

Fall Blooming Perennials – Color Your Garden!

When we think of fall in the garden, we often think of leaf color and the changing of the season to winter – putting the garden to bed – how depressing!! How about a cheerful colorful fall garden full of flowers to bring in for bouquets? None of those boring chrysanthemums now, we are talking real color here!

Fall is a great time to shop and plant. The cooler weather is good for plants, and nurseries will have the fall bloomers for sale, so you can see what you are getting. Also, a lot of nurseries have great sale prices in the fall. You can also shop for fall bloomers in the spring, giving them the summer to grow. The first thing to do, as always, is examine your growing conditions and think about your color scheme. There are beautiful perennials available for every condition and color.

If you have sun (6 hours a day or more), some show-stoppers for your fall color garden include the bright yellow-gold Goldenrods (*Solidago* sp.). There is a nasty rumor that they cause hay fever, but they do not. The real culprit is ragweed, not goldenrod. There are over one hundred species of Goldenrod native to North America, but as usual the nurseries have some new introductions and hybrids that are outstanding, including “Fireworks” and “Golden Fleece”. Also in the yellow- orange group for sun and fall flowers are the *Helianthus*, perennial sunflowers, and the *Heliopsis*, false sunflowers.

Asters are another large family of plants, with over 250 varieties, from small alpine charmers to tall background plants. They usually like sun or part shade, and don't demand much water, so are good for those drier places in your yard. In September purple Asters add a luminous cool touch to the border. Along with Asters, plant the fall blooming Monkshood, *Aconitum carmichaelii*, a tall, deer resistant deep purple helmet shaped bloomer. *Cimicifuga* sp., Bugbane, has tall frothy, fragrant, flowers that bloom late in September. And of course another fall favorite is *Tricyrtis* sp., the toad lilies. Contrary to the strange common name, the flowers are not at all toad-like, but remind one of a whole stem of orchid-like flowers, only in more abundance.

One of the all time native favorites is the 10 foot tall Joe Pye Weed, *Eupatorium* sp., a tall froth of frosty pink to purple butterfly magnet flowers, which now comes in shorter varieties and even a purple foliated show-stopper, the Chocolate Joe Pye. Along with this one, plant Autumn Joy Sedum (*Sedum spectabile*), for flowers that dry on the stalk and last into the winter.



Solidago canadensis –
Goldenrod



Aster novae-angliae –
New England Aster



Cimicifuga racemosa –
Bugbane

Lists of fall blooming plants to fit every garden can be found by searching on the internet, and there will surely be some to fit into your garden plans to ensure year round interest. All of these fall color plants blend well with grasses for a display that lasts into the winter, and provides habitat and seeds for birds and small animals. Fall is anything but boring!

References

[Fall Blooming Perennial Plants](#)

[Fall Flowers - Top Fall Blooming Plants for the Perennial Garden](#)

[Fall flowers and grasses for show-stopping color](#)



Tricyrtis hirta – Toad Lily



Eupatorium sp –

Dwarf Joe Pye Weed



Chocolate Joe Pye Weed