"Favorite Flowers of the Chesapeake Master Gardeners"
The Peony by Janet Grubbs

Latin Name & Cultivar: *Paeonia lactiflora* 'Sarah Bernhardt'

Common Name: Peony or often Chinese Peony
Family: Paeoniaceae

As a child I loved to visit my Aunt Edna's house in spring as her peony bushes were so full of beautifully scented flowers, that they filled the air with an unforgettable fragrance. Hers were very mature plants and were so large, they actually cascaded over a wall.
I looked forward to planting my first peony bush over 30 years ago and have continued to love many different cultivars ever since.

I love the look of English Gardens, so have my peonies planted among Echinacea, Liatris, Bee Balm and many other plants of different colors and textures. Peonies are very hardy plants once established and can grow for many, many years. Peonies attract butterflies as well as provide me with the fragrance of my childhood.

According to Missouri Botanical Gardens, this peony is native to central Asia. It has been grown in China since the 7th century and was introduced in North America in the 1800's.

'Sarah Bernhardt' is an herbaceous (soft stemmed) peony cultivar. The bush will grow to about 3 feet tall each year and will have good foliage throughout the summer. This heirloom variety has very large, pink double flowers and is a good cut flower. The flowers are so large that they will droop if not supported.

Height: 2.50 to 3.00 feet
Spread: 2.50 to 3.00 feet
Bloom Time: May
Bloom Description: Pink (double)
Sun: Full sun to part shade
Water: Medium
Maintenance: Medium
Flower: Showy, Fragrant, Good Cut
Attracts: Butterflies
Non-native plant

Resource: Missouri Botanical Gardens
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