

Vigorous and bushy, this floribunda features high-centered, bi-colored buds which open to large, fragrant, semi-doubled cups in salmon with a cream yellow reverse. Excellent disease resistance and abundance of flowers. ADR winner 2008.

Pink Enchantment™

HT (Souv. de Baden Baden)

mp, flowers creamy pink, outer petals fade quickly as they open , double, cupped, borne mostly singly, moderate fragrance; recurrent; growth upright



Sunny Sky™ HT

A very hardy, large-flowered yellow hybrid tea with exceptional disease resistance. The shrub has dark green, thick healthy foliage. This lightly fragrant rose has been decorated with awards in international rose competitions.

Wedding

Bells™ HT

This two-tone pink hybrid tea rose has very large, long lasting, fragrant blooms ideal for cutting. The rose bush has abundant shiny green foliage. Performs well in rainy climates.



Winter Sun HT

flowers pale yellow fading to white , double , high-centered , borne singly and in candelabras , moderate fragrance; recurrent, blooms late into winter; foliage glossy, disease-resistant ; growth vigorous, neat, medium growth

These roses from Kordes are for cutting roses, not landscape roses. They are lanky, unattractive shrubs. The Kordes modern roses also have another problem found in LaBelle. Because of our heat and humidity the rose buds often fail to open, shrivel up and die. It is called bud blast. This doesn't happen with the David Austin Roses and the Knock-out series, both so called "landscape" roses with healthy bushy foliage.

Now for some really bad news. All roses in some sections of the USA are getting killed by a virus disease called Rose Rosette Disease. No roses are immune. The disease is spread by a small mite from wild *rosa multiflora* and roses are in decline across the nation wherever the wild *rosa multiflora* has become invasive. In November of 2013, the virus was found in a North Florida nursery. Since the mite vector is not known in Florida and the multiflora rose is not common in Florida, it is hoped that garden roses in Florida can be spared this destructive disease. However, given the large market for roses, growers and buyers must be ever vigilant.



Rose rosette disease, the death knell for roses in any garden.

Chilli thrip (*Scirtothrips dorsalis*) is a newly introduced, invasive thrip whose feeding damage can destroy roses very rapidly. This thrip requires insecticide applications at least once a month to prevent severe damage. These are just one of many insect pests of roses. Plan on monthly insecticide spraying even with David Austin roses.

Even Fortuniana root stock plants need to be planted in raised beds with at least a foot of rich cow manure or horse manure compost. More compost should be added every year. All roses need a compost filled raised bed, constant fertilizer (use a balanced time release Osmocote type fertilizer), and lots of water in the eight months of the dry season, preferably watered with drip irrigation (water on the leaves promotes fungus). They all do best if sprayed by a fungicide and insecticide at least once a month. The roses need morning sun and at least six hours of direct sunlight to thrive. If the soil is alkaline once monthly applications of soil sulfur are required.

Kanapaha Gardens, a botanical garden in Gainesville, has a section of roses kept up by the local Rose Garden club. It is pitiful, to put it quite simply. But then there is a variety of shrub rose found all around Oakbrook rehabilitation center and they are doing fine with no special attention in just LaBelle sand. The rose shrubs are small and obviously just planted so it should be interesting to see how long they last.

One optimistic homeowner in LaBelle planted about ten roses in pots around their front yard about three years ago. I just noted their roses have all gone. I suspect they didn't water or fertilize them enough. I know of another large bed of roses that had been pampered for many years in Muse. The home changed hands and the new homeowner just watered the roses, not doing much else. Only one rose survived after three years.

So that is the low down on growing roses in LaBelle. To put it simply, it "ain't easy" to do it right. The roses that can be grown are severely limited and they generally require studious bed preparation and constant attention to do well for more than a few years. Note that it is possible to use "big box" roses as short three to five year lived perennials. It takes that long for fungi and nematodes to do severe damage. In the meantime, the plant can do well, regardless of the rootstock and site preparation, basically just living on the momentum of youth. Just be prepared to watch the rose die after two to five years.

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