

# 9 New & Notable Plant Picks for 2009



**Hydrangea macrophylla 'Blushing Bride'** © EndlessSummerBlooms.com

## Dreamy Color in Full Sun

Endless Summer® Blushing Bride blooms with radiant pure white, semi-double florets that gradually mature to a sweet pink blush. Blushing Bride's strong stems and branches keep the plant sturdy and upright in the garden, making it a perfect flower for cutting. Its attractive dark green foliage provides a striking background for the plant's large mop-head blooms.

This member of the Endless Summer Collection reliably blooms on both old and new growth, producing more blooms all season long. Blushing Bride's full yet compact habit makes it an ideal plant for decorative containers, elegant as a stand-alone shrub, or combined with other garden plants.

Dr. Michael Dirr at the University of Georgia bred Endless Summer Blushing Bride in 2001, and he calls this *Hydrangea macrophylla* his most significant introduction to date. "Blushing Bride has the same reblooming qualities as its parent, Endless Summer The Original, only faster," says Dirr.

It is being rated as USDA Zone 5 hardy. It prefers partial shade and likes its soil moist. The height and width range from 3-6 feet with an upright habit.



**Laguna™ Heavenly Lilac Lobelia**  
© Provenwinners.com

## Lasting Color in Stunning Annual

Laguna™ Heavenly Lilac Lobelia is an annual except in zones 9-11. It is compact, weather-resistant, and heat-tolerant. An excellent lavender flower that won't fade like many older forms. This is a self-cleaning and low maintenance plant that flowers early and performs in tough weather. It can reach 8-10" high by 8" wide. It prefers full sun to partial shade and likes soil to be kept on the dry side. Laguna Lobelias cascading foliage creates exceptional hanging baskets and combinations, but is also a great performer in the landscape.

Self cleaning, no deadheading necessary. Laguna does not like "wet feet." Be sure that you do not keep the soil wet. Allow the soil surface to dry before watering again. It combines well with nemesia and verbena hybrids.



**Eggplant F1 'Gretel'** © AAS

## Grow Eggplants in Containers

The earliest white eggplant perfectly describes 'Gretel.' Any gardener will agree, the earlier the better, since waiting for the best tasting, most nutritious food from our gardens is not easy. The glossy white mini-fruit are produced in clusters and can be harvested in 55 days depending upon growing conditions. Like all eggplants, 'Gretel' will grow rapidly under warm temperatures; over 55 degrees day and night temperature. The pure white fruit are sweet with tender skin even if they mature beyond the ideal fruit size of 3 to 4 inches. This trait means gardeners have a longer timeline to harvest fruit. 'Gretel' plants are relatively small, about 3 feet wide and tall. Since the plant is small, it is adaptable to the popular trend of growing edibles in containers. It is recommended to use a rather large container about 16 inches deep. This AAS® Winner was bred by Seminis Vegetable Seeds, Oxnard, CA.

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**Zahara™ Zinnia**  
© Ball Horticultural Company

### Disease-Resistant Zinnia

This Zahara Zinnia (*Zinnia marylandica*) is an all-new, disease-tolerant, heat-loving series has large blooms and very low water needs, making it a perfect summer, drought-tolerant garden addition.

From the Simply Beautiful® line, this zinnia is care-free and easy to grow from seed. Once established in the ground, drought-tolerant Zahara has low water needs, making it ideal for areas with watering restrictions. It needs full sun.

There are five colors available in the series: 'Coral Rose,' 'Mix,' 'Scarlet,' 'White,' and 'Yellow'. It reaches a height 12-18" and spreads 12-18".



**'Elongata Zephyr' © PanAmerican Seed**

### Funky, Fantastic Foliage

This small mound of dainty, fine-textured green grass is a great "touchable" addition to small mixed containers and is eye-catching at point-of-sale. It is also well-suited to indoor lifestyle plant programs.

This grass does not like hot sun or full shade conditions. It is "made for the shade." It does best in container plantings. Hardy to zone 7a, it is low maintenance and frost tolerant.

This *Deschampsia elongata* has a mounded growth habit and spreads to about 10 inches. Great accent plant.



**Begonia x benariensis 'BIG'™ © Benary**

### Big Annual for Full Sun to Shade

The new Begonia 'BIG'™ series offers big flowers, big container appeal and even bigger landscape potential. Perfect for large landscape plantings, combination pots and hanging baskets, the 'BIG'™ series is a must have for any gardener.

This annual thrives from full sun to shade and grows to 12-18". It is early flowering with large, showy blooms as big as three inches across. The deep green or bronze foliage add vibrancy and contrast to the striking red or rose colored flowers. It has an upright arching habit perfect for window boxes and hanging baskets.



**New Flower Carpet® Amber**  
© Anthony Tesselar Plants

### What a Peach This New Rose Is

Flower Carpet Amber's luscious amber-peachy-apricot roses are borne in such abundance that the mature three-foot high bush is covered with color all season long, blooming virtually non-stop from late spring through late fall. Available nationwide, beginning in spring 2009, this top-performing groundcover rose is as tough as it is attractive.

Noack Rosen, the German hybridizer behind all the roses in the award-winning Flower Carpet series, bred the new Amber. Like all Flower Carpet roses, once established, Amber is drought tolerant, disease resistant, and easy care, requiring no fancy fuss or pruning. It has tolerance for heat, humidity, and cold.

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**Euphorbia 'Glacier Blue'**  
© www.GreatGardenPlants.com

### Drought-Tolerant and Easy

Discovered at Skagit Gardens, 'Glacier Blue' has smoky blue gray, evergreen foliage edged in cream. The coloring is repeated in the intriguing flower clusters. It makes a striking specimen plant with vigor and habit stronger than other variegated Euphorbias. People's Choice award-winner at the 2007 Farwest Show.

'Glacier Blue' makes a great specimen and an outstanding container plant, alone or as the perfect centerpiece for drought-tolerant mixed pots.

It takes full sun to part shade. It reached about 12-15" with a spread of 18". The bloom time is February to May.



**Echinacea purpurea 'Green Envy'**  
© getgreenenvy.com

### Neighbors Go Green with Envy

Developed by hobbyist gardener Mark Veeder, 'Green Envy'™ represents an unprecedented breakthrough in horticulture, with rare and novel green flowers.

The vibrant, jade color continues from the time it begins to flower in mid-July through the fall months. Adding to its unique traits, as the 'Green Envy' flower matures, the petals take on a magenta veining and elongate from their round shape, while the cone gradually turns a deep purplish hue. Such bi-color features are unheard of in any other Echinacea bloom. It is able to thrive in average soils or hot, dry conditions, and is resistant to cold and frost. ❧