



CALLA LILY

UNIQUE BEAUTY

By Emma Bradford, FloraLife U.K.

Did you know that Calla lilies are not actually related to lilies at all? They belong to the plant family Araceae, and not Liliaceae where all the true lilies reside, and are more closely related to caladiums and philodendrons than they are to their name sakes.

So how did they come to be called lilies at all? Well, it was the great Carl Linnaeus, father of binomial nomenclature, who first mis-named this beauty. It was later re-classified into the genus Zantedeschia, but the name Calla lily persists.

Not only is their name deceiving, but Callas also hide their true flowers from the casual observer, as the flowers are not the showy part we first see, this is called the spathe, but rather they are on the central spike or spadix. This part is covered with many small flowers, and as evidence, the pollen can sometimes be observed as a pale yellow or cream-colored powder.

Calla lilies are available in a variety of colors, but nothing beats the classic white blooms we all know and love which are a symbol of hope, beauty, peace and purity.

So this Mother's Day, make Mom proud by gifting her a beautiful bouquet of Calla Lilies. Then dazzle her with your newly acquired botanical knowledge!

Care and Handling Information

What to look for when purchasing

- The spadix (the thick fleshy inflorescence inside the showy spathe) should be visible at the time of purchase.
- Spathe should be free of bruising, wrinkles, and browning.
- Stems should be pliable. Stems that snap when bent are a sign of age.

Shipping & Storage

- Shipping and storage temperatures should be 34 - 38° F.

Re-hydration at Store Level

- Store flowers dry at 34 to 38F (1-3C) for as long as possible (until flowers are needed for wet case display at store/wholesale level).
- Start processing with a clean bucket, sanitized with FloraLife® D.C.D.® Cleaner.
- If received dry packed, conditioning of stem ends is recommended to prevent blockage and promote uptake. Cut approximately 1" or more off stems. Use clean, sanitized clippers or knife, and treat with FloraLife® Quick Dip.
- Place flowers in a flower food holding solution such as FloraLife® Express Ultra 200. Do not put flowers directly in metal/galvanized buckets. Use clean, high-quality water that has not been treated with a water softener.
- Store in a cooler at 34 - 38° F.
- Allow minimum 2 hours to hydrate placing buckets in an area with good airflow.
- Always remember FIFO (first in/first out) when rotating Callas or any other flowers.
- Do not overcrowd buckets, Calla lilies are prone to bruising and damage caused by mishandling.

For more information, click here:

<https://floralife.com/article/troubleshooting-calla-lily/>
<https://floralife.com/flower-library-for-retailers/>
<https://floralife.com/flowers/calla-lily/>

Vase Care

- If received dry, cut approximately 1" or more off stems. Use clean, sanitized clippers or knife, and treat with FloraLife® Quick Dip.
- Immediately place flowers in properly dosed vase solutions (Flower Food and water) containing FloraLife Crystal Clear® (the perfect solution for clear vases), or FloraLife® Express 300 (the no-cut premium solution).
- Leave stems to hydrate for approximately four hours. Once hydrated, remove sleeve and arrange as desired.

Special Considerations

- Some Calla lily varieties may be ethylene sensitive. Using anti-ethylene products such as FloraLife® EthylGuard at farm level or EthylBloc™ during shipping and storage increases vase life.
- Thick stems tend to become slimy and decay quickly in water causing not only foul-smelling water but shrink/waste. Changing the solution often is necessary to avoid this from happening.
- Stems are soft so stems and blooms tend to bruise easily. For best results when packing, be sure bunches are securely fastened in the box but do not pull straps too tight.
- Flowers can be infected with Botrytis. Do not over pack buckets with bunches to allow enough breathing room between stems. Respect the cold chain and avoid temperature fluctuations. Do not get water on or handle the flowers by their blooms.

Happy Mother's Day!