



'Yuletide,' 'Nuccio's Gem,' Scentsation,' 'Buttermint' and 'Kramer's Supreme'

CAMELLIAS — QUEEN OF WINTER BLOOMERS!

by KITT BURNSIDES

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The camellia is a tough, durable plant, but it isn't always hardy enough to tolerate the deep chill and harsh winds of winter. If your plant looks a little worse for wear by the time spring rolls around, you may be able to bring it back to radiant health.

Camellia cold tolerance is fairly high, especially if the plants are sheltered from cold winds. Hopefully, the weather will provide a few chilly spells to toughen up the plant before the weather does its worst.

Water camellias thoroughly before the first hard freeze. Be sure to saturate the root zone because moist soil will protect the roots. Otherwise, water evaporates through the leaves throughout the winter.

Tight buds will not generally be bothered by a short freeze and will continue to grow and bloom, Buds showing color can be protected in a frost by covering, however even this will not help in a full freeze, these buds like fully open blooms will fall off.

Of course you can bring the color inside in the case of a freeze. Cutting the blooms and floating them in a shallow bowl of water is a wonderful way to display camellias blossoms. Some of the most popular, pictured above l, to r:

- **Camellia sasanqua hybrid 'Yuletide'** : upright habit with 3-inch wide, bright red, single flowers in early-mid season (November to December or later); best in partial sun; grows to 8–10 feet tall and wide
- **Camellia Non- reticulated Hybrid 'Buttermint'**: medium-sized shrub with formal double flowers that are creamy-white with yellow centers or soft yellow and a light fragrance (mint scented?!?); best in partial sun, blooms late winter to early spring; 6 feet tall by 4–5 feet wide late winter to early spring; 6 feet tall by 4–5 feet wide
- **Camellia japonica 'Scentsation'**: features large, silvery pink, peony-form blossoms, 4-5 inches wide, opening to reveal a tantalizing glimpse of golden stamens. They produce over several months from January to March.
- **Camellia japonica 'Kramer's Supreme'**: deep red double bloom with a peony form and a delightful fragrance; blooms January - February.
- **Camellia japonica 'Nuccio's Gem'**: a formal to double sparkling white blooms; blooms January - February.