

Hollywood Meets Horticulture

Our Hollywood Hibiscus made their red-carpeted, industry entrance at the TPIE Show in January of 2016, and it was apparent to all attendees, true stars had been born! Genetically speaking, Hollywood Hibiscus are a combination of French and J. Berry Nursery breeding. They have naturally compact growth habits, phenomenal bud and bloom counts, resistance to bacterial leaf spot and multi-day lasting blooms. In short, they check every box.

We have received five-star reviews on their consistent performance from growers' coast to coast along with unwavering support from retailers, and most importantly, for all involved with our supply chain, we have a devoted gardening consumer fan base.

Creating awareness at the industry and consumer

level for us has been strategic, focused and frequently measured. Starting with our Hollywood brand name, star logo, signature gold containers and glitzy industry show displays, we have had a consistent message that Hollywoods are unquestionably "horticulture royalty."

EDUCATION & INSPIRATION

Glamorous looks will only take you so far. So, we have worked to educate, inspire and engage our mutual customers and home gardeners so they are supported to achieve superior Hollywood Hibiscus performance for all seasons. To this end we invested in our website, hollywoodhibiscus.com, making sure the design was smartphone, iPad and variable computer screen size friendly, for an optimal user experience. We incorporated our social media feeds into the site, so our content would be viewable to those who may not actually be active on all social, which helps with our search engine rankings. By the time this article goes to print, the start of our series of custom Hollywood Hibiscus Videos will be directly available to view on our website. These videos, narrated by Jim Berry, the owner and one of the talented breeders of Hollywood Hibiscus, were created to introduce the collection, highlight qualities which set Hollywoods apart from other tropical hibiscus collections, and educate both new and experienced gardeners on best practices for success in the landscape and containers.

Additionally, we can only fit so much on care tags, and everyone's landscape, patio or deck is unique, so it is nice to have the ability to provide direct, timely and custom support on all our social channels. Keeping track of the most frequently asked questions and observations from our Hollywood fans led to our creation of a simple, yet highly detailed, care sheet. We have made it available for download on our website (as long as they sign-up for our enews). As a test, it will be printed and merchandised with our Hollywood Hibiscus plants at select retailers this spring.

ADDING A PERSONAL TOUCH

Superior performance, premium packaging and our online fan support have been the foundation of the success of Hollywood Hibiscus. To add a personal touch, each Hollywood Hibiscus variety is named for a traditional Hollywood character. Our key cast members include Leading Lady, Bombshell, Starlette, Bad Boy (we love to mention he just got out of quarantine), Hot Shot and Gold Digger.

To continue to strengthen our connection with our Hollywood fan base, we teamed up with Maria Zampini and Katie Elzer Peters of UpShoot Horticulture to fully develop each Hollywood Hibiscus personality, so they are relatable and come to life for our fans. In this creative process, we were inspired by the ever-popular quiz sections of beauty and fashion magazines outside of our industry, and we created an interactive Hollywood Hibiscus character quiz. Designed with

specific algorithms, answers to questions such as what your favorite color is, what can't you leave home without, and what your ideal evening entails, our audience is able to determine which Hollywood Hibiscus character is most similar to their own character. Reception and results have been phenomenal! Traffic to our website continues to increase and we have been able to build a focused e-contact list, as email addresses are required for your quiz results. Knowing how important instant gratification can be, we are working with online retailer Nature Hills this spring, so our Hollywood fans can purchase their Hollywood Character Quiz Result.

We are looking forward to continuing to strengthen the Hollywood Hibiscus collection with advances in breeding, staying on-trend with our packaging and merchandising, and continuing to be inspired to engage and support our Hollywood fans, who we have found can't wait to collect them all! [gpn](http://gpn.com)



Tamara Risken is marketing and licensing manager for J. Berry Nursery and a member of GPN's 40 Under 40 Class of 2017. She can be reached at tamara@jberrynursery.com.



Hollywood Hibiscus was a recipient of the Cool Product Award at the 2017 Tropical Plant Industry Exhibition.