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SHARING
SECRETS

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“What are some of your favorite plants in winter and why?”

Your overwhelming response to this column is very much appreciated and most edifying. Our latest question received a wide variety of entries:

I have beautiful azaleas in many colors and they have been blooming for about two months. I also have camellias and they are blooming. One of my cymbidiums is starting to bloom. I also have calla lilies. - *MP*

Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*); *Salvia regla* - blooms at Christmas; *Camellia sasanqua* ‘Yuletide’ - compact/single reddish-pink flowers; great container plant for entry way. - *SG*

I love my wisteria because I can see the wonderful structure. I also love to look at my kumquat tree and see the promise of all the future kumquat marmalade. - *WG*

20’ old poinsettia plants - tall, graceful and old. Azaleas - grow wild in Florida. Pansies - lots of color blooms. - *The KM Group*

Bird of paradise - they are so colorful in winter. - *DW*

Bok choy - great winter grower and delicious! - *ES*

Wonga-wonga vine (*Pandorea*) - blooms once per year. - *AB*

Brunfelsia, double white. - *RI*

Anonymous Contributors

Canna ‘Lucifer’ looks beautiful. Flax stays nice in winter. Chinese magnolia blooms in winter. Nandina stays nice.

Begonias - wide variety of leaf designs, colors and textures (outside).

Cyclamen are great for winter color. Violas and pansies last for months.

Lachenalia bulbifera (red) - has naturalized in my yard.

Salvia wagneriana - large dark red flowers bloom Nov-Feb. *Salvia elegans* & *S.* 'Frieda Dixon' - large plants with flashy red or pinkish-red small flowers. Schlumbergera (Holiday Cactus) - red, white, pink, orange flowers; not always easy to grow but worth the effort.

Erica 'Winter Fire' - red blooms starting November; dry bracts still hold color. *Cantua buxifolia* - blooms in February; a fuchsia on steroids.

Roses - they are still blooming!

Billbergias seem to burst forth with their blooms and though they don't last long, put on quite a show when multiples are allowed to go. *Aechmea recurvata* var. *benrathii* turns a lovely bright shocking pink color around Christmas time.

Magnolia x soulangeana and *M. denudata* 'Alba' - can see tree structure.

Arum italicum 'Pictum' - lovely arrowhead-shaped leaves, dark green, marbled with white, grows in shade from a tuber which is summer dormant. *Helleborus x sternii* - pewter-netted, toothed leaves, very handsome foliage at all times, huge trusses of very long-lasting (3 months) pink/chartreuse flowers beginning in December. *Helleborus corsicus* - same attributes as *H. sternii*, but flowers are chartreuse.

Corylus avellana 'Contorta' (Harry Lauder's Walking Stick) - deciduous; twisted, gnarled stems with catkins just appearing. An off-beat beauty.

Japanese maples in the "nude" are a particular highlight, especially the ones with red bark.