



L to r, ranunculus, sparaxis, tulips and watsonia

BULBMANIA!

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Bulbs are Mother Nature's little miracle. Everything the bulb needs in order to bloom is contained within the bulb itself.

Successfully growing bulbs in the Gulf Coast Region is quite easy when you use a few tips.

Most books and articles about growing bulbs are written for colder climates. They recommend fertilizing, planting in sunny spots and planting in the fall.

For bulbs to bloom successfully here in the Gulf Coast, we must first accept a few things:

- We have clay soil
- We have mild winters
- Bulbs hate heat
- Many bulbs should be viewed as annuals

Many bulbs are bottom heavy and therefore will slowly sink in our clay soil, where they will then rot.

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When planting bulbs that are annuals there is no need to fertilize, save your money and buy more bulbs!

Our mild winters do not provide enough chilling time required for many bulbs, so chilling in a refrigerator and planting the first part of January will produce spring blooms.

Because bulbs hate heat, do not plant them in full sun, partial shade is much better and the blooms will last longer.

Think of many varieties of bulbs as annuals, just as one does other annuals.



L to r, allium, amaryllis, anemones, Dutch iris

The following bulbs are annuals (*one bloom season only!*) on the Gulf Coast:

- Tulips
- Some Daffodils
- Dutch Iris
- Muscari
- Anemone
- Allium
- Ranunculus
- Hyacinths

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L to r, Daffodil Double Roman daffodil Carlton, Daffodil italicus, Daffodil Fortune,

A few bulbs that are Perennials (*return year after year*):

- Amaryllis
- Daffodil Carlton
- Daffodil Fortune
- Daffodil Double Roman
- Daffodil Italicus
- Leucojum
- Watsonia
- Sparaxis
- Licoris



L to r, hyacinths, lecojum, lycoris, muscari

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Bulbs look best when planted in clumps or in masses. Most bulbs need to be planted deep enough so there is as much soil over the top of them as there is the height of the bulb. In other words if a daffodil is 3 inches tall, there should be 3 inches of soil on top. (Amaryllis is the exception to this rule) Plant your bulbs one bulb width apart.

Tulips will need a minimum of 6 weeks chilling. Do not buy Parrot Tulips, our temperature swings are too great and the bulbs will not bloom.

If you plant bulbs that are perennials, the time to fertilize them is when the blooms have died and leaves are dying back. This will feed more energy into the bulb for the next year's blooms. Do not twist, braid or tie up the dying leaves, these practices restrict energy going back into the bulb.

A final recommendation is to buy the best bulbs you can afford, this will help with your success.