

Heather

ERICA (commonly known as Heather or Heath)

Bursting forth in splendor, the Erica with its upright plumes of brilliant blossoms can be described, truly, as simply elegant. The colorful blossoms vary in size and shape (depending on the variety) from tiny to several inches in length but all the blossoms are exquisite in shape and detail. **hana bay flowers** heather comes in colors ranging from white to very dark pink and some of the varieties even have a delicate fragrance which people find quite refreshing.

NATIVE HABITAT

Ericas are native to South Africa; many species originate from the Cape Peninsula. From the mention of “ereike” by some of the early Greek writers, it is known that the areas around the Mediterranean Sea have also been a habitat of the Erica for thousands of years.

In Europe, primarily in Germany where the climate is mild, Ericas and Callunas are used extensively in landscaping. If you’re lucky enough to live in a suitable climate zone, imagine what a planting of 20-30 lovely heather plants could do for *your* yard . . . something to consider!

CULTURAL TIPS

Temperature ~ 33-75° F. Cooler temperatures are preferred but will *not* tolerate freezing conditions.

Light ~ Bright light to full sun.

Water ~ *Always* keep soil wet but not soggy. Does *not* tolerate drought.

Fertilizer ~ None while in bloom. During growth phase, light feed with an acidic type plant food.

Soil ~ Acidic peat moss and sand. Must be well drained.

Garden Suitability/USDA Zone(s) ~ Limited. Zone 9 and cooler parts of zone 10 only. Primarily for indoor use or if you like, keep as a dry potted plant.

GARDEN CULTURE

After the blooms fade, the heather can be planted in the ground in a full sun area (in the appropriate climate zone.) In warmer climates, plant in lightly shaded areas. After blossoms have faded, cut the plant back without cutting into leafless wood. Periodic feeding with iron sulfate will keep the pH acidic but discontinue this before buds appear. Ericas cannot tolerate freezing temperatures; therefore, they would not survive outdoors in cold areas.

CONTAINER CULTURE

The Erica can continue to be grown in a pot even after the blooms have faded but be forewarned . . . it is not easy to do so for very long. Proper watering becomes especially important and over watering or delayed watering even by a few hours, can result in the plant’s demise. But if this happens, all is not lost. See under Life After Death.

AFTER CARE

If you would like to preserve the blooms for a prolonged period (or if the plant inadvertently dies,) leave the plant in the pot and allow

the soil to dry completely. The plant will die but the colorful blooms can be enjoyed for months as dried flowers as long as the plant is not disturbed. Touching the dried blossoms will cause them to drop so handle carefully. We know of no method or technique, which will keep the dried blossoms intact, but if you do, we would love to hear from you.

SPECIAL NOTE

Our Erica is grown primarily as an indoor blooming plant and any success you have growing it beyond this initial enjoyment period should be considered a secondary value achieved only through *your* horticultural skill! Ericas can be rather tricky to grow but in all fairness to this plant, there are many hillsides around this San Francisco coastal community (where our Ericas are grown), which abound in heather! Some have been growing “wild” on the hills for decades and when they bloom, the hillsides resemble a lovely Monet painting!

PLANT SELECTION GUIDE

The different Erica varieties we grow:

Varietal names	Availability	Blossoms type
“Persoluta”	Mid-March	Deep pink
“Heidi”	Mid-Jan. thru Feb.	Tiny bell-shaped, dark purplish-pink flowers
“Rosemarie”	Mid-Jan. thru Feb.	Bushy, light orchid-pink-bell-shaped flowers
“Sachi®”	Oct. thru Nov.	Same as “Heidi” but slightly lighter in color
“Christmas Belles”	Mid-Nov. to Christmas	Tiny white bell type flowers on Christmas tree cone shaped plant

When purchasing an Erica in bloom, look for a plant that looks lush and is covered with blossoms. The blossoms should be abundant and feel soft and supple. Feel the soil. It must be moist but not soggy. Avoid wilted or dry plants since most likely, watering will not revive it.

We appreciate hearing from you, the consumer, to hear how one of our plants may have touched your life. We also appreciate the opportunity it gives us to pass on information that will enhance your enjoyment of a plant. We hope this gives you a little more knowledge about the heather and will encourage you to look for it as well as our many other products wherever quality plants are sold. We at **hana bay flowers** continually strive to produce the finest plants possible in our effort to *Bring Beauty to Life . . . to your life!*