

vaughn's view

BY VAUGHN FLETCHER

1

BRIGHT AND RADIANT

BASKET COMBINATIONS — PART 3



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The Costa Premiere Spring Basket Trial featured over 84 basket combinations with some real standout recipes.

I visited the Costa Premiere spring trial on week eight to evaluate the early flowering and performance of annual introductions for 2023. My May and June articles highlighted many of the most dynamic, unique and exciting varieties from this late February evaluation.

I returned on week 17 to view and evaluate not only the basket trial, but the perennial trial in later stages of development and flowering. I will cover the new perennials in the August article, but the focus of this article is the basket trial, comprised of current, new and experimental designer recipes from nine different international flower breeders. The baskets were planted in weeks 50 to 51 and moved from the greenhouse to the outside trial area in week nine.

There were over 84 different combinations in the trial with double replication. The baskets consisted of 2-gallon coco fiber with nine plant components each. The stage of the combinations following nine weeks of heat, humidity and rain is consistent with the stage of maturity demonstrated in the northern trials in mid to late August. The recipes manifested the following attributes: component balance, timing, dynamic colors, vigor, uniformity, durability and lastly, but most importantly, weather tolerance.

1. TRIXI COMBO ENCHANTED EVENING

Selecta One

This new Trixi for 2023 consists of petunia 'Headliner Enchanted Sky', calibrachoa 'MiniFamous Uno White', and



2

verbena 'Blues Purple+Eye'. Petunia Enchanted Sky was introduced for the 2022 spring season and was very popular in spring programs. It was one of my favorites in last year's summer trials for its color retention, vigor, heat tolerance and unique violet-pink petals with a white central star and white speckles. Calibrachoa Uno White is considered a compact yet vigorous variety with a semi-trailing habit. The Uno series is very diverse, consisting of 19 solids, doubles and stars. The verbena Blues series is the most vigorous in the Selecta portfolio, and Purple+Eye demonstrated that vigor and flowering power in this combination.

2. MANDEVILLA SUN PARASOL COMBO

Suntory

This combination of the new mandevilla 'Sun Parasol Original Sunbeam' and mandevilla 'Sun Parasol Garden Crimson'

was the most popular selection on my Facebook page and was dazzling in the trial. This Original Sunbeam is a revolutionary genetic breakthrough with incredible floriferousness, bright yellow petals and dense branching. Combined with the basket variety Garden Crimson, it created visual heat and excitement. These are varieties that will flourish in intense summer conditions and provide perpetual color into early fall.

3. KWIK KOMBO DEKKO DARE DEVIL MIX

Syngenta

This new early season single species Kwik Kombo combines petunia 'Dekko Banana', 'Dekko Deep Lavender Vein', and 'Dekko White'. The medium-sized flowers produce a prolific flower canopy with uniformity, a tight flower window, versatility and excellent rain and heat tolerance. I highlighted Banana, a new introduction for 2021, in an article last year. I was impressed by the branching, flower coverage and durability, which are indicative of the entire series. This new mix demonstrated outstanding timing, balance and floriferousness in the trial. There are 11 core and unique colors in the series with application in quarts, mixed containers, baskets and beds.

4. TRIXI PERFECT PAIRING LAVA

Selecta One

This Trixi is experimental, but it is hot! It combines the warm colors of petunia 'Headliner Red', the new verbena 'Lascar Orange Lava', and calibrachoa 'MiniFamous Uno Orange+Red'. This combination manifested balance, uniformity and exceptional flower coverage. When you combine the primary colors of red and yellow and the secondary color orange to the mix, you create intense color saturation, resulting in the perception of energy and excitement. The Headliner petunia series is medium vigor, mounded and early flowering with a wide range of varieties including Skys, Stars, Swirls, Veins and core colors. I highlighted the exceptional performance of the new verbena 'Lascar Orange Lava' in my June Costa article. When I returned to the Costa trial in late April, I was impressed with the color retention, controlled growth habit and foliage integrity. The calibrachoa 'MiniFamous Uno Orange+Red' is new for 2023 and will be a strong addition to the series. The red veination provided a strong contrast with the orange petals.

