

Kartuz Greenhouses

Achimenes Rhizomes - Care Sheet Including xAchimenantha & xSmithicodonia

Available March through April 2023

Common names for Achimenes: Magic Flowers, Cupid's Bower or Hot Water Plant, so named because in the 1800's, gardeners believed incorrectly that soaking in hot water was necessary to break dormancy.

Achimenes and related hybrids, members of the *Gesneriaceae*, are native to Mexico and Central America. Their flowers are available in almost every shade imaginable. They are easily grown from small scaly rhizomes planted in the spring. We offer rhizomes during the spring months only, March through April. Five rhizomes will make an excellent 5 to 6 inch pot specimen.

To plant Achimenes rhizomes, use an azalea pot, and fill with a light, porous potting mix. Plant the rhizomes horizontally, spacing them evenly around the pot. Cover them with about one inch of the potting mix and water thoroughly. Then, water sparingly until they sprout. When rhizomes have sprouted and have three pairs of leaves, pinch out the tip growth to encourage branching. This pinching should be done at least twice to produce greater bloom, and will delay flowering only slightly. Keep plants well watered during the growing season and fertilize regularly. Provide strong filtered light to produce compact plants with plenty of flowers. They love warm and humid weather conditions.

When Achimenes have finished flowering in the fall, they should be allowed to die back naturally by gradually withholding water. When plants show signs of yellowing, it's an indication of the start of dormancy. The dormant rhizomes may be stored in the pot or harvested from the potting mix and stored in partially open containers or paper bags in dry vermiculite or peatmoss. Keep cool. In the spring replant in fresh potting mix, as above.

Achimenes are sent in plastic snack bags for shipment. The rhizomes should be planted right away, even if indoors. If they must be stored, you need to permanently open the bags and let them get fresh air and keep them in a cool location. If left sealed and with warmth they could rot.

Note: Some varieties are always in short supply. We will substitute equally good varieties of similar color and type unless a choice of substitutes is given.

Package of 5 rhizomes per variety: \$12.95

Shipping and handling is \$10.00 plus \$1.00 for each rhizome package or plant ordered. Rhizomes can be combined with plants to help offset shipping costs. California residents add 7.75% sales tax. We offer Achimenes as rhizomes only, not potted plants.

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