



SunPatiens.com

SUNPATIENS® MAKE RIVETING DISPLAYS

By Norman Winter

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After three years, I am hooked on the New Guinea-type impatiens series called SunPatiens®. The heat over the past few weeks has made gardening a real struggle. But every day, I pull into the driveway next to SunPatiens® putting on a show.

When the SunPatiens® came out, I was skeptical of how well they would perform in our heat. New Guinea impatiens have not been our best performers in sun or filtered light. But I remember touching their leaves and flowers at the trials in California, and I could then tell they were something special.



SUNPATIENS® LINING THE STREETS OF POZUELO, SPAIN

They bloom from the time they are planted in late April or May until freezing weather finally knocks them out. When petunias have finally succumbed to the relentless summer heat, the SunPatiens® still look incredible.

Last year we planted them at Mississippi State University's Truck Crops Experiment Station in May. They were waist-high when the Fall Flower and Garden Fest was held in October. Visitors were mesmerized. Usually I walk around answering questions, but last year I just stood by the SunPatiens® and told everyone what they were and when they were planted. This year's event is scheduled for October 16-17.

Because they are so tough, we tried them in our display boxes partnered with some cannas for a tropical look. We used some with Mexican Bush sage, and in another area we used them with Goldilocks lysimachia. In all instances they performed like winners. The combinations are limitless, so let your imagination run wild.

The SunPatiens® series now boasts 15 riveting choices. Seven are considered compact, though they will still get quite large. Six are classed as vigorous and two are variegated and spreading.

SunPatiens® look great in the landscape, but the compact and spreading selections open the possibilities for floral containers or baskets that will look good all season, as long as they are watered and fed.

At my home I have SunPatiens® Vigorous Orange planted behind lime green Joseph's Coats and in combination with Blue Wave petunias spilling out of a container. Closer to the front door I have an old clay container with SunPatiens® Spreading Salmon, Bonfire begonia, Blue Princess scaevola and Ogon Japanese sweet flag.

I should be clear on a couple of things. These are in no way xeriscape-type plants; they will need water. At the MSU experiment station we have them on raised beds and use a drip system. At my house I use a water wand and spend less than five minutes each morning giving them a good soaking to get them ready for the 90- to 100-degree days we have been having.

Be sure to plant the SunPatiens® in good, fertile, organic-rich soil. Tight, compacted clay will not give you good results. The SunPatiens® should fit any style garden you have or could ever want, and they will catch the eye of all who pass your way.

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