

GLADIOLUS

Little Sword of Sincerity

In the annals of interesting flower names, Gladiolus - "little sword" - lands somewhere in the middle. Definitely not as romantic as anemone (daughter of the wind), not as bluntly literal as chrysanthemum (gold flower), nor as suggestive as orchid (um, look it up yourself.) They were once the symbol of the Roman gladiators, so the moniker makes some sense. Still, a pretty aggressive name for something so lovely and delicate, don't you think?

Gladiolus originated in sub-Saharan Africa, with its Center of Diversity (where you can find the majority of species) located in the wonderfully rich Cape Floristic Region. A member of the Iris family, Gladiolus was introduced to European gardens over 300 years ago. Today, they come in a variety of colors including green, orange, pink, purple, red, salmon, white, and yellow.

Symbolizing sincerity, generosity and infatuation, Gladiolus is a popular choice in today's flower shop, even if it's NOT your August birthday or your 40th anniversary! So, if you are a floral professional who wishes to wield your Little Sword effectively, please peruse these valuable care and handling tips from your friends at Floralife®!



PURCHASING GLADIOLUS

- Ethylene has been shown to cause abortion of unopen florets. Ask if your supplier has treated the product with an ethylene action inhibitor, such as EthylBloc™.
- Avoid stems with brown or shriveled florets.
- Avoid stems in which foliage exhibits tip burn.
- Choose spikes that have a few open florets.

PROCESSING GLADIOLUS

- Rinse bottom of the stems of any dirt or debris.
- Start with a clean bucket, sanitized with D.C.D.® cleaner.
- Fill buckets with cool water mixed with flower food solution according to manufacturer's recommendation. Do not put flowers directly into metal/galvanized buckets. Use clean, good quality water that has not been treated with a water softener as the salt levels can be damaging to flowers.
- Remove foliage below solution level.
- Cut (or don't cut) stems if using Floralife® Express Technology and be sure to Quick Dip. If not, then re-cut stems approximately 1" using clean, sanitized clippers or knife.
- Place flowers in prepared container.
- Allow a minimum of 2 hours to hydrate, placing buckets in an area with good airflow. 2 - 4 hours if flowers are limp or exhibiting bent neck.

- Always remember FIFO when rotating Gladiolus or any other flowers.
- Spray your arrangements containing Gladiolus with Floralife® Finishing Touch before they go out of the door. This will hydrate and protect the blooms.
- Always give a packet of a flower food with your designs. One-liter packets treat one quart of water.

STORAGE

- Place Gladiolus in a 34 - 38° F cooler with 75 - 85% humidity.
- Store upright if possible as Gladiolus tend to bend and deform.

Common Gladiolus Defects & Causes:

- Flower fade/translucency due to ethylene and/or high temperatures.
 - Remaining florets do not open due to early harvest, stored too long, extreme temperatures, and/or low humidity.
- Petal and foliage burning due to excessive fluoride.
- Gladiolus stem ends are prone to developing a biofilm formation when in water due to bacterial growth.

