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Creating romance with roses

Designer Arne Maynard is adept at using roses in mixed borders, along walls and even romping through long grass. Here he explains how to choose and use them for best effect.

WORDS ARNE MAYNARD PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM OPENING IMAGE BRITT WILLOUGHBY DYER



Arne Maynard is a leading garden designer based in London and Monmouthshire

love the old-fashioned roses and use them extensively in my gardens. When we were brought in to re-design the gardens at Haddon Hall in Derbyshire, we were working with a garden that was famous for its roses. We didn't want to alter the garden's Elizabethan structure, but the way some of the roses were being grown, in bare earth and with colours mixed together, felt very dated. Creating an atmosphere more fitting for the romance and age of the house, led us to remove the roses we felt weren't appropriate to the aesthetics of the place and re-select others. Beds of old Hybrid Teas and Floribundas were taken out, and this gave us the opportunity to carry out a different treatment, using old-fashioned roses in deep borders, mixed in with herbaceous perennials.

We began the selection process with colour. Not just the palette of the border, but the colours of the surrounding landscape and buildings, because that's the aesthetic the roses are seen against, and Haddon is a wonderful Tudor country house of mellow Derbyshire stone. Then, there's the size of the border to consider. In a limited space I'd use one or two roses and a restricted palette, whereas with big borders and high walls there's the luxury of choosing lots of different cultivars. There were some amazing old roses on the walls that we didn't want to lose, such as 'Mannington Mauve Rambler' and 'Veilchenblau' and it was important to work with them. I also wanted to re-introduce some Edwardian elegance, with soft, faded-chintz pinks and blues.

Next comes perfume. Roses are such sensual flowers, that for me, they have to have perfume. Something I think everyone ought to try and do when they're selecting old roses, is to go and see them growing at their peak, in June, at a rose grower or a garden with a good collection. Look at the way they're growing, their height and habit, smell them, and check

they're disease resistant. Many old roses are prone to mildew or black spot, particularly in damp conditions, so it's worth doing a bit of research into which are the most resistant to avoid disappointment and having to spray.

Old-fashioned roses encompass groups of varying heights and growth habits. Species roses such as R. chinensis have a light feel and I grow them as individuals at the front of the border, or wild in grass. The damasks, R. x centifolias and moss roses I love to train on hazel domes. This is because roses can get very heavy with flower, so when it rains you'll find them collapsing into the mud with the weight of the rain. Not only does the dome support the growth, it helps the rose produce more flowers. By winding the stems horizontally around the structure you're encouraging flower buds to break from the leaf axils so the whole dome becomes clothed from base to top like a rose topiary, creating volume in the borders.

Then we have other species roses, that sit at the back and bring autumn interest with hips or, like the incense rose, *R. primula*, have scented leaves that fill the garden with fragrance in the evening and when it rains. The scent of incense conjures up a medieval atmosphere that's so right for Haddon, and adds another layer to the experience of walking round the garden, by stimulating the senses and conjuring up something of its history.

All the old-fashioned roses bloom in June, and for me that huge, gorgeous exuberance of blossom is what June is all about. But, to extend the season, I like to add in some of the David Austin English Roses that are bred from the Old Roses and Modern Hybrid Teas and Floribundas, and which continue to produce blooms and fragrance well into August and September. \square

• Turn the page for Arne's selection of 12 favourite old-fashioned roses.



Nothing quite compares to the scent of an old-fashioned rose on a warm, summer's day. Designer Arne Maynard picks a dozen of his favourites.

1 Rosa 'Apple Blossom'

In June, true to its name, this Multiflora rambler is heavy with masses of delicately scented, apple blossom-pink flowers. Lovely for giving an informal, country feel. Tolerant of some shade. 2-3m. USDA 5a-9b†.

2 R. The Generous Gardener (= 'Ausdrawn')

One my favourites of the David Austin repeatflowering roses. A good, strong-growing rose, disease-resistant and with fantastic perfume. If not deadheaded, it will produce large, orange hips in the autumn. 3m. AGM*. USDA 5a-10b.

3 R. 'Mannington Mauve Rambler'

This wonderful, old rose growing on the walls at Haddon gave us the starting point for our choice of colour palette. A vigorous rambler, in June it's covered in clusters of small, semi-double mauve flowers. 4.5m.

4 R. Scepter'd Isle (= 'Ausland')

An upright-growing shrub that is the perfect companion for perennials in a mixed border. It will flower freely and continuously throughout the summer from June to September, filling the garden with the rich fragrance of myrrh. 1.8m. USDA 5a-10a.

5 R. 'Président de Sèze'

Président de Sèze' is a Gallica, one of the most ancient groups of roses. Compact, shapely and beautifully scented, with full, quartered blooms that range in colour from magenta to pink and lilac. Chosen for Haddon because of its richness and historic associations. 1.8m. AGM. USDA 4a-8b.

6 R. Gentle Hermione (= 'Ausrumba')

The blooms of some old roses are so heavy they hang downwards, but both this rose and The Generous Gardener, hold and display their flowers well, something that's important if you're adding them into a border with perennials. 1.2m. USDA 6b-9b.

7 R. 'Blush Rambler'

A very pretty old Multiflora rambler, with a cottage-garden feel and cascading clusters of soft, pink blooms in mid-summer. Wonderful



planting ideas roses

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among other small-flowered ramblers for creating the sense of unrestrained and fragrant abundance that is the essence of an English country garden in June. 3-6m. USDA 6b-9b.

8 R. 'Dupontii'

A tall, shrub rose with single, white flowers with a central coronet of yellow stamens. Good grown towards the back of the border. If not deadheaded, it will produce round, red hips for autumn interest. Thought to date back to 1596, and chosen for its Elizabethan associations. 2.4m. AGM. USDA 4a-8a.

9 R. 'Climbing Madame Caroline Testout'

A strong, reliable, climbing rose that's a sport of an early Hybrid Tea rose. I've chosen it for its classic, shapely, tea-rose blooms and its repeat-flowering habit. After the main flush, a second crop of smaller flowers is produced in September. 3-4m. USDA 6a-9b.

10 R. 'Madame Grégoire Staechelin'

Although it flowers only once, the effect produced by the mass of pink, double flowers with their sweet-pea scent, covering a wall is spectacular. All wall-trained roses need to be kept vigorous by regularly taking out old wood to promote new, and feeding generously. 4-8m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 6a-9b.

11 R. James Galway (= 'Auscrystal')

Repeat-flowerers are invaluable for adding late season interest. This one is vigorous and disease-resistant, with warm-pink flowers. At Haddon I grow it as an arching shrub in a mixed border but can also be used as a short climber on a wall. 1.8m. USDA 5a-10a.

12 R. 'Céleste'

The Albas are an ancient group of roses, and this is one of the most beautiful, with fabulously scented, soft, pale-pink flowers and grey-green foliage, lovely in a mixed border. Tall-growing and almost thornless, it will tolerate some shade. 2.4m. AGM. USDA 5a-9a.

USEFUL INFORMATION Haddon Hall

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RECOMMENDED SUPPLIERS

David Austin Roses

Tel 01902 376300, davidaustinroses.com

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