

Time to Buy those Daffodil Bulbs!

September, 2002

If it's Labor Day weekend, Dutch bulbs must be in a store near you. If you haven't already ordered from specialist mail-order catalogs, you can find bulbs now at local garden centers. You can still order online at www.brentandbeckysbulbs.com if you prefer that to looking at a lot of different stores to find what you want. Most of their offerings are illustrated.

I was at my local Home Depot store today, and checked to see what daffodil bulbs were available this year.



If you want early-blooming daffodils, then try 'Jetfire'. This little cyclamineus hybrid in yellow and orange will brighten the garden in earliest spring. It was bred in America by Grant Mitsch, and is now being grown in Holland, a sure measure of a daffodil that increases well. Another early bloomer is the miniature 'Tete-a-Tete' (pictured). This little flower often comes with two

blooms per stem, sometimes three, and sometimes only one. It's a charmer in all its guises. You could even buy enough bulbs to fill a pot to bring spring indoors even earlier. If you decide to plant some in pots, plant a double layer of bulbs, one layer on top of the other. You'll get a spectacular pot this way.

If you're looking for really large daffodils, then try 'Fortissimo'. It makes a showy display in yellow and orange. Friends tell me this one does well in the South. A clump of this will stop traffic! But I have to admit it's a bit too showy for my tastes.

I was pleased to see bulbs of a couple of ADS Wister Award winners there. Wister Award winners should do well in all areas of the country. 'Salome' is one of my favorite daffodils, because I'm partial to pink and white daffodils. It opens white and yellow, then the cup takes on lovely pink tones, retaining a rim of yellow along the edge of the cup. 'Ice Follies' is a changeable flower also. It opens with white petals and a disc-shaped yellow cup, and fades to an all white flower.

Blooming a bit later in the season are a couple more American-bred daffodils, the jonquil hybrids 'Bell Song' and 'Pipit'. Both of these charmers usually have more than one bloom per stem, and have the added bonus of fragrance. 'Bell Song' comes in white and pink, while 'Pipit' is a "reverse bicolor"—meaning it's a yellow

flower with a cup that fades quickly to white, the reverse of most bicolor daffodils which have white petals with yellow cups.



Coming near the end of daffodil season is 'Cheerfulness' (pictured). This all white flower is a double form of a tazetta daffodil, which makes it very fragrant. It usually has from 3-5 blooms per stem. There is also a yellow form called—what else—'Yellow Cheerfulness'.

The store also had bulbs of 'Golden Ducat', which has a large, double yellow flower. In my climate (Zone 5-6), the large, one-bloom-per-stem doubles often "blast," or fail to open. The smaller, Cheerfulness-types do well, but not the larger ones. If you have spring weather that goes from cold to hot to cold and back again . . . you might try just one bulb, to see how it performs for you.

So why not plant a few daffodil bulbs? Next spring, you'll be glad you did.