

# Christmas Flowers

## A Holiday Classic: The Poinsettia

(NAPSA)—In addition to their role as traditional Christmas decorations, poinsettias can serve as tokens of goodwill, friendship and joy during the holidays and beyond. More than 50 million Americans will purchase a poinsettia plant this holiday season.

While 75 percent prefer the familiar red version, there are more than 100 varieties available. White, pink, yellow and even variegated poinsettias are gradually gaining popularity. Named after Joel Poinsett, who introduced this indigenous Mexican plant to the United States during the 1800s while he served as the U.S. ambassador to that nation, poinsettias have become America's best-selling potted plant. More than 85 percent of all potted plants sold annually are poinsettias.

Here are some care and handling tips for your own holiday classic from the floral experts at 1-800-FLOWERS.COM:

- When purchasing your plant, select a poinsettia with dark green foliage, strong, stiff stems, and completely colored flowers. Make sure your plant has no fallen or yellow leaves and that it is fully balanced and attractive from all sides.

- Poinsettias thrive on bright, sunny, natural daylight. Place your plant in indirect sunlight for at least six hours per day. Keep your room temperature between 68 to 70 degrees. Do not place your plant near drafts, heating vents or appliances.



**This Christmas Cookie Poinsettia, with leaves that resemble perfectly shaped holiday cookies, arrives beautiful and blooming for the yuletide celebration.**

- Water the plant when the soil surface feels dry to a light touch. It's very important not to let your plant sit in standing water.

- It is not necessary to fertilize your poinsettias when they are in bloom. However, after the holidays, a balanced, all-purpose household plant fertilizer will help maintain the rich, green foliage color and promote new growth.

- Do not place your poinsettia outside, as the plant is sensitive to chilling temperatures.

Visit [1800flowers.com](http://1800flowers.com) on the Web for a beautiful selection of poinsettia plants, including the Christmas Cookie Poinsettia, a bold new variety in deep, bright red, with leaves that resemble perfectly shaped holiday cookies.