

CARNATIONS: OLD SCHOOL NEW RULES

CARE & HANDLING

Carnations, and Mini Carnations, tend to get a bum rap. Many people see them as old fashioned; “Grandma” flowers. The origins of *Dianthus Caryophyllus*, or Carnation as it is commonly known, are difficult to pinpoint. Probably native to the Mediterranean region, their exact beginnings are unknown due to widespread cultivation over the last 2000 years. They have stood the test of time with good reason. Carnations are one of the most incredibly hardy flowers in the market today, with an average of 7-14 days vase life. Carnations and Mini Carnations travel well, hold their shape and color, and can easily outlast most other flowers in a bouquet.

Dianthus translates to “Flowers of the God” and “Flowers of Love”. Symbolizing virtues of love and enchantment, each shade represents different sentiments. The range of colors available is nothing short of spectacular. Variegated and two tone varieties provide extremely unique design elements, adding touches of color, and texture, to compliment any home décor. Extremely versatile, Carnations used in contemporary designs will leave you speechless; especially when you take a look at the reasonable price tag.

Most common defects are:

1. Early Sleepiness due to ethylene exposure
2. Split calyx due to production conditions
3. Buds fail to open due to improper hydration

The list is rather short for possible issues with Carnations and Mini Carnations. A few easy steps you can be sure they'll go the distance:

- Carnations and Mini Carnations are ethylene sensitive; insist that your supplier treats with an ethylene inhibitor such as EthylBloc™ or EthylGuard to protect against exposure. Do not store or display near ripening produce or products that produce ethylene.
- Start with a clean bucket, sanitized with D.C.D.® cleaner.
- Fill buckets with water mixed with flower food solution according to manufacturer's recommendation. Do not put flowers directly into metal/galvanized buckets as these are toxic to flowers. Use clean, good quality water and do not use water that has been treated with a water softener as the salt levels can be damaging to flowers.
- Cut or don't cut stems if using Floralife® Express Technology and be sure to Quick Dip. Re-cut stems approximately 1" using clean, sanitized clippers or knife. Always re-cut stems between the nodes. Remove any foliage that fall below the solution level.
- Place flowers in prepared container.
- Allow minimum 2 hours to hydrate placing buckets in an area with good airflow.
- Always remember FIFO when rotating Carnations and Mini Carnations.

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