

MEDIA FACTSHEET

ROSE ROMANCE (玫瑰之恋)

Stop and smell the roses as you take a stroll through a romantic European garden setting adorned with over 40 varieties of roses in myriad hues of red, pink, orange, yellow and white. These are not your garden variety roses, but a spectacular medley of hybrids rarely seen in this part of the world. There is Princess Anne, a fragrant, deep pink rose named for British royalty; Lady of Shalott, which bears the name of the classic Tennyson poem and produces stunning salmon-pink blooms; and the surprising Angèle Pernet, with its whimsical and unusual colour gradation. These lovely blooms trail down from trellises and arches, flourish amidst magnificent ruins reminiscent of castles of long ago, and surround a tower where Juliet on her balcony is wooed by Romeo in the courtyard below.

Date: Until Sunday, 14 July

Time: 9am to 9pm

Location: Flower Dome

Details: Admission charge to Flower Dome applies

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ROSES

When we talk about roses today, most people think of the Hybrid Tea Rose, a cultivar which was first introduced in 1867 and marked a turning point in the world of roses. Considered one of the modern roses, the Hybrid Tea Rose eventually gained widespread popularity, in particular from the 20th century, for its elegant beauty – even though fragrance had been sacrificed during the hybridisation. Often seen at the florist or depicted in popular culture, it is mistakenly regarded by many as the “classic” rose shape.

However, not only are roses a very, very old flower, they are also remarkably diverse partly because of enthusiastic hybridisation through the centuries, and blooms can differ greatly in shape and structure.

In fact, before 1867, roses looked rather different from the ones we are familiar with today. These pre-1867 roses, of which there are several families but are all categorised as Old Garden Roses, tended to have rosette-shaped flowers, were hardy growers, and very fragrant. Some date back to the pre-15th century!



On the far left is an example of a Hybrid Tea Rose, which is commonly – and mistakenly – regarded as the classic rose shape. On the left is Mary Rose, an Old Garden Rose hybrid which bears the old-fashioned form and strong fragrance of Old Garden Roses. Both can be seen at the Rose Romance floral display.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ROSE ROMANCE

Roses have long been associated with England and France. After all, the national flower of England is the rose, and a classic English beauty is described as an “English rose”. The French have their own love affair with roses; from the legendary rose garden of Josephine, wife of Napoleon Bonaparte, to the roses from Pegomas that go into making the classic perfume Chanel No. 5.

Each country has renowned nurseries that produce distinct roses; at Rose Romance, experience roses grown by famed British rosarians, and exclusive varieties from a French nursery with a storied history.

“English Roses” cultivated by David Austin

The late, prominent rose breeder David Austin gained international recognition for introducing a distinctive cultivar of roses he called “English Roses”. With these old-new roses, Austin managed to combine the appearance and fragrance of older roses with the frequent-flowering characteristic of Hybrid Tea Roses. In Rose Romance, look out for English Roses grown as Standard Roses, which is when three rose bushes of the same variety are joined at the top of a sturdy stem to form a rounded, tree-like shape.



Boscobel

The buds start out red, then open to become coral-pink rosettes. This fragrant variety has a myrrh scent with hints of hawthorn, elderflower, pear and almond. It was named after Boscobel House, famed for housing the oak tree that King Charles II hid in after he was defeated by Oliver Cromwell’s forces during the English Civil War in 1651.



Princess Anne

This richly flowering rose, named after Queen Elizabeth II’s daughter, produces blooms that start out in a pink so deep that it is almost red, which then fades into a paler shade. Each fragrant flower has unusually substantial petals, with a hint of yellow on their undersides.



Lady of Shalott

An example of David Austin's numerous literary references in naming his roses, this striking rose has salmon-pink outer petals that contrast beautifully with golden-yellow undersides. It has a tea fragrance with hints of spiced apple and cloves. The Lady of Shalott is a classic poem by Lord Alfred Tennyson, about a cursed lady who lives in a castle near King Arthur's Camelot.



Darcey Bussell

This deep crimson-pink rose was named after the acclaimed English ballerina Darcey Bussell. When young, the outer petals ring around an inner cup, which opens to form a perfect rosette. The flowers have a light fruity scent.

Peter Beales and his love for heritage roses

Another acclaimed British rose breeder, the late Peter Beales made his mark specialising in Old Garden Roses. In his life, he searched for and propagated many old-fashioned, rare and historic roses, and enabled them to continue to exist for the enjoyment of generations to come. He also hybridised many roses he called "Modern Classics", which remain popular today.



Ely Cathedral

Named after the cathedral in Cambridgeshire in England that is recognised as one of the "Seven Wonders of the Middle Ages", this variety produces outstanding red ruffled blooms.



Dunham Massey

An example of a Modern Classic rose by Peter Beales, this variety produces lightly-perfumed, candy pink blooms that are borne in clusters.



The Fairy

These unusually petite roses, which were introduced in 1932, are of a spreading variety that reaches a height of only two inches. The small, bead-like buds open to globular, pink flowers which are lovely to look at en masse.



Prosperity

This rose with strongly scented creamy-white flowers that grow in trusses was introduced in 1919.

A century of roses from Roseraie Ducher

The Lyonnaise rose nursery Roseraie Ducher is run by the sixth generation of the Ducher family, ever since it was established in 1845. The nursery has had a significant presence in the world of roses through its long existence.

One of its more famous owners was Jean Pernet-Ducher, who was called the “Wizard of Lyon” for his rose hybrids. He created Soleil d’Or in 1898, which is regarded as the world’s first yellow Hybrid Tea Rose. Soleil d’Or made the creation of the yellow roses that we see today possible.



Antoine Ducher

This deep pink rose with a rich heritage was introduced in 1866. By crossing this rose with a yellow species rose (a rose from nature that has not evolved either through natural or human intervention), Jean-Pernet Ducher produced the world's first yellow Hybrid Tea Rose, Soleil D'Or. The yellow Hybrid Tea Roses we see today can be traced back to this historical moment.



Angèle Pernet

This two-tone hybrid tea rose with interesting colour gradation was introduced in 1924.



Purple Kid

Purple is not a colour often associated with roses, which makes the showy violet blooms of Purple Kid stand out even more. The outstanding colour becomes darker if it is planted in half shade.