5. VINCA 1

PanAmerican Seed

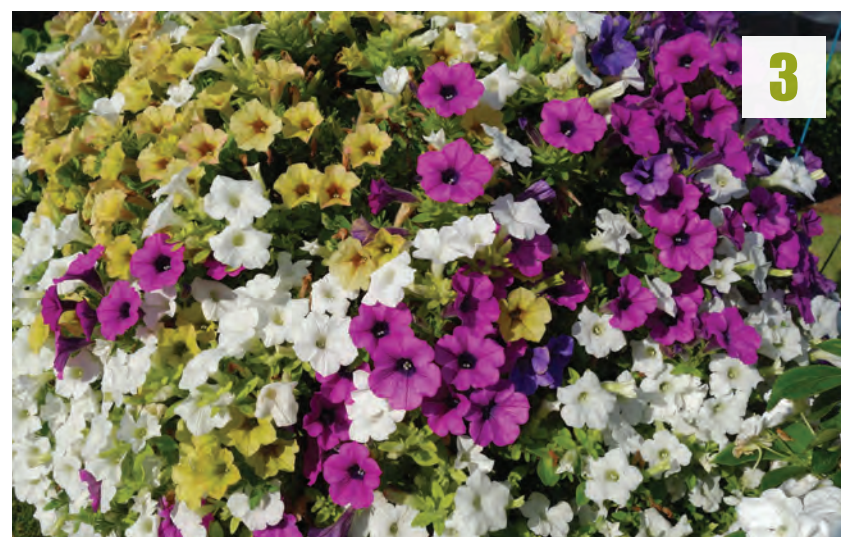
This experimental combination of vinca 'Tattoo Tangerine', 'Tattoo Raspberry', and zinnia 'Double Zahara Cherry' was the most unusual and flashy mix of genera in the trial. This was a mix I have never seen in production, but it grabbed my attention with its hot, dynamic colors. I chose this recipe to illustrate the uniqueness of the Tattoo colors and the flower size, color and floriferousness of the 'Double Zahara Cherry'.

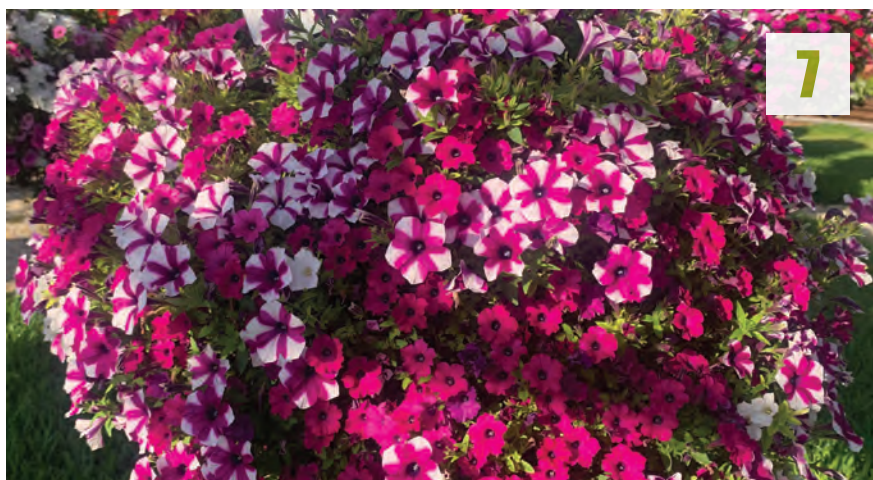
The vinca varieties are Medal of Excellence Industry choice winners, and the 'Double Zahara Cherry' has won the prestigious All America Selections award and the Fleuroselect Novelty award. The vinca Tattoo series, with its novelty bicolor petals, has become a significant and colorful component in sun patio containers and baskets.

6. SUPERCAL CITRIX MIX

Sakata

This is a current SuperCal recipe in the SuperCal kit program. It combines SuperCal's Premium Pearl White, Premium Yellow Sun and Premium Sunset Orange. This combination demonstrates the tight flowering window, semi-mounded habit, flower size, heat tolerance and floriferousness of the Premium varieties. 'Premium Yellow Sun'





and 'Premium Sunset Orange' were introduced in the trial program in 2021 and are available now in the 2022 spring season. There are nine unique colors in the Premium series. These interspecific varieties have demonstrated superior weather tolerance and durability in all regions of the country in summer trials and consumer application. Based on performance since their introduction, the SuperCals should be used in quarts, combinations and basket production to give the consumer the planting flexibility for a rewarding and colorful plant series for the summer and early fall season.

