



Carnation

(*Dianthus caryophyllus*)



Origins

Thought to be a native of the Mediterranean region, *Dianthus caryophyllus* is known to North American florists as the carnation. Carnations are one of some 300 species of annual, biennial and perennial herbs in the genus *Dianthus*, which means “flower of Zeus” in Greek. Common relatives of the carnation, a member of the Caryophyllaceae family, include sweet William, gypsophila and chickweed.

Availability and Vase Life

Carnations are available year-round in a plethora of colors and sizes, and new cultivars frequently become available. Some highly scented cultivars are used to make perfumes, while other cultivars are void of any fragrance. With proper care, carnations can last two weeks.

Care and Handling

Remove any foliage that will fall below the water line of the carnations' container before recutting the stems under water. Place the carnations to a clean container holding a properly prepared fresh flower-food solution. Recut the stems underwater and remove foliage that may be submerged before inserting the stems in a vase or design.

Design Uses

Carnations' diversity makes them suitable for many uses in floral designs, ranging from traditional arrangements to body flowers.



Information courtesy of Extra Touch Florist Association, www.etfassociation.org

Images courtesy of Colombia Flower Council, California Cut Flower Commission, and FPO.

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