

POOR DAVID'S ALMANAC

BY DAVE INGRAM, CONSULTING ROSARIAN

*"A garden complete (once greed besets thee),
Features roses as far as the eye can see."*

Getting Started With Roses – Volume VII



Internet Mail-Order Nurseries

I have read that over the years, more than 20,000 rose varieties have been introduced. Most of these have disappeared, but there are still several thousand cultivars available, and if you want, you can buy them all for your garden. Some are hundreds of years old and alive with history; others are brand new, the exciting work of today's top rose hybridizers. So, it is my happy duty to introduce you to a wonderful and hopeless addiction—endless roses!

If you have followed our articles this year, you have learned how to plant well-started, # 1 roses from local nurseries in your garden and succeed with them. That will always be your best road to success—that is why local nurseries are there. It is how I like to buy roses, despite the cost. But local nurseries can only offer the tip of the iceberg of all the varieties out there. And if nothing else, the websites I have listed here are a fine source of knowledge.

Be aware that most mail order nurseries offer first year rooted cuttings (own-root) for sale, much smaller and more fragile than what you have dealt with this year. These plants are shipped to you in quart-sized pots (generally 4" X 4" X 5" deep), often called "bands," to save shipping costs. The plants average maybe 6" to 8" in height, and they will need a couple of years of attention to reach the size of the roses you have put in this year, and maybe 3 to 5 years to reach full, mature size. Miniatures arrive in even smaller pots. But fear not—the same principles you have followed and the skills you have learned from the *"Growing Roses in Colorado"* book will help you succeed with these young cuttings.

Most of the nurseries listed below have been around for awhile; but with the economy as it is these days, the waves of change may drown some of them—so the old expression of "caveat emptor" is good advice. Several offer discounts to ARS members, another good reason to join the American Rose Society! Explore these sites, and follow their links for a journey full of history and beauty. First up, an index site:

- ☛ helpmefind.com/rose—a search site that has cataloged over 39,000 plants (roses, clematis and peonies), with over 86,000 photos. There are links to plant nurseries, public and private gardens, plant societies, and much more. A wonderful resource.
- ☛ High Country Roses—highcountryroses.com. 1-800-552-2082. Catalog available. Located in Jensen UT, with family ties to the DRS. We have sold their plants at our events for years, and I bet most of our members have at least one of their roses in their gardens. Over 250 varieties, mostly hardy in our climate—a factor you must be aware of. Great descriptions of each variety, with photos under a separate heading. Good selection, excellent service.

- ☛ Roses Unlimited—rosesunlimiteddownroot.com. 864-682-7673. Laurens, SC. Hundreds of varieties from all over the world. These are bigger plants in gallon pots; they cost more, and shipping costs are high. Good selection and good service from a modest website. Phone orders.
- ☛ Vintage Gardens—vintagegardens.com. 707-829-2035. Sebastopol, CA. The Big Daddy site. An historical treasure trove of over 3,500 varieties, offered mostly in bands, and a few gallons. The website alone is a “must visit.” Not all varieties offered each year; awesome selection and decent service on a great ordering site. But, these are small plants from a big operation, sent in an odd, gravelly soil mix in smallish pots. I have a lot of their plants in my garden, but I failed with some, too. After slow sales, the owner says he will decide May 2009 whether to stay in business. Order if you can — we need them to stick around.
- ☛ rosemania.com 1-888-600-9665. Franklin, TN. A big supporter of the ARS, this is a top site for ordering garden chemicals in quantity and other equipment. They also offer some bare-root roses, and a line of minis and mini/loras from top hybridizers. For me, a cutting-edge site; useful selection and great service on a great ordering site.
- ☛ Heirloom Roses—heirloomroses.com. 503-538-1576. St. Paul, OR. The late John Clements built this business on a fine selection of top varieties, along with his own introductions. Good service, good ordering site.
- ☛ John’s Miniatures - johnsminiatureroses.com. 1-800-820-0465. Same guy, different business, specializing in miniatures.
- ☛ Nor’East Miniature Roses—noreast-miniroses.com. 1-800-426-6485. Probably the top source of miniature roses. If you can’t find it here, or at John’s, then maybe you don’t need it. Great selection, service and on-site ordering.
- ☛ Northland Rosarium—northlandrosarium.com. 509-448-4968. Spokane, WA. Strong selection of Canadian, Kordes, and Griffith Buck (39 varieties) hardy roses, along with many others. Good service and on-site ordering.

Want more? Oh, I don’t know. Well . . . Okay!

- ☛ chambleeroses.com—Texas. Over 300 varieties, in gallons (high shipping).
- ☛ antiqueroseemporium.com—Texas. Good selection, in 2-gallon pots (higher shipping).
- ☛ roguevalleyroses.com—Oregon. About 1,200 varieties.
- ☛ davidaustrinroses.com/american—Texas. Catalog available. All those great English roses, produced here in the United States as grafted, bare-root plants.
- ☛ jacksonandperkins.com—Oregon. Catalog available. Probably the largest mail-order bareroot company in the U.S. Their catalogs alone will make you drool on the floor.
- ☛ hortico.com—Canadian nursery. A big operation—3,000 varieties, mostly grafted and bareroot. A good source, but I have received mislabeled varieties from them.
- ☛ weeksroses.com—Wholesale only, but you can surf their roses to find out what your local nursery might carry next spring.

There are many more nurseries. I am sure I have missed some that our members love. But enough for now! If you have visited all the sites listed here, then it is time to take the needle out of your arm. Congratulations! You are well started as a rosarian!

You have got roses in the ground that should bring you many years of enjoyment, and I have tried to kick the door open on how to let your life drift totally out of control, like Poor David's has.

The Denver Rose Society has great educational programs each month. Make sure your membership is updated (do it today!!), and let's get together and talk about our discoveries.