7. KWIK KOMBO ITSY BITSY MIX

Syngenta

This new Kwik Kombo for 2023 received many Facebook likes when I posted my favorite recipes from the trial. The components are petunia 'Shortcake Blueberry', petunia 'Itsy Magenta', and petunia 'Itsy White'. This is considered a heat-loving, mid-season Kombo. I have highlighted in previous articles the exceptional summer performance of 'Shortcake Blueberry' and 'Itsy Magenta'. 'Itsy White' was introduced last year and was a top performer in many summer trials. 'Shortcake Blueberry' is a novelty petunia that produces a medium-sized flower with a well-defined and stable magenta-blue star flower pattern. The Magenta and White Itsy have flowers the size of Sutera, tight internodes, vigor, a mounded semi-trailing habit, a carpet of color and outstanding heat tolerance. This is a Kombo that will go the distance and provide the consumer with season-extending color.

8. PLEASANT VISTA

Proven Winners

This new Bundled Kit combination for 2023 consists of petunia 'Mini Vista Indigo', 'Vista Fuchsia', and 'Vista Snowdrift'. These petunias do not need a lengthy description because they have proven themselves year after year since their introduction in production programs, landscape sites, patio containers and hanging baskets. The Pleasant Vista recipe is eye-catching and offers balance, timing, prolific flower coverage and superb weather tolerance. These petunias are all-star performers and demonstrate prolific bright and intense flowers throughout the summer and early fall season.

9. TRIXI STAR SPANGLED GLAMOUR

Selecta One

This new Trixi mono combination for 2023 offers a patriotic flair with the MiniFamous series including Double Dark Blue, Double Red and the new Double White, with many improvements including larger flowers, faster to flower and increased vigor to match the series. This Trixi recipe manifested uniformity, floriferousness, stable double flowers and excellent color retention. This is the most compact series in the Selecta portfolio, consisting of solid, doubles, bicolors and star-shaped flower patterns. The series demonstrates sufficient vigor to grow, develop and produce a colorful basket or to be a valuable component in patio containers.

10. CONFETTI GARDEN TIME FOR FUN

Dümmen Orange

This Confetti recipe combines calibrachoa 'Tik Tok Blue' and 'Tik Tok White'. There are four vivacious colors in the series: Blue, Grape, Rose and White. The flowers produce prolific yellow starburst patterns with dark centers and solid outer petals. As you can see from the photo, the color separation is well defined and sharp, which creates stunning flowers that are dazzling and eye-catching. The series has excellent vigor and performs well in quarts, combos and basket production. This



is a series that manifests high impact at retail, which is significant with the multitude of outstanding calibrachoa varieties available to choose from.

11. DURABELLA VERY VANESSA

Danziger

The Danziger Durabella recipe program, introduced in 2021, has expanded to include over 21 Duo and 50 Trio combinations for 2023. The new Very Vanessa verbena recipe includes Compact Neon Pink, the best-seller in the series, Compact Vanessa Lavender and Compact Vanessa White. These three varieties demonstrate the attributes of the compact Vanessa series, which are balance, timing, uniformity, color stability and a prodigious flower canopy. There are now 13 colors in the series, including the new Bordeaux and Rose for 2023.

12. LOBELIA RIFT MIX

Westhoff

When you think about Westhoff breeding, you immediately think about their calibrachoa portfolio and the lobelia Hot series, which has proven itself year after year as one of the best series in the industry. A new Hot+ series has been added for 2023, but Westhoff has made a genetic leap for next year with two new variegated or multicolored lobelia: 'Rift Blue'

and 'Rift Purple', with striking blue and purple petals overlaid with white streaks. I observed them in my February visit, where they were flowering profusely in the trial beds, and I was pleasantly surprised when I returned in late April to see the excellent performance of the varieties in the basket trial. The habit is similar to the Hot series, densely branched, floriferous and extremely heat tolerant as demonstrated by this late flowering in Florida. These colors pop and will be excellent additions for quarts and combinations.

13. BLOOMTASTIC SUMMER SOLSTICE

Dümmen Orange

This is a current Confetti Gardens recipe, and when you combine superlative calibrachoa Bloomtastic varieties together, the synergistic effect may be greater than the individual components. This is a combination of 'Bloomtastic Rose Quartz', 'Bloomtastic Yellow' and 'Bloomtastic Pink Flare'. The attributes of this series are significant: substantial flower size, vigor, durability, color retention, prolific flower canopy and superior heat tolerance. I have highlighted the popularity of Rose Quartz in the market and the effulgence of its petals in a previous article. When you combine this variety with the brightness of the 'Bloomtastic Yellow' and the distinct center of Pink Flare, you have a very special recipe. [gpn](#)