Mother’s Day Gifts

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Flowers and garden related gifts are always popular for Mother’s Day. Here are a few Gardening Projects that make great gifts because of the plants involved but also because of their status as “projects”.

“Whopper” begonias in a hanging basket. Check out the new “Whopper” begonias, they are spectacular. They appear to be just as tough as the popular waxleaf begonias but have leaves that are three times as large and larger flowers as well. The “Whopper” will grow to 30 inches tall and 20 inches in diameter. The green or bronze leaf versions look great in the flower bed or a container.

“Whoppers” are especially showy in a hanging basket, in the same league as the New Guinea Impatiens. The difference is that “Whopper” begonias planted in a container can be expected to survive and prosper all summer and into the winter. “Whopper” begonias are available at area nurseries in hanging baskets but make it an even more special gift by purchasing all the parts and assembling the hanging basket for the “Mother’s Day Honoree” at your Mother’s Day celebration.

Take your children or grandchildren to your favorite nursery to select a hanging basket container, a bag of potting mix, a hanging hook, and one or two “Whopper” begonias. The plants in quart size containers are very inexpensive. They grow quickly and will fill the container within a few weeks. A special Mother’s Day Gift for Mother or Grandmother for about $25.

Another Gift along the same line to consider, is one of the tough modern roses. Belinda’s Dream, Grandma’s Yellow, Katy Road and Knockout roses are all in bloom at the nursery. Select the one you think your Mother’s Day Honoree will like best and make it a special gift by planting it for her.

The tough modern roses are desirable because they bloom for about 8 months of the year, are drought tolerant, grow in our native soils, and do not require pesticide sprays.

Along with the rose, purchase a bag of mulch so that you and your planting team (children and grandchildren) can cover the root area with mulch. If your Honoree likes cut flowers, select Belinda’s Dream or Grandma’s Yellow. Plant the Mother’s Day rose in full sun. The total purchase will be about $35.

If your Mother is more into vegetables than flowers, consider making the Mother’s Day Project Gift a pepper plant in a container. Peppers are very attractive and productive in containers if they are placed in full sun.

The Pepper Project would involve purchasing a decorative container, potting mix, some fertilizer for containers, and a pepper plant. Depending on the decorative container, this Mother’s Day gift may cost at least $75.

Nurseries have large numbers of decorative containers from which to select. Consider a Spanish Courtyard or solid color ceramic container with at least 10 gallons of capacity. It may require 2 bags of potting mix. Even if you purchase potting mix enriched with fertilizer, obtain a bag of Osmocote to supplement the nutrients through the growing season.

Half the fun for your “Gift Team” may be selecting which pepper to include in the planting. My choice would be a banana pepper because they are colorful, productive and tasty, but depending on what your Mother likes; a jalapeno, serrano, or bell pepper may be a better choice. All of them are attractive container plants. Bell peppers are the hardest to grow.

Happy Mother’s Day!