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Espresso Cranesbill

Geranium maculatum 'Espresso'

Espresso Cranesbill foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 18 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Spacing: 20 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 3a

Other Names: Wild Cranesbill, Spotted Cranesbill

Description:

A compact, clump forming plant with the most unusual chocolate-brown foliage which turns reddish in the fall; attractive light lavender-pink saucer-shape flowers stand off against the darker foliage in spring for a magnificent effect

Ornamental Features

Espresso Cranesbill has masses of beautiful lavender flowers at the ends of the stems from late spring to early summer, which are most effective when planted in groupings. Its attractive deeply cut lobed palmate leaves are dark brown in color. As an added bonus, the foliage turns a gorgeous red in the fall.

Espresso Cranesbill flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Espresso Cranesbill is an herbaceous perennial with a mounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

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Espresso Cranesbill is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Espresso Cranesbill will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 20 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

Espresso Cranesbill in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selection of a native North American species. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Espresso Cranesbill is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. It is often used as a 'filler' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, providing a mass of flowers and foliage against which the thriller plants stand out. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.