

Flower Show Blooms With Possibilities



Imagine the time and skill involved in having plantings at their peak for the nine-day show.



Each individual flower is tagged so that visitors can jot down the names of plants, trees, and shrubbery they want to add to their home landscaping designs.



Rustic buildings and elaborate facades of houses were erected to show how plantings add accents to the surroundings.

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PHILADELPHIA — Brilliant colors and fragrances of hyacinths, roses, and herbs mingled together at the world-famous Philadelphia Flower Show last week.

For the sun-deprived, it seemed as if the growing season had finally arrived.

Although few of the lush garden exhibits were projects that do-it-yourselfers can duplicate, the show sparks gardening dreams and offers the opportunity to learn from the workshops, lectures, and personal one-on-one time with top gardeners from around the world.

The spectacular landscaped exhibits with towering trees, blooming bushes and gentle ponds appear to be permanent grounds. In reality, the exhibits were only erected days before the show opening and were torn down at closing.

The ability to force blooms of spring, summer, and fall flowers at this time of the year is no easy feat for growers. It requires horticultural skills of adjusting light, humidity, and carbon dioxide levels in greenhouses, where thousands of plants are grown in preparation for the annual event.

Flowers on display are name-tagged so that visitors can jot down the names of plants they want to include in their landscaping themes.

This year's "Festival of the Flowers" carried a Latin theme with many tropical flowers. Columns, urns, waterfalls, water garden, and indoor water ponds were interspersed among the displays. Patios, walkways, and walls used a variety of masonry materials in unique designs.

One of the most popular spots is the marketplace with 140 national and international vendors. People bring large shopping bags and even carts to fill with the latest gadgets to make gardening easier, or one of the many flower-related gift items to decorate their homes.

Crowds gathered around a vendor from the United Kingdom. Called the Great Hang Up, the stand featured metal brackets used to hang any type of a pot or container indoors and outdoors.

Plants, flowers, and almost everything imaginable connected with outdoor living were available for sale.

It's impossible to capture the magnitude of the magnificent displays, but here are a few glimpses to encourage you to mark your calendar for next year's show, March 7-14, 2004.



Patios, walkways, and walls incorporate a variety of masonry materials among plantings to help Philadelphia Flower Show visitors visualize the possibilities available for outdoor designs. In addition, vendors from around the world were on hand as resources for answering questions and purchasing materials.



Blossoming trees are tucked into landscape settings that appear to be permanent at the Philadelphia Flower Show.



This Italian kitchen display is typical of the Latin theme for this year's event.



Unlike home gardening, the Flower Show has typical spring, summer, and fall flowers blooming simultaneously.