Cherry Explosion™ Hydrangea

Hydrangea macrophylla 'McKay'



Cherry Explosion Hydrangea flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 4 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4a

Other Names: French Hydrangea, Bigleaf Hydrangea

Description:

A hardy and compact hydrangea that blooms on new wood, and gives a long-lasting performance; large, lovely lacecap flowers have cherry-red florets surrounding tiny star-like pink flowers; color is lavender in acidic soils

Ornamental Features

Cherry Explosion Hydrangea features bold cherry red lacecap flowers with shell pink centers at the ends of the branches from mid spring to mid fall. The flowers are excellent for cutting. It has dark green deciduous foliage. The glossy pointy leaves turn burgundy in fall.



Cherry Explosion Hydrangea in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Cherry Explosion Hydrangea is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Cherry Explosion Hydrangea is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

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Planting & Growing

Cherry Explosion Hydrangea will grow to be about 4 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It tends to be a little leggy, with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years.



Cherry Explosion Hydrangea flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. You may want to keep it away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It requires an evenly moist well-drained soil for optimal growth. It is not particular as to soil type, but has a definite preference for acidic soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in both summer and winter to conserve soil moisture and protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Cherry Explosion Hydrangea makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.