

Dipladenia / Mandevilla

Mandevilla sanderi (dipladenia) and *Mandevilla x amabilis* (mandevilla) are easy care tropical plants native to Brazil. Both thrive in full, blazing hot sun and reward the gardener with a profusion of bright blooms that do not require deadheading. They are drought tolerant and are therefore the perfect container plants for homeowners who travel frequently and may not be able to follow a consistent watering program.

Mandevilla sanderi (dipladenia) are bushy plants that develop twining stems as they mature. Dipladenia have 3 inch smooth, shiny, ovate leaves which exude a milky sap when broken. Their 3 inch flowers are a salverform shape (a wide flat flare above a narrow corolla tube) and come in a color range of bright pink ('Red Riding Hood'), blush white ('Faire Lady'), light pink, and the recently introduced crimson red colors of the Sun Parasol series. These are excellent plants for hanging baskets and other containers.

Mandevilla x amabilis (mandevilla) have large, coarsely corrugated leaves up to 10 inches long. They are vigorous twining plants that require a trellis or other support to best show off their large flowers.

Dipladenia and mandevilla are not specifically intended as houseplants, but some gardeners successfully winter them over in a sunny location. Before moving your plant indoors we recommend that the plant be pruned to a manageable size for the indoor space. (Always prune to just above a leaf node). When the plant is first moved indoors it will likely go through a period of adjustment due to the reduced light environment. Expect yellowing leaves to occur. Your plant will not actually go dormant, but it will be in a less active growth phase. You will not need to water as much as in the summer, at most twice a month. Let your plant dry out between waterings. Do not apply any fertilizer until spring. As the days lengthen in February and March you will observe long, whiplike stems shooting out from the plant. Prune these to your liking. Do not be afraid to manage your plant by trimming unwanted growth. When danger of frost is past in the spring (late May to early June) move your plant outdoors. To avoid leaf scorch, give your plant a few days to adjust before putting it in full sun. Now you can begin watering and fertilizing on a regular basis. We have had some reports from customers indicating that house wintered dipladenia and mandevilla take much longer to begin flowering in the summer than those wintered in a greenhouse.

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